

THE FUTURE
OF
Texas Christian University

AN ADDRESS

BY
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T. C. U.—A VISION



A few years ago, one beautiful morning in June, I walked beneath the classic shade of the giant oaks of Oxford—the world's greatest university. The very air seemed instinct with the atmosphere of religious culture, for Oxford has always been the embodiment of the religious ideal in education. I saw the miniature beginning of the great institution—the first tiny college founded nearly a thousand years ago. And then I saw the other colleges, Balliol and New, and Magdalen and Christ's Church, and Oriel and Mansfield, the latest of them all. Each of these splendid colleges with its own government, charter and regulations stands as the monument to some one's loyal devotion to the cause of education, and all of the colleges, now twenty-one in number, when grouped together constitute the corporation of Oxford, the world's ideal of a university. As I threaded my way through those old quadrangles and cloisters made sacred by the presence of so many of the great and the good of earth, I thought of what a harvest had come from the seed-sowing of the pioneers who founded and made possible Oxford University. Think of the boys who played and studied in those old halls! John Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation; John Wesley, the founder of Methodism; Cardinal Wolsey and Cardinal Pole, John Hampden and John Tyndall, Ben Jonson and William Penn, John Ruskin and Cardinal Newman, Adam Smith and Percy B. Shelley, William E. Gladstone and Herbert Asquith. One could call the roll of a long and representative list of the poets, statesmen and orators of England.

How much of history and the story of triumphant progress of the human spirit is written into those massive stone walls of Oxford! And the past is only a part of the story, for Oxford, though a thousand years old, is still in the heyday of youth. Every springtime she puts forth new branches, and new admirers come to worship at her shrines. Through the munificence of a great Englishman, Cecil Rhodes, each year scores of the best products of American culture go over to Oxford to drink anew from her springs of inspiration. Who shall measure the power and influence of such an institution? It would be difficult perhaps to get at the exact amount of money which has been invested in Oxford in the past thousand years, but it is safe to say that, dollar for dollar and pound sterling for pound sterling, no other investment in the history of the world has produced such tremendous returns in enduring values, both spiritual and material. The men who helped to found Oxford were far-seeing prophets. They knew that in no other way could they use their capital where it would mean so much and where its usefulness would be so perpetual and eternal. There is a story in the Good Book which tells of certain men who were entrusted with sums of money for investment. Some of them gained pound for pound, others did better, but one man appeared with a record of an investment which had yielded ten fold. So far as it is possible for human ingenuity to pass upon the question it would seem that the founders of Oxford University may well come forward at the last day and say, "Lord, here is the pound which Thou didst give me and, lo, it has become ten pounds."

Oxford is the world's ideal of a university. It exercises a peculiar fascination upon all educators who once come within the fairy-like spell of its presence. It is well known to those who have had any intimate acquaintance with Woodrow Wilson that the ideals of education which he attempted to carry out at Princeton and only partially succeeded in carrying out were borrowed directly from Oxford. Wilson himself, in speech, in manner, in ideals, bears the Oxford stamp. The greatest living American metaphysician has dedicated his last and greatest work—just off the press—to Oxford University. When Dr. Osler, a few years ago at the head of the medical faculty of Johns

Hopkins University, was chosen as Regius Professor of Medicine in Oxford, it was universally recognized that he had been given the highest position in his own field in the world.

No stream rises higher than its source. No man becomes better than his ideal; no institution achieves greater success than it plans to achieve. As a religious communion we have set before us the goal of a great university in the empire of Texas. If we hope to realize that goal, it is incumbent upon us that we shall see clearly at the outset what we want to accomplish. We dare plan for nothing short of the best, for surely only the best is worthy of the serious thought of any purposeful group of people.

I wish, therefore, in the few moments at my disposal this evening, to hold up before you as the serious and definite plan for our future university what may be styled the Oxford ideal. It will necessarily require certain modification to adapt it to our own special environment, but the general outline will be as indicated. It will be discovered, we believe, that this ideal is not only the best which it is possible for us to select but that it is also the easiest to accomplish. By its plan of separate groups of colleges it becomes possible for an institution to grow by constant definite accretions, any one of which is not too large for a man of even moderate means to initiate providing he is seriously in earnest about doing it. The first college which marked the starting point of Oxford University was builded on a far smaller scale than is our own Add Ran College of Arts and Sciences to-day. From that first college as a seed grain Oxford grew and grew, adding new colleges through the centuries, until she reached the proud pre-eminence which is hers to-day. Let us now briefly apply the Oxford ideal to the T. C. U. situation as we see it at the present time. We have, as all who are present doubtless know, but one real college in our so-called university. That college is the school of arts and sciences. Our Fine Arts, Business and Bible Colleges are really only departments. What we need to do, therefore, is first of all to make these departments real colleges. To accomplish this result is not so difficult a matter as may at first sight appear. For example, to create a real Bible College—a college devoted to ministerial and co-related

training—would require no more, at least as a starting point, than the building and equipment of a suitable plant for the necessary instruction and the providing yearly of a sum sufficient to pay the salaries of four instructors. The plant, thoroughly equipped, will cost about \$30,000. The yearly endowment required to pay the professors will be approximately \$6,000, or the interest on \$100,000 of funds. Thirty thousand dollars will, therefore, permanently establish an institution of high grade devoted to the special training of ministers, Sunday School workers and missionaries and, so far as we can see, will guarantee its growing and continued usefulness throughout the ages. There ought to be some man or group of men among us who should be willing and able to put aside \$36,000 now, in order that this new college should be enabled to open its doors in September. I can conceive of no greater or more enduring monument which a man could possibly build than to have the privilege and opportunity of founding such an institution. No other investment can possibly yield such tremendous returns in terms of service both for God and for humanity. An institution founded along the lines just indicated would be able to provide thorough and high-grade training for two hundred and fifty university students every year, and would be able to offer its services to young men desiring to study for the ministry at the slight expense of simply their board and room rent for the year. Was there ever afforded an opportunity for such tremendous usefulness with the expenditure of so small a sum of money?

The Bible College ought to be the first of the group of colleges to be cared for in building up our university after the Oxford model, but there are many others, each of which should fire the ambition of some man or group of men among us. With the demand and necessity for adequate instruction in the Fine Arts, especially music, there ought to be some one who should be willing to build up a college devoted especially to this type of education. Such an institution could be founded with even less expense than the Bible College, for it would involve no extra outlay to cover the cost of free tuition. The building required for the work would be more costly, but the endowment might well, at least in the beginning, be much more meagre in order to secure satisfactory results. What an inspiration such an

institution would prove to men and women everywhere, whatever their religious conviction might be, and what a credit it would be to a great movement like ours to be able to point to such a school as a part of our contribution to the great cause of education!

There are some people to whom the practical side of life will always appeal more than the purely artistic. Such men and women may find scope for their ambitions in a college of Applied Science devoted to special instruction in such necessary subjects as agriculture, engineering, and kindred branches adequately handled by instructors of positive religious character and surrounded by a definitely Christian environment. The amount of money required to found such a college would, of course, vary with its scope, but the beginning could be made without any tremendous sacrifice on the part of many men among us. All that these men need is to catch the vision, and the rest will easily follow. There is room also in such a scheme for a great Teachers' College, a school devoted to the adequate and proper training of young men and women for the pedagogical work of our land. Next to the ministry, the calling of a teacher is perhaps the most sacred and self-sacrificing open to the young man or the young woman of the present age. A real university should have at least one college devoted primarily to the equipment of our youth for this great field of activity. Such an institution could be built up at an expense no greater, perhaps less, than that of any of the colleges so far mentioned. It would prove of tremendous and far-reaching influence throughout the length and breadth of our land. Some one should seriously consider the field open before us in the establishment of a great Teachers' College.

I need not speak at this time of other fields, for the opportunities are endless. As the years pass on, the list of colleges would grow just as it has grown at Oxford. The all-important thing is to make a beginning, to plan largely and well, and to definitely and adequately commit ourselves to the task. It is in order that this beginning may be made that these considerations are brought forward this evening. It is quite possible that the whole magnificent plan shall be realized if we seriously determine to undertake it.

All of the schools to which we have been referring, it should be noted, would be real colleges—that is to say, would be separate institutions with separate charters, separate faculties and separate control. All of them, however, would be grouped together after the Oxford model as one great institution—the real Texas Christian University.

Such is, very briefly outlined, the ideal of the first genuine university, so far as I know, ever planned by the Disciples of Christ anywhere in the world, and the first real university planned by any church in the great empire of Texas. Is it not an ambition worthy of this Convention to blaze the way for such a new step forward in the educational world? In talking with an educator of great prominence in our own state and not a member of our communion in regard to the plans outlined in this address, he remarked that this ideal, if seriously worked out, would immortalize the religious people who had the vision to grasp it. Brethren, have we not the vision. Before this Convention closes the first great university among the Disciples of Christ ought to be an assured reality. We can not afford to let such an opportunity pass from our sight. A great writer has said:

“There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Committed, all the voyage of their lives
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”

There is no more poignant reflection than the vision of the thing we might have accomplished, the leadership which might have been ours after the hour has passed for us to realize it. I verily believe that we are standing to-day in the presence of the greatest opportunity which will ever come to us as a religious people in the State of Texas. To-day it is ours to assume the leadership in the work of religious education, both among our own people at large and among all religious forces in our great commonwealth. It will not be long before the opportunity for leadership will have passed. When that hour comes, it will be possible to follow, but nevermore to lead. I much mistake the temper of the men and women with whom it has been my good fortune to work in this state if they will allow the opportunity

to pass. It is given to each of us to accomplish something in the world—to some the smaller—to others the larger things, but it is seldom given to any people to lead in a movement such as we have only faintly outlined in this brief address. What shall be our answer to the summons? Will it be the listless indifference of those who let the vision pass unaccomplished and sink back into the ranks of the ignominious and the forgotten, or will we heed the trumpet call which summons us to the glorious heritage which the King would have us claim?

“Trumpeter, sound for the splendor of God!
Sound the music whose name is law,
Whose service is perfect freedom still,
The order august that rules the stars!
Bid the anarchs of night withdraw.
Too long the destroyers have worked their will.
Sound for the last, the last of the wars!
Sound for the heights that our fathers trod,
When truth was truth and love was love,
With a hell beneath, but a heaven above.
Trumpeter, rally us, rally us,
On to the City of God.”