ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
IN ANNAPOLIS

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Supplementary Bulletin

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

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REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Five years have passed since St. John's College introduced its present program of instruction. During that time much has been said and written about the College's radical reform. Some of what has been said has exhibited extraordinary insight, both into the St. John's Program and into the state of liberal learning in America today. Inevitably also, much has been said which was simply misinformation about St. John's College, yet has been unconsciously revealing of American opinion concerning liberal education. It would seem proper to lay before the Visitors and Governors in some systematic form the principal misapprehensions concerning the College's purpose and the means it has adopted to carry out that purpose, both because they are the natural interpreters of the College to the outside world and should know the points which most need interpretation, and also because one may well record, at the end of these five years, what the comments of that world have been upon the assumption of a task which American colleges had for decades refused to assume. The history of the College for the past five years has acted as a catalytic upon the confusions implicit in contemporary liberal education, has indeed made more explicit, confusions which every college trustee might well consider.

There have been two main classes of misapprehensions. On the one hand "conservative" educators have argued for the "traditional" elective system in our undergraduate colleges against the "novel educational experiment" which St. John's supposedly started. St. John's had restored a kind of education that has more than two thousand years of teaching experience back of it compared with the elective system's century or less. The liberal educators, on the other hand, welcome what they call novel experiments and took the St. John's Program to be one. In general, the conservatives have found in the St. John's curriculum all the things they fear, and the liberals all the things they always hoped for and never found elsewhere. The conservatives have feared an intellectual *coup d'état* under papist auspices. Was the College not requiring students to read St. Augustine, St. Bonaventura, St. Thomas Aquinas? And were not these theologians Catholics—at a time, it is true, when the choice of Protestant churches was lamentably restricted? Were they not dog-

with those three questions in mind: Whom is the St. John's Program for? What does it do for them? What chance has it of surviving?

"Only the brilliant student need apply to St. John's for admission, and in any case only he would profit by studying there if admitted." As a matter of fact the Dean of the College has throughout the five years, and as a matter of educational policy, admitted freshman classes that exhibited what educators often call a bell curve. That is, he has admitted a few freshmen who had averaged "A" in high school, a few who had averaged "D", and a goodly proportion of "B's" and "C's." For the first five years the entrance requirements the College had for a long time been using, fifteen high school "units" and the principal's recommendation, were continued, not because the Dean attached much importance to them but because he did not wish to recommend more appropriate requirements until the faculty had had enough experience teaching the Program to draw them up wisely. This year the War precipitated action that might otherwise have been postponed for two or three years longer: the faculty substituted for a high school diploma its own entrance examinations, examinations designed to insure as far as possible that the incoming freshman had the relevant preparation while at the same time enabling him to enter the College early enough to graduate by twenty. Although the military draft precipitated this action, there is reason to hope that the College will feel justified in continuing to graduate its students by twenty, even after peace comes. Certainly an efficient system of school and college should accomplish more for a student by that age than the present system achieves by a considerably later age. The Visitors and Governors will doubtless recall that the new entrance examinations cover algebra through quadratics, plane geometry, one foreign language and—what innumerable college matriculants and some graduates from our better colleges no longer possess—common school arithmetic and English grammar. A boy who understands those subjects should profit by studying at St. John's.

There is, however, one requirement which the bulk of matriculants in our colleges do not meet: the boy that enters St. John's must desire a liberal education seriously enough to face tasks he did not choose and to work harder upon them than he would need to work if his only desire were to secure a bachelor's degree from a leading American university. This last requirement keeps more boys from applying to St. John's than anything except misinformation about it, or misinformation about liberal education. But mediocre abilities have not barred applicants.

"Only students with private incomes should enter St. John's since the College does not prepare boys to earn a living." Almost none of the present student body now have, or may expect to have, private incomes. They did not of course come to St. John's to prepare for a specific job. St. John's is not a business school, not a professional school. It is concerned to awaken and discipline and render genuinely usable the intellectual powers of its students. It assumes that many of them will upon graduation enter a business occupation, in which case they will learn the job from those already on the job. This is the way most bachelors of arts in the United States, who earn bread today, learned their jobs, not by taking "practical" college courses. In fact, alumni surveys indicate that few undergraduates "major" in the field in which they later earn their living, for the adequate reason that life is much more surprising than most colleges realize, and the average undergraduate cannot predict how he will eventually earn his living. In short, most persons still learn their business the way their great-grandfathers did, by the method formerly known as apprenticeship. Those who have first learned to think make the aptest apprentices.

However, certain of the learned professions, theology, medicine, law, engineering, and others, require of their apprentices that they first get specialized theoretical training, usually though not invariably in a school. Some of the best of these professional schools require of those who enter them a bachelor's degree, in an effort to guarantee that those who study for a profession shall first be educated men. They are usually disappointed in their guarantee and are loud in saying so to the liberal arts colleges. The graduates of St. John's go to professional schools just like other college graduates, except that they have learned first to handle more difficult problems than the elective system requires students to handle.

The medical schools offer a special problem, since, despairing of getting educated B.A.'s from the colleges, they have passed over to the colleges, under the term "pre-medical course," some of the professional training which medicine requires. The graduates of St. John's are entering good medical schools. Certain graduate departments in our universities, notably chemistry, do not insist on a liberal education but do insist on several years of undergraduate chemistry. No college could hope both to assume this professional responsibility and give its students a thorough liberal education, and St. John's does not try. It has never tried to "meet requirements" but to give a solid education, and really good graduate and professional schools are but too glad to get what they originally hoped the colleges could give.

The "practical" benefit of a liberal education is to enable young men to think clearly and imaginatively, to display versatility and adaptability, and the only known "course" in these valuable qualities is what men once called liberal education. The qualities are still eagerly, if vainly, sought by those in responsible positions with difficult personnel problems. Only recently have many Americans assumed that knowing how to think better would be a handicap in earning a living.

"Poor boys need not apply, since there is no student aid, and since St. John's is in any case a community of 'gentlemen' with a high standard of living." There are of course many poor boys at St. John's, earning a part of their education by the usual college jobs and receiving the rest as a free grant. The standard of living is conspicuously simpler than in most well known American colleges.

"St. John's teaches no science, only the classics." St. John's is, I assume, the only college of liberal arts in the country that will not grant a degree without four years of laboratory work, three hours a week for freshmen and sophomores, six hours a week for juniors and seniors. It is true that the purpose of this laboratory work is not to train professional chemists or physicists or biologists but to discipline the student in the kind of thinking that goes on in those subjects by working in those subjects. St. John's is concerned, not primarily to teach laboratory rule of thumb but the reasoning back of the rule.

It is moreover concerned that students should understand the great revolutions in scientific thought, whether in ancient Greece, or in contemporary Europe or America. In the last formal lecture he ever delivered, Sir William Osler argued indeed for the value of Greek classics to liberal education but demanded that we study not only those called "humanistic" but the giants of Greek scientific inquiry as well: Democritus and Archimedes, Aristarchus, Hippocrates, and Galen, and the scientific works of Aristotle. For there are "classics" in science as well as classics in poetry or philosophy. There are books which are classics and there are laboratory instruments which are also classics.

"St. John's teaches no modern books, only the Greek and Latin classics." The books used at St. John's are of course the great books of the Western tradition, regardless of time or place. In time they range from Homer to living authors. Fortunately not all the great classics were written by Greeks or Romans.

"Are students required to 'believe' Aristotle or St. Thomas Aquinas?" No, nor Freud, nor Marx either. Students are discour-

aged from believing or disbelieving books they have not read or do not yet understand. They learn by daily experience how irrelevant this question of believing or accepting or subscribing usually is. Those moderns who accept, or refuse to accept, Aristotle, without knowing what he said, are not in a happy position intellectually, although their ignorance of the nature of their position usually leaves them tranquil.

"The abolition of the elective system at St. John's leaves no room for the great specialist, no room for research, without which teaching itself decays." Leaving aside the rather obvious fact that most great specialists in our universities tend to pass on undergraduate teaching to their less distinguished colleagues, it is true that the faculty of St. John's are far too busy learning how to move through the same unspecialized areas of human knowledge through which the authors of the great books moved, to carry on much specialized research in the contemporary academic sense. It is equally true that the research that they do undertake is chiefly concerned with the recovery of understandings which the specialized scholar has now lost. How easily this loss could occur is obvious to anyone who reflects that the greatest minds of the Occident were rarely content to operate in what a modern research scholar calls his field. Finally, it is worth observing that though modern research has indeed been used as the only available antidote against the boredom of teaching elective courses to undergraduates, that antidote is not needed by a faculty constantly occupied with the greatest books in all fields which our civilization has produced, and with helping undergraduates to understand them.

"Undergraduates cannot read some of the books on the St. John's list." The heavy word in this sentence is the word "read." If it means master, the statement is not only true but a bit obvious. Some of the books on the St. John's list are not in a certain sense mastered by the faculty, nor perhaps by anybody. It is one of the characteristics of William Shakespeare that just when one feels one has really seen all the meanings in a given tragedy, a new implication appears. That is presumably why grown men, even learned men, do not object to reading and rereading Shakespeare. But the other great authors of our civilization exhibit the same inexhaustibility. If "read" means to understand to some degree and with immense intellectual profit, then the books "read" at St. John's are quite genuinely "read." Some of them, like Newton's *Principia,* have to be read in the British university sense: that is, studied line by line and toiled over at the blackboard. But they are read.

The levels of understanding by undergraduates of different capacities vary more widely than the levels of understanding in dealing with a modern textbook. But the different levels increase in depth, and that is the reason for the reading.

"Undergraduates cannot read so many books, since whole graduate courses are built around one or two of them." Again it depends on whether a man has read Dante when he knows what he says and can discuss it intelligently, or whether he has read him only after mastering the philological and historical apparatus employed by Dante Clubs. It depends on whether one seeks to become a Dante specialist or whether one uses the experience of reading Dante's poetry as one of the means of increasing a young man's understanding, in short, of educating him. Finally, it is quite probable that the required books at St. John's are less numerous than the books the average American undergraduate reads during the four years it takes him to thread his way through the maze of elective courses. It is more than probable that they are better books and therefore more worth his precious time.

"Undergraduates cannot master four languages, yet St. John's requires every undergraduate to study Greek for one year, Latin for one, French for one, German for one. Why not study one long enough to master it?" St. John's is not concerned to turn out Hellenists or Latinists or French scholars or German scholars. It is concerned to acquaint its students with Language. It is concerned that its students should learn to use their mother tongue, in most cases English, with more discrimination and with greater effect than American college alumni now can. For Language is a basic instrument of human thought. Normally, dull and slovenly language is recording dull and slovenly thinking. Even if the thinking is not dull, dull language cannot adequately convey it to others. This is as true in writing a business letter as in writing a piece of literary criticism. But to study Language in general, it is wise to study a sample language. Foreign languages are better for this purpose than one's own language, because they command a stronger quality of attention. Ancient languages are peculiarly adapted to exhibiting clearly the problems of all Language because they are highly inflected and the joints show. French and German have the advantage of being easier to learn to read directly without translation. Like Greek and Latin, they have the added advantage of being the vehicles of some of the greatest thinking of the Western world. For the end in view at St. John's, the comparisons between the four languages studied are of high pedagogical value. Neverthe-

less, there is nothing sacred about the number four. Provided the end were kept clearly in view, the same job could be done with two languages or even one. The decision to use four was a purely practical one.

"The object of the St. John's Program can be better achieved by a survey course in the intellectual history of the Western world." Not if this means substituting for the products of great minds condensations or commentaries by smaller minds. The American college professor, by the way, has no reason to feel insulted if his mind is considered smaller than the greatest minds whose products have come down to us. His mind can become less small if he associates constantly through his study and reading with minds that are really great. So can the minds of his students.

"How can an undergraduate read a great book, say Machiavelli's *Prince,* without having first been given the background of the book: the Italian Renaissance, a course in painting, or the history of the Italian city states?" It is a modern superstition that a book like the *Prince* is inaccessible except to those who "have read up on the period." It is accessible to anybody who reads it attentively. Far from requiring a historical background to make good sense, it is one of the documents without which the so-called background makes very little sense indeed. Additional information, shedding light on Machiavelli and sometimes on his work can be multiplied almost indefinitely so long as our larger libraries hold out. But Machiavelli will remain intelligible, alone and unaided, so long as ordinary human experience holds out. Finally, most contemporary attempts to do a "thorough" job on Plato or Rousseau turn out to be based on the professorial assumption—in the context of contemporary education, curiously self-verifying—that no man reads an important book a second time after he has graduated. In so far as the alumnus does not read important books, he is quite simply another expensive educational failure. I am aware that he normally feels he lacks the time and I am equally aware of his frantic efforts to kill the time he could use re-reading the great books he first read in college, if indeed he did.

"There is no course in American history given at St. John's." In fact, in June 1942 the *New York Times* conducted a survey that disclosed that only eighteen per cent of our colleges require such a course for graduation and only twenty-eight per cent require it for admission. The *Times* reported that many educators were horrified by this disclosure. St. John's is not. It is horrified by the fact that American liberal arts colleges no longer supply the kind of educa-

tion that made that history possible. As for the history itself, there are extant many readable versions of it, and there are countless Americans who have learned more about the history of their country from the sort of reading educated men and women do than can be learned in an undergraduate course. In terms of understanding America, it is far more shocking not to have read the Federalist papers than not to recall what happened in McKinley's administration.

"St. John's is too intellectual. It is concerned with reading and thinking and talking, but it does not educate the whole man." It happens that colleges can best help the whole man by strengthening his intellect, as hospitals can by healing his body, and restaurants by feeding his stomach. St. John's thinks it important to discriminate between these social functions. It is true that it operates an infirmary and a dining hall, but its central concern is with the minds of its students. It also has a very lively athletic system, although it will have no truck with intercollegiate competition in its present form. It sings, it dances, it boats, it even goes to the movies! But it does these things in order that it may do better the job it was chartered to do: develop the intellectual powers of young men and teach them the means of continuing their development for life. Its "college life" is organized around its instruction, not vice versa. It is not a club.

"St John's is not concerned with 'creative' work or with the fine arts." St. John's is deeply concerned about the fine arts, but it is quite true that it has made really effective educational use of only one of them: music. It would welcome a good solution by which other fine arts might support the liberal arts. It has not to date found such a solution and it would be quite unwilling to substitute for a genuine solution any schemes that contemporary colleges have to date set up.

"St. John's does not cater to individual differences in its students." The College does not believe that young men can afford to focus upon their peculiar aptitudes before getting a basic, sound, general education. Such an education is the common need of all free men. With it, differences in personality are rendered significant. Without it, such differences become mere eccentricity. Those persons best learn to "express themselves" who learn to express ideas; and they can learn to express ideas by essentially the same method by which children can learn to talk well: by listening to adults who can already talk well and by talking with them. It is true that the average St. John's student quite naturally puts more time on those aspects of human knowledge and inquiry which most attract him,

although as he develops, the area frequently shifts. What he is not allowed to do, and what the elective system encourages, is to blackball whatever he finds difficult, thereby maiming himself intellectually. The elective system operates pretty much the way our political elections do; and James Bryce noted decades ago that the American electorate does not so much choose the man it wants in as vote against the man it wants out. Students do not so much elect what interests them as dodge what frightens them. Intellectual muscle, like other muscle, depends on a balanced ration, not on a diet of favorite dishes. This is a hard truth for many of our progressive educators, but one with which educated men everywhere are quite familiar.

"It is too early to tell whether St. John's has the answer or not." It is somewhat doubtful if there is an "answer" to have. But there is long human experience back of the teaching which St. John's is doing. If by "answer" is meant the ability of the College's graduates to "make good," St. John's would have to reply that no self-respecting educational institution would consent to measure the worth of its work by the average size of its alumni's incomes. That the graduate who has learned to think will find many things easy that the man who cannot think finds painfully difficult, is obviously true. But history does not record a necessary correlation between material success on the one hand and intellectual and moral worth on the other. We should recall for our good, now and then, how many of the world's great men were "failures." Any educational institution whose faculty can practise the liberal arts is capable of detecting whether its students are learning to do so. It does not have to "wait ten years" before "evaluating" its work. On the other hand, it cannot guarantee even an educated graduate against war, famine, earthquake, or other catastrophes. Nor can any other institution. All a college can do at the best is, not to guarantee its alumni from catastrophe, but to teach them how to meet catastrophe. If the present war cures our colleges from trying to guarantee comfort and prosperity to their graduates, it will not be fought wholly in vain. If it can teach the colleges that what our country asks of them is not successful alumni, but useful citizens, our victory will be sweet. War can cause anguish, and anguish sometimes brings contrition, and contrition is a fair start towards understanding.

"St. John's has a good curriculum but is about to collapse financially." This practical prophecy the Board will recognize as based on tangible, if dated, evidence. Just previously to the introduction of the present curriculum, those who knew the affairs of the College

had every reason to fear its imminent collapse. The determination to exploit educationally that near-catastrophe in large part made possible what St. John's is and stands for today. I believe the Board will agree with me that the vitality of the College springs in great measure from its resolution in 1937 to tackle the job without money, do the job, and call for help. That this call has been generously heeded sprang, I am convinced, primarily from the fact that the College was doing the job, not offering to do it if somebody would make it safe to do. The risks it then took have served ever since as a pledge to its friends that it meant business and that its financial needs reflected carefully chosen means to a clearly envisaged end.

But on this problem too it is worth our avoiding the childish fallacy I have just ascribed to colleges in general. Just as they cannot guarantee their graduates an income or even physical survival, so neither can any institution guarantee its own survival. Those of us whose picture of the world was formed before 1914 sometimes have to pinch ourselves to recall that a large part of that snug, successful, comfortable civilization lies in ruins about us and that the rest of it is fighting for its very life. Today it ill behooves a college of all places not to recognize that its first obligation is not security but performance of duty. It can be prudent in fitting means to end; it cannot play safe as an educational policy without forfeiting the right to the very means it seeks at all cost to guarantee. That St. John's has prospered during the past few trying years is due not merely to good fortune but to its courage as an institution in meeting its responsibilities. That courage and responsibility have attracted support from men and women able to recognize those qualities.

"St. John's will not collapse financially, because it is operated by the University of Chicago, which will look out for its material needs. But since it is an experiment conducted by that University, it is not a free agent, and may come to an end when the experiment has yielded publishable findings." Of all the misapprehensions listed in this Report this one was once the most widespread. Although the College has never been in any way connected with the University of Chicago, it is easy to see where this particular legend started. The President of the University of Chicago joined our Board when I became head of the College; he was for a time Chairman of the Board: he still is a member. For years he had publicly advocated the sort of education St. John's is giving. Perhaps more important than that was the assumption of the average newspaper reader that

there must be a connection of this sort: otherwise the College would not dare to push ahead. In short most members of the newspaper public, who did not predict financial collapse, assumed as the only other plausible hypothesis that Chicago money would keep us from collapse. For the colleges have taught the public not to expect action without advance subsidy. I tried to tell the story of an unsubsidized action in the July 1941 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The Treasurer's Report for January 1941 fills in the gaps in that narrative.

There is one last group of comments from those who recognize the vitality of the College and its work but find other reasons than its educational purpose and practice for that vitality. "It is special teaching methods that give the College life, not the subject matter it insists upon." Needless to say the College employs no teaching method that has not been used intermittently for thousands of years. "Then it is a specially brilliant faculty." We do not admit the compliment. After five years we have naturally become more competent to our task. One does not read the great books steadily year after year without being in a better position to teach them to undergraduates than even most leading scholars now are. But that is because of the work we have been doing, not because of our average intellectual capacity. We have, quite simply, re-educated ourselves for five years, and we have thereby repaired in part the deficiencies in our previous training. "The faculty of St. John's are enthusiasts, and enthusiasts can educate with any subject matter." I think I can report to the Board quite truthfully that with all the difficult problems the faculty have had to face, they have not had the additional problem of being enthusiasts. I once hired a housepainter who was an enthusiast and it was a costly business. I take it that good workmen incline to like their work, if only because it is, in proportion to their growing competence, good work. I think the faculty of St. John's now have felt this kind of satisfaction to a degree unusual for academic men of our generation. But they are far too busy to be what the word enthusiast suggests. Those who admire enthusiasts habitually conclude their diagnosis with a murmured reminiscence of Mark Hopkins on the end of a log. The anecdote has done American education much disservice by glorifying the living teacher and exempting us from listening to greater ones who were even wiser men than Mark Hopkins and who can still be summoned to our aid through the magic of the books they left behind them.

The misstatements quoted above tell, it is true, little or nothing about St. John's, but by implication they tell a great deal about the state of liberal education in America today, about what most Americans think a college of liberal arts is and ought to be, about what kind of education Americans want for their sons. Let us sum up the misstatements in those terms.

We Americans do not expect our children to be able by college age to read first-rate books and are content to have them read a few passages or a few of the great books in a special field and be told what is in the rest of them in survey courses. First-rate books are all right for the sons of our rich neighbors who can afford to concern themselves with the problems free men have always examined. For ourselves, we would rather our boy learned how to earn money and we believe that courses in a liberal arts college can somehow teach him to do so. Is not this the "age of specialization"? We have no faith that reading the first-rate will form the mind in any useful way. We believe that the world's greatest books are "culture" and we believe that culture is for the rich.

We cannot conceive why a boy should study both ancient books and modern ones, both humanistic ones and scientific ones. Classics were written in Greek and Latin and are "culture." The up-to-date and the scientific are useful and true. Nor do we want him to read medieval books, because even the greatest books of medieval Christendom are not worth reading unless you believe them.

We are not convinced that the reading of great books would be more favorable to education than the reading of lesser books. The important thing is the teacher. He should be skillful and enthusiastic, or our sons will become listless. What he teaches, provided it will be useful to making money, does not greatly matter.

We Americans once provided liberal education in our colleges of liberal arts, a kind of education aimed at liberating the intellectual powers through discipline, and this aim is again the aim of St. John's College. But we were able to provide it for a very few of our sons. It is not true that we provided it for the rich only, but it is true that at the college level liberal education was thought of primarily as preparation for the learned professions. Since those days we have expanded incredibly the number of young men who "go to college." But we are not giving even those of them who propose to enter the learned professions, a genuine liberal education. We are trying instead to give them the specifically useful in a pitiful effort to prepare them against the utterly unknown demands of their future life. It is more than possible that the War and its aftermath will

teach us the folly of this substitution, will teach us how seriously our sons will need a more versatile preparation for living, how seriously we will need disciplined thinkers instead of college "majors." But I am in hopes it will teach us one more thing. I am in hopes it will teach us that if our modern industrial society is to be self-governing, not only must we restore the sort of liberal education that will prepare adequately for citizenship; we must set about making it available to all young Americans. That is a formidable task, but it is one that is worthy of the American tradition. If we propose to guard the freedom for which many of our fellow citizens are now dying, and if we expect to exercise it on the basis of a complex technology, we dare not aim at less.

Once more, the comments and questions which have greeted the St. John's Program can be classified under three headings: What does liberal education do? Whom is such education for? What chance has it of surviving in our world? The answers to those questions are simple answers, even if they are difficult to understand for institutions which have for many decades not asked the questions.

Liberal education frees the human intellect by disciplining its powers. It removes a man's impediments to the complete use of whatever thinking powers he may possess. Since to live well, since even to earn a living, requires a man to think, liberal education is the basic preparation for life. But it is a full-time job and cannot be carried on adequately by institutions that attempt simultaneously to give occupational training and what they may call "practical" knowledge. That kind of knowledge can be speedily acquired, whether on the job or in a postgraduate professional school, by the man who has learned to think. It can be acquired only with difficulty and inadequately by the man who has not. The penalty which contemporary society has paid for omitting this basic sort of education is the multiplication of highly trained specialists, who are, fundamentally, uneducated men and who are inadequate to the varied responsibilities of life, whether as citizens, as husbands, as fathers, as friends, as soldiers.

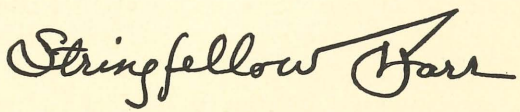
But since liberal education is the sort that enables each man to think as well as his native powers permit, it is by definition appropriate to all men. It is not for the rich alone, nor the intellectual élite alone, nor the gauleiters and commissars alone. A free society that limits it to a small fraction of its citizens, does so at the peril of its existence. And the effect which liberal education seeks is not the ability of graduates to "pass" a certain test but the completest possible realization of the powers to think, on the part of each human individual. By ignoring the ideal goal of universal liberal education,

America allowed such education to transform itself into a training for white-collar workers and those who aspire to a white collar. Then, quite logically, since there are many honorable occupations in which white collars are not worn, America declared that it would be folly to give liberal education, that is white-collar training, to everybody. But true liberal education, of the kind American colleges stopped giving, is appropriate to any occupation a human being may properly perform.

Since man's most specifically human powers are the powers of the intellect, the powers of understanding, the man who neglects to use and develop those powers does so at the peril of becoming a shrewd and dangerous animal. And since happiness depends on the full use of man's proper powers, those men who become shrewd animals do not become happy. The ultimate price of neglecting to free the intellect is bestiality.

What chance has such education of surviving in our practical modern world? First, a glance at our modern world raises some doubt as to whether practicality is among its characteristics. Practical men do not treat such problems as peace, the distribution of material goods, or the education of their young, as we treated those problems in the twenties and the thirties. Secondly, the gloomiest fact about this question, whether true liberal education can survive, is that it should be seriously asked. To the extent that we know so little about it that we ask that question, it has already ceased.

Liberal education cannot of course be killed so long as human beings think. But it can be gravely weakened or postponed in a given place at a given time. What we mean by civilization, with its law, its science, its institutions, its art, is the product of the intellectual arts. To fight a war to preserve that product without taking measures to recover the arts that produced it is to misunderstand a basic fact. It is a fact which the Nazis, whom we have come so much to resemble, also misunderstand. It is that man was not made to support the social order but that the purpose of a good social order, like the purpose of liberal education, is to free the soul of man.



STRINGFELLOW BARR

Annapolis, Maryland,
July, 1942.

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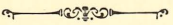

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