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ON BEING AN ALUMNUS

Our college life, as we live it every day, in classrooms, lectures and laboratories, seldom reveals the long history and slowly evolved academic traditions upon which the things we learn and do are based. Yet at certain times during the college year we become especially conscious of an impressive and dignified background for the procedures of college and university life. The very terms in ordinary use, faculty, curriculum, baccalaureate, alumnus, bachelor, master of arts and doctor of philosophy, imply a progressive development that extends over not hundreds, but thousands, of years. Through those first little colleges on our own Atlantic seaboard we can trace these expressions, and the things they stand for, to mediaeval Oxford and Cambridge, to the great university in Paris where Abelard held forth, and thence to those far earlier porticos where Socrates taught Plato. Here with us today is an incarnation, a reinterpretation, of something that is very old.

As never before, however, that classical tradition is becoming only a cloak, an outward covering, whose folds, set by long convention, serve only to conceal an educational body that is alive with a new vitality -- charged with new knowledge and a new idealism. The studies and experience of today are in many ways essentially different from what was once accepted as a proper college training. When our grandfathers -- even our fathers -- went to college they could speak in rather definite terms of the education they sought. They knew what it was. The early graduates of
this college, and their contemporaries in many a middle-
western and eastern institution, were able to assume that
what they learned gave them at least an effective glimpse
of the whole existing world of learning and scholarship. A
few short generations, however, have worked a marvelous and
a significant metamorphosis. The old certainties and simpli-
cities have been lost. We are breaking away, rapidly and
inevitably, from precedents which were laying their weight
upon youth even before the time of Christ. No one can better
recognize the sweep, the complexity and, perhaps, the
possibilities, of education as it is interpreted in twentieth
century terms, than college graduates,—those who have been
in intimate touch with the puzzling problems and new
inspirations implied in the wider range of the present day?

There are some conceptions, which are emerging in this
period of change and new educational ideas which perhaps merit
on this occasion a heightened emphasis and an especial inter-
pretation.

Among all the developments which have influenced our
modern American college, there are two which may be taken to
have particular importance today. The first is the rapid
advance of scientific discovery during the last seventy-five
years, which has revolutionized our attitude toward education
and life. For this recent flowering of scientific studies,
the investigations of a thousand years were only a prepara-
tion. Not only do we recognize new and thrilling facts
everywhere about us, but we have come to see something that
once was only dimly discerned — that science is a unity,
and that advances in all its branches depend more and more
upon achievements and discoveries in other fields or learning.

This expansion of scientific knowledge has brought with it an enormous increase, not only in the basic matter of education, the subjects taught, but it has also made inevitable new facilities for properly setting forth this knowledge—libraries, laboratories, and classrooms. Moreover, those who seek to take advantage of the opportunities thus offered have been constantly multiplying in numbers. To put it briefly, not only has the enrollment in our colleges and universities increased ten-fold, but the number of teachers, the amount of space and the equipment at the disposal of each of these students, likewise have all been mounting at a ratio almost as impressive.

Thus about us today rises an intellectual urge which has called into existence an educational structure as unique in many respects as is the skyscraper in American architecture. We have only to view our colleges and universities in historical perspective to realize that in making higher education possible for all who desire it, and are properly equipped, we are creating something entirely new in the history of civilization. Democracy in education is today so thoroughly accepted in America that it is difficult to realize how unusual it is. In most European countries the college and university is essentially aristocratic,—it has always been for the select few. In an earlier era the same was true in America. But the multiplication of educational facilities to the place where even those with slender financial resources are not debarred from their privileges has given America a larger proportion of college trained men and women than any other civilization the world has produced.

This growth has been made possible in great part
through the operation of the second of the two factors mentioned. This element has little or no precedent in the history of higher education -- though it is an element redolent of American idealism and genius for organization -- the alumni. Without question the extraordinary developments in higher education America has witnessed in the last fifty years would never have come without the active and interested support of college graduates. They have given, and they are giving every year, not only millions, but tens of millions, toward the support of their colleges and universities. The total gifts for higher education from all sources in 1928 amounted to $114,000,000, according to the report of the U. S. Commissioner of education, and of this impressive total it may safely be assumed that at least one-half came directly from alumni benefactions. But not money alone; time and thought, in increasing measure, have been devoted by alumni to their institutions everywhere, so that the actual contributions which can be traced to the college graduates of America, impressive as they are, are far from representing the full weight of their effort.

Thus the college-bred men and women of America have risen to what might have been a crisis in education. They have given what was necessary or have seen that others have given it, and, as far as can be seen, this support on their part will continue. There is hardly an institution in this country that cannot list its needs in millions, and, such is the spirit of America, these dreams of the present will become the realities of tomorrow.

With this background of material service on the part
of our college graduates in mind, it seems fitting to discuss for a short time their relationship to this ever rising surge of educational advance. Let us lay aside all thought of whatever other obligations the college man or woman may desire to assume and consider in a different way how they may be of service to the college, and how the college can be of service to them, through a continuation into graduate years of the intellectual inspirations and ideals of undergraduate life. Recognizing that the alumni are serving their colleges and universities in many ways; does any reciprocal obligation rest upon our colleges and universities to serve the alumni, and, if such an obligation exists, by what means shall it be fulfilled?

It is an old commencement platitude that today the college graduate stands at one of life's milestones. In this beautifully simple view life is arranged into two periods, - the years of learning, of preparation, on the one hand, and a career with its opportunities and obligations to put the things learned into practice, on the other. It is all very nice and tidy as thus set forth, even though commencement, seen in these terms as the end of education, becomes in reality something of an academic paradox.

In the past this conception has had many supporters. Psychologists formerly assumed, - at least they took it for granted, - that youth, the age of high school and college, is the only period for learning and acquiring the habit of study. William James in his "Psychology" said: "It is well for the world that in most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster and will never soften again." This
view was carried even further by others, who followed, apparently, an assumption that, through some alchemy in our physical and mental processes, these earlier years were immutably set apart for the acquirement of knowledge. Yet those of us who happen to be a little older have been discovering, in everything we have been doing since we left college, that education is really a continuing process. Possibly this realization has been mostly subconscious; we seldom stopped to consider what, and how, we were learning. Nevertheless we have come to understand, often through some flash of introspection, that in reality we have acquired far more knowledge since we left college than we did as undergraduates.

It is doubtless a reflection of this gradually acquired conviction that has led to a second familiar graduation truism, that life in itself is an education, and that a college career is only a preparation, an introduction. For the most part, true as it is, this statement has been regarded as only an attractive generalization, a thought which called for no further examination, or any consideration as to what it might really imply. In fact, it has been almost inevitable that its acceptance should be superficial, since our whole educational practice has been developed upon the old theory that commencement means the end.

Some leaders in the academic world, however, have been sufficiently progressive to recognize that there exists definite possibilities for a broader intellectual fellowship between college and graduate, a new tie which can give a clearer and more effective interpretation to this ideal
of a life-time educational progress.

As a result of extensive studies, Professor E. L. Thorndike of Columbia University recently demonstrated, in cold inescapable scientific terms, that there is small basis for the old conception that a peculiar aptitude for learning things exists during the late teens and early twenties. He has studied intensively the learning capacity of all ages, and all sorts and conditions of men and women. He took children; he took college men and women; and he took uneducated adult groups from prisons. He tried teaching them Esperanto; he tried teaching them to do things with the left hand; he tested their capacity for speed in adding columns of figures. The result of these studies was a demonstration, in terms of calculations and graphs, that what we may call the educational curve does rise very rapidly up to the age of twenty. Then it flattens out, and for twenty years or more there is little variation. Later comes a gradual lowering of the capacity to learn in proportion to age, balanced, however, by a greater ability to select and correlate facts -- judgment.

The net result seems to be that Professor Thorndike has proved pretty conclusively that the man or woman of forty-five or fifty is just as open to the acquirement of new ideas and new aptitudes as the youth of college age. One observer, in discussing extension students, remarked that "Their ability increases consistently with age. The topmost student, so far as sheer intellectuality is concerned, is forty-nine years old. The range in ability is practically identical up to thirty-eight or thirty-nine. From there on
there is a marked upward trend in ability until approximately fifty years of age.

Especially striking in this connection is a record made by Dr. Folwell, former President of the University of Minnesota, who at the age of ninety-one years committed to memory in less than one-half hour the Lord's Prayer in the Swedish language. In doing this he was totally unaware of any unusual accomplishment. Truly there seems no limit to the age when one can learn.

Thus, while it must be recognized that our whole educational system is still operating largely upon the old conception of a sharp dividing line between education and life, we have ample justification for a new and broader view, an interpretation that makes graduation merely one incident in the sum total of personal development. But that old idea nevertheless has become so deeply embedded in our thinking, so ingrained in our academic customs, that the immediate opportunities and inspiration for a rich and fruitful intellectual life on the part of the college graduate are not as ready to hand, or as obvious, as we might wish. Now, with this new background, both college and college graduate can begin to see education in terms of a long haul. A new spirit of co-operation on both sides is indicated, as well as an acknowledgement that certain mutual obligations exist. Many educators, in fact, are recognizing that our institutions of higher learning have a stake in the intellectual development of their graduates which heretofore has scarcely been thought of. After all, the final demonstration of the effectiveness of Lawrence College, lies in the impact
upon society through the lives and accomplishments of its former students, those who today are its alumni. It may be, as some have suggested of late, that the actual content of a college curriculum—the irregular verbs, the historical facts, the scientific formulae, does not long remain. But four years of study have fashioned a way of thinking, and a technique for the approach to broader problems. These are the fundamentals of education. They are, or should be, the real things which the college graduate can carry into his or her future life. It is precisely in these fundamentals too, that the college may well be of continuing service. So, whether or not we are ready to accept the challenge, as college graduates we cannot escape an obligation to use what we have learned. What we do and what we accomplish in the years subsequent to graduation will be taken as reflections of the teachings of Alma Mater. That, I take it, is one of the first things it means to be an alumnus.

Many university teachers, however, are still inclined to insist that their responsibility ceases with graduation—that if the individual graduate has not learned how to steer his educational course, to select the books he shall read, the preoccupations he shall emphasize in his future development, the college can do little more for him; his case, for them, is hopeless. This view implies a limited horizon, although it must be conceded it reflects an attitude which can be maintained with some justification. It represents a feeling on the part of some teachers that, with the demands made upon their time and energy through daily contacts with the college student in this era of broadening curricula and
constantly augmenting numbers, there is little time left for any experimenting with alumni.

Others see this problem differently. They acknowledge that in a developing educational relationship there is a vital element which may play its part in a future expansion of our whole college and university system. At a meeting held nearly two years ago at Vassar College, which was attended by six alumni executive officers and an equal number of college presidents representing some of our leading institutions, there was unanimous acknowledgment that a definite responsibility lies with our colleges and universities to provide opportunities for continuing education and intellectual stimulation after graduation. True, it was suggested that if our system of education were really effective there would be no need for such a measure. It was generally agreed, however, that as things are, it is incumbent upon our colleges at least to make an effort to build up and maintain an intellectual fellowship with their former students. Even though it may be regarded only as a "salvage operation", in the words of President Neilson of Smith College, such an effort on the part of the college is worthwhile, if only to make sure that its investment is not lost "for lack of a proper follow-up."

There are other implications in this relationship. The peculiarly American recognition of a financial obligation on the part of the alumnus toward his Alma Mater has already been suggested. It is significant that, from the first, this idea has been developed through the initiative of the college graduates themselves. Also, they have felt the need,
as well as the desirability, of continuing the relationships formed during undergraduate years, and, through organization, have set about in a characteristically practical American fashion to keep their college associations as far as it is possible, in some measure a factor in their lives.

The result has been an impressive development in the organization of alumni interest, which has been growing at an ever-accelerating pace, particularly since 1900. Scarcely a college or university today is without an association or council of alumni, and some type of alumni executive to act as an interpreter or liaison officer between the institution and the alumni. The activities of such an officer may vary. The emphasis in one place may be upon the continuation of the class spirit of college days, while elsewhere it may be upon the groups of alumni in different localities who gather once in so often to sing the old songs, cheer the football team, and listen occasionally to a message from some representative of the college. These are all desirable and legitimate aspects of alumni life, particularly, if, as in so many instances, the result is a periodical message from the institution to the alumni in the form of a weekly, monthly or quarterly publication. What many alumni fail to realize is, that, in aligning themselves with their official alumni organization, they are performing a first and very important service to the institution. For the graduate it is the initial step toward the establishment of a mutual understanding, without which no co-operative relationship is possible between the college and those who were once students within its walls.
It is unfortunate, however, that, aside from the alumni organization, the avenues for the expression of this interest, up to recent years at least, have been rather limited. The responsibility for this limitation, it seems to me, has rested upon our colleges and universities themselves. They have not recognized, as they might, the rich intellectual possibilities and the vital interests which lie dormant in any group of alumni. They have been content to let the alumni work out their own educational salvation, and often echo the criticisms we sometimes hear of the college graduates. One writer, a former college teacher, has gone so far as to dub the alumni "pestiferous", utterly ignoring the logical inference that if the product of higher education is pestiferous, why go on with the education?

This attitude of easy criticism is reflected in the story of two college presidents who exchanged confidences as to their ideal institution. One said that he would like to be the head of an orphan asylum where there would be no anxious parents, while the other remarked that his preference was for a state's prison, where there would be no alumni to come back and bother him.

Here we have the reflection of a thoughtless and undiscriminating popular idea that in some way the alumni are a harmful and disturbing influence. Such a view is, of course, a caricature, but it helps to explain why our alumni relations today are in many ways poor relations. It has been assumed, because college graduates obviously
are interested in such things as buildings, endowments, and athletic victories, that, despite their active impulse toward organization, the underlying educational values do not appeal to them and that trouble results when they do try to share in these aspects of college life.

Yet wherever the opportunity has been afforded for serious co-operation on the part of the alumni in the fundamental aims and problems of their institutions, the results have been more often than otherwise stimulating, both to the institution and to the alumni. Participation of this character, however, has been limited, in the past, by the fact that, ordinarily, the only messages which have come consistently from our colleges to their former students have been Macedonian calls for help, financial help particularly, or athletic propaganda and explanations as to why a football championship was not forthcoming.

Moreover, it must be recognized that if this support, which all normal alumni are ready to give, is to take practical and at the same time educationally effective forms in harmony with the best interests of the institution, a duty rests upon college graduates to "keep their pictures of the institution up to date." Most college graduates treasure memories of the campus they knew and, unconsciously perhaps, resent the changes which progress brings. Therefore, to be a good alumnus, implies an active effort not only to understand and share in the affairs of the college, but also to keep sails set for the breezes that are blowing from the campus. The agencies set up to keep the alumni in touch with the ideals and progress of the institution should be welcomed, as part of an obligation, by every interested college man and woman.
But important as such an active and constructive alumni relationships may be, both for the institution and for the graduate, we are beginning to see that such efforts as have been made in the past toward alumni organization, and alumni co-operation in academic affairs, do not by any means outline in its fullest sweep the sky-line which bounds the college world. If education is to be conceived in terms of our whole existence, rather than for a particular and sharply defined period, what precisely does that conception mean to the individual alumnus?

A few years ago a movement started in Europe that has already gained an international impetus—adult education. Across the Atlantic it was largely defined in terms of opportunity for the under-privileged educationally, and thus it came to have special significance for those who have lacked the opportunities we have had. In Europe, too, it has meant release, an enhancement of life's values for those who, in a rigidly stratified society, can never hope, ordinarily, to be anything more than they are. There the coal miner's son will have pitifully few opportunities to become anything else than a coal miner; the son of the craftsman will follow his father's trade. In reading and study, not as part of their daily vocation, but for cultural satisfactions, many a European worker finds something to brighten and enlarge a drab daily routine.

But when the idea crossed the Atlantic it received new interpretations. For years we have been accustomed to certain types of intellectual relaxation. The old New England town meeting, the lyceum movement of the "thirties", 
the Chautauquas, the women's clubs and the workers education movement, have all been parts of a scarcely recognized program in adult education. In America too, the workman can become the boss, a phenomenon so often exemplified that we almost expect it as the usual thing. One of the principal aspects of adult education in America, therefore, has become opportunity,—the chance for the mature man to improve his station in life by vocational study in his own field or profession, or by cultural studies to fit himself for a wider social sphere.

With this interpretation, too, comes another new element which is bound to have its effect in increasing measure,—the problem of leisure. America has so developed its own industrial system in these later years, that the workman now has far more time on his hands than his father had. Already we hear of the six-hour day and the five-day week. And if we are thus limiting our working hours, we are enlarging the limits of space with the automobile and airplane. Increasingly the workman, and the executive as well will have more time to play, to travel and, it is to be hoped, to acquire knowledge -- to study. Surrounded by labor-saving devices and in a world where the old long routine is a thing of the past, this increasing spare time threatens us with novel problems. In adult education we have really one practical solution, as a movement which will give solidity to the desire to study and to learn on the part of many men and women of mature years, so often a hopeless yearning through lack of opportunity or encouragement. Now, it appears we
have not only the means at hand, but also some of us at least are beginning to have the time for personal adventures in intellectual avocations.

The part our colleges and universities are going to play in utilizing this social force, I am frank to say, is not yet entirely clear, though many institutions are beginning to recognize the portents, and are seeking to make their resources available to any alumni who come to them asking what they can offer. Is it not possible that in the future it is going to mean more to be an alumnus, and in a new way, than it has in the past? No longer, it is true, can we recapture the almost unique distinction it once was to be a college graduate, in those old days when in any community there were only two or three who had a college background,—the preacher, the teacher and perhaps the village doctor——the lawyer's education had been completed in the squire's office. Those days, and that apartness for the college bred, are over now; but the possibility of a well rounded intellectual life, growing and expanding through new contacts with the world of thought, where ultimate truth and high ideals are the only legal tender, must certainly give more lasting values to the graduate of the future, as well as a new richness to the life of the college.

If those who are in intimate association with Lawrence College thus acquire a vision of some of the possibilities for an ever-strengthening intellectual friendship, the question arises inevitably: What specific measures can be set up to make this ideal a reality? By
way of answer to this very natural request, a few efforts
may be mentioned which are already under way here and in
colleges and universities where those who formulate educa-
tional policies are thinking in terms of the product as
well as the methods of production.

The first and most obvious measure, possibly, is a
mutual effort on the part of the graduates and their old
friends of the faculty, to build up avenues for future
fellowship. Undergraduate life and thought is largely molded
by opportunities of meeting and hearing thinkers and leaders
in different fields. Why is it not possible for that relation-
ship to continue, not perhaps in the same immediate and
intimate form, but at least as an occasional refreshing and stimul-
ating draught from the ever-flowing spring on the old campus?
Visits to old haunts once in a while, occasional letters, and
talks to alumni groups on the part of former teachers, can
easily be made to carry a stimulus and inspiration that an
alumnus cannot afford to miss. Moreover experience has
shown that such contacts, also have their own inspiration for
the representatives of the college who thus meet at least
occasionally with their former students.

The rather remarkable success which attended the Alumni
College at Lafayette College last June will emphasize
this point. This program was frankly an experiment in
alumni education, lasting over five days immediately
following commencement. Ten members of the Faculty each
gave five lectures over the period to a total of sixty-
five graduates who returned for the week. They were of all ages and stations in life — a typical cross section of any alumni body. Not only were these alumni students interested, they were enthusiastic, so much so that they almost overcame their teachers when they applauded at the end of their class. This program is being repeated again this year, with a series of lectures by Dr. Robert A. Millikan as the feature of the week. Similar efforts are under way at a number of institutions, notably Columbia, Beloit, Iowa State and Michigan. If these tentative efforts prove that the educational idea is sound, we may expect to see similar alumni institutes inaugurated in many other colleges and universities within a very short period. It may even be that they will become a regular part of our annual academic program, just as the summer schools and extension programs have developed from experimental beginnings.

We are often faced, too, with the problem of how we can make our reading of real profit. Reading may be desultory, to a certain extent it almost always is, but also it may be easily turned toward particular fields with really extraordinary profit and satisfaction, once the habit is created. Lawrence College has inaugurated one of the most interesting experiments in this field undertaken anywhere, and President Wriston's constructive program deserves the fullest co-operation of the alumni of Lawrence College. There are a number of other institutions also inaugurating tentative efforts in this matter of guidance in reading, with a clear demonstration that
many welcome this help. The world is full of reading suggestions these days, but no one can speak to the graduates with the same inspiration and authority as a former instructor with whose ideas and teachings they have become familiar.

Many alumni, too, can find time, even in that first busy period of adjustment to life and the world of affairs to participate in study and discussion groups, if only the impetus and inspiration for their organization exists. Moreover, if once the need is recognized and a willingness to make the preliminary effort demonstrated, the numbers of those who are ready for some effort in this field will prove surprising. And here again, the college can be of the greatest encouragement and assistance.

Most fruitful of all in its relationship to the real satisfactions of life are the possibilities which dwell in a well established hobby. The significance of an avocation, as a release from the pressure of ordinary business and professional life is only beginning to be understood. As an inspiration and a source of pleasure it can carry one into fields where otherwise it would never have occurred to him to wander.

President Eliot of Harvard once said that an education consisted of knowing something about many things and some one thing well. That, perhaps, is the best type of personal development to be hoped for under modern conditions. Not only does it apply to the college course of today, but it has special significance for the occupations and interests of off-hours.
We in America seem to be torn by two diametrically opposed psychological forces. There is an urge toward conformity, in dress, in mental habits and in business practices. The general adoption into our vocabulary of Sinclair Lewis' designation "Babbitt" is significant of this aspect of our contemporary life. Examples of the herd instinct are always obvious, although the fact cannot be overlooked that this very spirit of conformity and of wholesale acceptance of larger opportunities in education and in life, has made possible, in many of its features, the remarkable material advance this country has witnessed in recent years.

But, even so, it is fortunate that there is another urge within each one of us, which demands a more intimate and a more personal expression of the fundamental self. Without the outstanding individualities which have arisen because of this impulse, life would be indeed a dreary level of mediocrity. That spark of personal thinking and initiative must be cherished and its expression fostered. Toward the setting up of a leadership which thinks and acts according to its own inner light, nothing will work more effectively than some interest, some attitude toward life which is truly one's own. It will give the individual not only a new insight into his own work, but also it will provide for him that deep and ultimate satisfaction which comes from going a little further than his fellows in some subject; of being an authority, even in a small way, in some field.

I can hear already what many business and professional men are apt to insist upon, that most busy men and
women have no time for such a dispersion of energies. I say, one cannot afford not to have some occupation that will carry him out of a routine. What it shall be does not, perhaps, matter so much as that it is an avocation, personal and mentally liberating, which, in addition to the normal hold upon the social organism one's business or profession gives, will provide another point of contact, serving to make the college graduate doubly efficient, as a citizen and as an educated man or woman.

No avenue of contact between college and life, in fact, has more possibilities of stimulus and inspiration than the road that lies in precisely this direction, our hobbies,—the occupations of our spare hours. Consider the things with which our friends and acquaintances busy themselves, when they are not earning their living. In how many cases the facilities of the college might be called upon to give their measure of information and encouragement. There may not be a course on raising thoroughbred cattle, or pedigreed dogs, but many byways in biology and genetics will be of help. The book collector will acquire an historical point of view. Leaders in boys and girls groups will find sociology of value. The specialist in local landmarks and traditions will find plenty of encouragement from his former teachers in history. In truth, the possibilities are infinite for an ever developing intellectual comradeship, providing that a hobby is regarded as something useful and constructive, something to be proud of, a vital element in one's inner life, rather than a useless, even though
fascinating, waste of time.

Hobbies, too, contrary to a current impression, are easy to acquire. The possibility lies within all of us. Who is not conscious of some special interest that he would like some time to follow up? The first step, the orientation, may be uncertain and difficult, but once a start is made and one is committed, the rest follows easily and naturally, resulting eventually in a satisfaction of a type that nothing but an amateur status in some specialized field affords. A tailor I once knew, was called to discuss fungi before a college audience because he knew more about some aspects of the subject than anyone else; later the same man became one of the best known authorities in the country on the raising of iris, with his garden a riot of beauty every spring. Such an example offers something for those with a college background to think upon.

Let me suggest, in conclusion, one more aspect of this whole conception of "education for the educated." That is, the fundamental importance of such a program in this era of rapid change, not for alumni alone, but for the institution as well. Keen observers of late have noticed that the college student of today is viewing his undergraduate life in a somewhat different perspective from that of his fathers. The urges and loyalties which once were all-important, are today appealing with a lessening authority. We have witnessed in recent years what
amounts to a popular over-emphasis on the "container" rather than the "thing contained"; the sound body rather than the sound mind. College athletics are important; they always will be. They form one of the most natural and direct of spans between youth and maturity. But if some analysts of the times are correct, we are witnessing a distinct swing back to an interest in fundamentals and a perceptible improvement in scholarship. The student of today is more alert. He is less inclined, observers agree, to take statements at face value. He is impatient with dogmatism. He is more inclined to examine whatever premises are set up and then judge for himself.

Here we have a basis for an entirely new alumni point of view, and the college educators, with their more mature perspective, see in this an attitude that eventually will color our whole system of alumni relations. President Alderman of the University of Virginia has put into definite form a thought that has occurred to many, that the college or university of twenty-five years from now may be as different, in educational aims and methods, from those accepted today, as we today have advanced beyond the educational institutions of fifty years ago. A prominent college executive was recently called into consultation on the plans for the future growth of a large southern university. After looking them over he remarked "I don't see any place for airplanes, you can't plan twenty-five years ahead without taking such things as that into consideration. In fact, a place
for airplanes may be more important than dormitories."

If new relationships, such as that implies are impending
in the physical equipment of our colleges and universities,
may we not expect equally startling changes and re-align-
ments in our educational resources?

That these are coming is at least suggested by the
intensive study on the part of faculties and governing
boards, of curricula, of the content of courses and of
college organization. In all this new and inspiring
educational growth and readjustment, the alumni may well
have their part, if they can rise to their responsibilities.
As never before, we in America are coming to incorporate
our college graduates into the academic family. The college
of university no longer is composed solely of the students
and the faculty. We now have a third estate -- the
alumni, and the responsibility of their new position
rests upon them with an increasing weight.

I have sought to suggest the significance of the
college career, viewed in its proper perspective as a
life-long adventure. You are faced today with this
question: Are the stimulus and zest your college years
have provided to continue, or are they to be overlooked
and, perhaps, forgotten in the pressure and tension of
the life before you? If you see the future as I see it,
you will recognize an opportunity, unequalled even in this
changing and exciting educational world, not only to
leave a mark in the future growth and expansion of
Lawrence College, but
to make certain in your own career those more personal and ultimate satisfactions which come from thinking as well as doing. It rests with you whether, in its closing years, the flavor of life shall pass, or whether with Ben Ezra you can always look forward, sustained by the conviction that "the best is yet to be."

"Youth shows but half; trust God; see all nor be afraid!"