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The Junior College As a Relief

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History seems to have a habit of repeating itself, and those who read history should profit by their knowledge. It was only normal for the returning soldier in 1865-66, and again in 1919-20, to hasten to complete his college studies, which had been interrupted by the war. It should not have been surprising to have the entering classes in September, 1919, number twice as many persons as the largest class to enter their respective universities before the war. Mathematicians also have a habit of studying the past and predicting what the future will bring forth. To any one who had made a mathematical study of the subject, the size of the entering classes at our great universities in the fall of 1919 was not surprising. If the "curve of new registrations" be plotted for the last ten years, it will be seen that for many of our more prominent educational institutions the curve of new registrations would have predicted just what did happen.

The surprise that was actually given to some of the universities in the fall of 1919, however, was sufficient to cause them to repeat the question so frequently asked: "What are we going to do with this crowd of students?" Old students, anxious parents, and timid youths must have had some misgivings on registration day as to how the university could possibly assimilate such numbers and care for classes, some of which were twice as large as any previously enrolled. The executive officers of state institutions were especially perplexed to know what to do under the circumstances, when no money was to be immediately available. Private universities could limit their enrollments, but state-supported institutions could not decline to take a student who fulfilled the requirements of the state law.

This congestion due to numbers in the lower classes has thus become a very real and serious problem, both for the young people of the country and for the universities. It is one that is not peculiar to any one institution, as most of the colleges and universities of the country, and certainly those of the Middle West, both small and large, privately endowed and state-supported, found themselves in the same predicament in the fall of 1919. Notwithstanding the withdrawals during the first year and the very serious drop in attendance of first-year students, the outlook for 1920-21 is for second-year classes in several of the courses that will be almost double the size of any classes which have preceded them. The problem is not confined solely to caring for the first-year students. In fact, already some of the third-year classes are almost one hundred per cent larger this year than ever before. The problem, therefore, before the state universities in particular is how best they can get the desired relief, the better to serve the state and their constituents. Should

they seek relief from the legislature through increased appropriations for buildings, equipment, and instructors, so as to care for the increasing numbers of the young people of the state, that desire to obtain an education, or should they try to deflect some of these students by other paths to the upper classes of the university? Let us see if there is any way out.

I

The history, practice, and present status of the junior college movement has recently been very fully described in a bulletin (1919, No. 35) of the United States Bureau of Education on The Junior College by F. N. McDowell. From this monograph it will be learned that the idea started with President Henry P. Tappan of the University of Michigan in 1852; that it was first put into actual practice when President Harper opened the doors of the University of Chicago in 1892; that the University of California, through Dean A. F. Lange, kept the idea alive by reports to the faculty in 1892, 1903, and 1907, and embodied the Junior College idea in its Lower Division in 1903; that in 1910 the first California high school took advantage of the state law of 1907; and that the Universities of Minnesota, Missouri, Texas, Illinois, Wisconsin, and other states have adopted the idea more or less fully. The influence that has caused the development of the junior college has been chiefly the universities; but the normal schools, the demand for extended high school courses, and the small colleges have also had their effect. McDowell shows that these influences have caused the development of four kinds of junior colleges, namely, "the lower division or junior college within the university, the normal school accredited for two years of college work, the private junior college, and the public junior college." We may examine these varieties in order.

In recent years, the requirements for admission to the more professional colleges have been advanced, so that in the Colleges of Commerce, Journalism, Law, and Medicine two full years of Arts College work is required for admission to study for their degrees. The tendency of the other professional colleges is in the same direction. The upper two years of the College of Liberal Arts, Philosophy, and Science now form a Senior College for semi-professional, or advanced work in the so-called cultural subjects, and in literature, philosophy, and the pure sciences. For admission thereto, certain requirements are demanded that can be satisfied by specific courses from the first two years of the work in the College of Arts, just as for the other colleges. These first two years now form a Junior College of Arts. Its enlargement, or duplication, would solve the problem for many high school graduates.

A greater degree of cooperation with the normal schools of each state would be helpful in relieving the congestion at the state university. At the present time there is some transferring of students from these institutions to the universities, just as there is from most of the other colleges and universities of the state. The idea is capable of development, provided it can be shown that adequate classroom and laboratory space is available at the normal schools. It might be necessary to increase the number of sections of the classes and to have classes held both in the morning and in the afternoon in the same rooms and laboratories. This would increase the efficiency in the use of the equipment one hundred per cent. Of course, few institutions like to have their students leave and go elsewhere; but, if they can be of greater benefit to the people of the state as a whole by cooperating with the state university, it would seem wise for them to accept the opportunity of leaving their own imprint upon the minds of larger numbers of students.

By the cooperation of the smaller and less well-endowed denominational colleges of the state, these would become private junior colleges to the larger institutions. Some of them might go even so far as to give up their upper classes, in order to extend their influence to more persons. In 1917 there were ninety-three private junior colleges in twenty-five states. Among the arguments given by McDowell for the development of the small college are the "widespread belief that the small college has many advantages over the larger institutions; local pride of the community in the home college; the interest and support of men of wealth of the college town; the strong religious support given to most of these institutions; the democratic spirit of the American people; the increased standards of professional schools above referred to." In this connection, the idea of the combined double-degree curricula enters and might be applied just as well to the smaller colleges and to the normal schools as to the larger colleges and universities of each state. This plan permits the student to spend three years at the college nearest to his home, or of his first choice, then go to the state university for his more professional and technical work in Commerce, Education, Engineering, Home Economics, Journalism, Law, or Medicine, and receive his degree from the first institution at the end of the fourth year, by special arrangement between the two institutions, and his professional degree from the state university on the completion of his professional curriculum. This would make him an alumnus of both institutions and bind his affections to both of his alma maters. This plan is being increasingly followed at present and should be encouraged and expanded.

The establishment of local public junior colleges would cause them to act as feeders to all the universities and also to the industries. Since the first junior college was started at Fresno in 1910 under the California law, some thirty-nine have been established up to 1917, half of which are in that state. They are supported by taxation, state

aid, and tuition. In California, \$75 is received for each student. Of this amount, \$60 comes from the county fund and \$15 from the state, but it is now proposed to increase this to \$120 and \$60 respectively, or to a total of \$180. In investigating the "reasons given for the organization of public junior colleges," McDowell found that they were given in the following order of importance:—"desire of parents to keep their children at home; to provide a completion school for those who can go no further; the desire of students to secure college work near home; to meet specific local needs; geographical remoteness from a standard college or university; to meet the entrance requirements of professional schools; to provide vocational training more advanced than high school work; financial difficulty in maintaining a four-year course; to provide additional opportunities for teacher training; to procure the segregation of the sexes; and to provide opportunities for higher education under church control."

II

It has already been shown how the normal schools and the privately endowed colleges and universities of each state can, by mutually cooperating with their state university, assist in the more complete education of larger numbers. It is quite conceivable that the legislature of certain states might appropriate sufficient funds where-with to organize, and direct the state university to establish, a junior college at the university, which would satisfy the needs of all portions of the state and its youth. This would mean centralization, decrease in overhead expenses, unity of aim and purpose, and the broadening of democratization of the youth of the state. All of these are desirable.

Moreover, the public junior college would seem a meritorious institution. In 1918 the University of Chicago issued a circular of information stating that it was "prepared to encourage any adequately equipped secondary school to extend its work so as to cover the work now offered in the freshman and sophomore years of the college." This is the challenge to the "secondary schools." Why have they not accepted it in greater numbers? The answer seems to be the cost to the public. But, to quote from the McDowell bulletin:

"The principal of the Grand Rapids (Mich.) High School estimates that it costs the parents of that city \$250,000 annually to send their children away from home to complete their education. Much of this he believes has been saved to the community by the establishment of a junior college. Mr. A. A. Gray estimates that the city of Los Angeles saves \$100,000 annually by keeping the two hundred students enrolled in the junior college at home rather than sending them away to the university. Evidence so far seems to show that a junior college can be supported at a cost per pupil very little in excess of the per capita cost of high school pupils, and in California at from \$80 to \$200 of cost to the city for each student in the junior college. Many call attention to

the fact that this could be much reduced by larger enrollments."

On the other hand, among the regulations adopted by the University of Kansas in 1916 was the statement: "It is to be noted that the maintenance of a junior college will involve an expenditure greatly in excess of the expenses of an ordinary high school. Therefore, before organizing a junior college, the community should carefully consider its financial ability to maintain such an institution without impairing the character of the work in the elementary and secondary schools." Legislation has been effected in a number of the states, including California, Michigan, Illinois, Kansas, and Texas. The North Central Association of Schools and Colleges at its meeting in 1917 agreed upon a set of standards for the accrediting of junior colleges. From what has been said above, it will be seen that educational authorities have plenty of precedent to go by in laws already enacted, regulations promulgated, schools established, and results obtained during the past ten years of the operation of both public and private junior colleges. The rock upon which so many of the latter, and not a few of the former, have struck and sunk has been the one of cost, as forewarned by the University of Kansas. If the cost is the sole deterrent to the success of the junior college idea in practice, possibly there may be a way of escape from that dreaded obstacle.

Let us first consider how many and what classes of boys and girls would be most likely to be benefited by such a junior college in each of the cities or districts of 30,000 people or of cities having an assessed valuation of over three million dollars, as some of the present laws prescribe. First, there would be those boys and girls who wish to get a college education and who could not afford to go away and could not immediately earn the money wherewith to go. From this class are recruited the mature students who go to the universities to get an education after they have earned a bank account and have proven their need for an education, if they are ever to mount above the ground-floor of their chosen vocation. Second, there would be those boys, and particularly those girls, who are too young and immature to be sent away to college, who have never been outside of the county, who have always leaned on an indulgent father and a self-sacrificing mother, who would be lost in the sea of freshman life and sink beneath the waves of college duties, cares and snares, and who should be kept at home until they had learned to swim with ease in the currents of their home town before venturing into the eddies of the world. Third, there would be those who would be kept at home by home ties and duties, either personal or filial. Usually these would profit greatly and enjoy the possibilities of a college education. Fourth, those who need further moral and religious training before they are thrown into the vortex of city temptations and college life. Fifth, those who are expecting to enter one of the professional schools and who could just as well get their preliminary training for Law, Medicine, Theology, Journal-

ism, Commerce, or the like at the home college as elsewhere. Sixth, those who expect to go on into educational work and become teachers themselves. These could get their preliminary training under the local superintendent, principals, and normal school teachers while getting their more academic education. By this means, each city would have its own source of supply of teachers and would be doing its share towards supplying its own needs and those of the state. Seventh, those who are expecting to go into business, whether it be banking, insurance, merchandising, or any other. The fundamental principles are the same. The details may vary. Eighth, those who want to get a vocational education along some trade, art, or vocation higher than that given in a school of the strictly trade-school type. Ninth, to provide a completion or finishing school for those who are not going on to get a higher education. The experience of the University of California is that the more the "finishing courses" are emphasized by the junior colleges, the more the university is relieved of students who stay only for a year or two. McDowell shows that, based on a period of three years, 73 per cent of the graduates of the public junior colleges continued their work in a higher institution, while only 42 per cent of the graduates of private junior colleges did the same. Surely the number and variety of young people who would be benefited and the relief it would mean to the universities ought to justify considerable expenditure in the establishment of junior colleges.

The work done in the junior college should, of course, be of strictly collegiate grade, and the equivalent in content, quality, character, and presentation of the work given at the university. It should be done in a college atmosphere where the student is put on his own responsibility and is not kept in a study room and "assisted in getting his lessons." The teachers should be men and women of experience and training, as good in pedagogic ability, and preferably better, than those employed in the local high school. They should be experts in their respective lines of work. They should be college graduates, who have specialized in the subjects that they propose teaching, or should have had the equivalent in vocational training and experience. Hitherto, when such a type of educational unit has been thought of, it has been in terms of a new building and equipment, and all the expense and trouble that such an idea involves—bonds, sinking funds, delays, and the like—and usually at the curtailment of the building program for grade and high school buildings badly needed for the required education of the children already enrolled.

This sounds expensive. But it has now been suggested that the state law be changed, where necessary, so as to permit and authorize the Boards of Education of cities, school districts, or counties to finance, organize, and operate such junior colleges as the needs of their communities would seem to suggest and warrant and that there should be paid from the state educational funds to the board a specified sum of money for

each student enrolled in the junior college. Legislation may also be procured for additional support by gifts, local taxation, and tuition fees. The Board of Education should be authorized to secure and to appoint a suitable president, heads of departments, and assistants who are competent to do the work of organization and instruction, to provide an adequate library and janitor service, and to care for the upkeep of the buildings. Then one or more of the regular high school buildings could be used for the junior college sessions. These sessions could be held from the close of the regular high school session at about two o'clock, or earlier for certain subjects, until five or six o'clock, in order to cover the various assignments of class work. By this means the present high school classrooms, laboratories, and gymnasium would not be idle so many hours in the day, would be more efficiently used, and could be made to do double duty for most of the junior college work. The students would be held for not to exceed three hours each day of recitation work, or for four hours including laboratory work. They would come and go from their classes just as at any other college and as their schedules required. Their work would be intensive and not scattered. There would be no intermissions. Their mornings would be free to study, work, help to earn a living and support the family, get a business or trade training or a co-operative education, indulge in junior college athletics if they so desired, or do anything else that was lawful and right. By making the regular high school session begin a little earlier, the junior college session might be finished a little earlier. The janitors would have to do their cleaning after six o'clock rather than before, but such is the usual practice in office buildings and many other places. The cost would include the services of another faculty and teaching force, a little extra janitor service, possibly ten per cent for additional heating, and from fifty to one hundred per cent for additional lighting. In any case, the cost to the citizen, city, and state would be much less than that of the present practice of sending children away from home for the two years during which they are getting their continuation high school and academic education at the junior college in the large university preparatory to their more professional education and training at that institution. The public library of the city could be used for the reference reading. Additional laboratory facilities, shops, and the like would have to be provided for those subjects requiring such equipment, if the local high school did not possess them, or could not get them by the co-operative system, but, at the most, the expense would be light in comparison with the benefits obtained. As these matters differ greatly in different cities, no fixed rules can be laid down concerning them.

III

It may now be asked what effect such legislation and practice will have upon the state universities. It is evident that few rural and small-

town communities could be served by the nearest city junior college, but would continue to send their high school graduates to one of the colleges of the state university. Some city high school graduates might also go immediately to the university. But the attendance at the junior colleges would constitute a great relief for the universities from the increasing numbers of students in the lower classes, which, we have seen, are causing such serious problems. The freshman class would not so nearly outnumber the rest of the student-body. The atmosphere would be more that of a university and less that of a high school. Intellectual and scientific attainments and serious work would be at a premium. The institution would become more of a university for professional study and for the advanced cultural subjects. Its ideals would be raised. Its rank among the colleges and universities of the country would be still further increased, even if not by increased numbers.

The effect on the cities and their schools would be to increase the value of an education to the children of the city. More children would accept the opportunities offered and provided at their door. They would be kept under the parental roof for more years. Money would be saved to the parents and children. The high school would be benefited, as it would no longer be the capstone of the education locally available. One building would do the work of two and would be used more efficiently. The local industries, business, and the schools would be better served by supplying a vocational education to those children who did not propose to go further educationally. Less money would be spent on highly specialized courses given to only a few high school students, and such as only a large university can afford to give. A greater willingness would be developed to invest in the education of the people at public expense with the correspondingly larger dividends proven to accrue from such an investment.

In the United States, the increase in the demand for a collegiate education during the ten years before 1914, as measured by the enrollments of thirty of our leading universities, was three and one-fourth times as great as the increase in the population of the country. The present demand is not exactly known, except that it is greater than ever before. The fact that the sum of the enrollments at all of the numerous Ohio colleges is only one-seventh of the 200,000 children of the State of Ohio between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one shows that there are ample possibilities for still further increases in the enrollments of the colleges. The same is probably true of most of the other states. Their citizens are asking that their children receive an education higher and better than that now offered in their high schools. The present facilities of the privately-endowed and of the state-supported normal schools, colleges, and universities are not adequate to meet the demand. What shall be done? One possible solution of the problem is clearly the local junior college.