

III

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY

THAT we have been making large plans is already a commonplace of our thinking and talking. In the proposed solutions of some of the problems confronting them the trustees have been moved by several considerations, which may appropriately be recapitulated at this time. In the first place, the financial resources of the institution, however handsome, are limited; for this reason it was determined to build and maintain the Institute out of the income, keeping the principal of all funds intact. In the second place, the new institution is located in a new and rapidly developing country. In the third place, the very problems pressing for resolution in the development of the environment seemed to call for a school of science, pure and applied, of the highest grade, looking, in its educational programme, quite as much to investigation as to instruction.

Accordingly, and in the spirit of the Founder's dedication of the Institute, it was proposed that the new institution should enter upon a university programme, beginning at the science end. As regards the letters end of the threefold dedication, it was proposed to characterize the institution as one both of liberal and of technical learning, and to realize the larger characterization as rapidly as circumstances might permit. With respect to the art end, it was proposed to take architecture seriously in the preparation of all of its plans, and to see to it that the physical setting of the Institute be one of great beauty as well as of more immediate utility. This in a nutshell is the programme on which we have thought with great deliberation and wrought with even greater care. Its chronology to date consists of one year of

preparatory study from England to Japan, one year in the making of preliminary plans, and two years in work of actual construction and organization.

The new institution thus aspires to university standing of the highest grade, and would achieve its earliest claims to this distinction in those regions of inquiry and investigation where the methods of modern science are more directly applicable. For the present it is proposed to assign no upper limit to its educational endeavor, and to place the lower limit no lower than the standard entrance requirements of the more conservative universities of the country. Moreover, all courses of instruction and investigation, graduate and undergraduate, will be open both to young men and to young women, and for the present, without tuition and without fees. These courses will be offered by a staff, initially organized for university and college work, ultimately to consist of three grand divisions, science, humanity, technology, each of which will break up into as many or more separate faculties. For these faculties the best available instructors and investigators are being sought wherever they may be found, in the hope of assembling a group of unusually able scientists and scholars through whose productive work the Institute should speedily take a place of considerable importance among established institutions. Friends of education in America would insist that the term "Institute" is too narrow in its connotation, friends of science in Europe would contend that it is too broad. However, in its dedication to the advancement of letters, science, and art, the educational programme of liberal and technical learning now being developed may justify the designation "Institute" as representing the functions of a teaching university of learning, and, at least in some of its departments, those of the more recent research institutions founded in this country and abroad.

The planning of universities is no new problem. The list of modern solutions under state initiative is a long one from the national universities of Japan at Tokyo and Kyoto down to the reconstruction of the University of Paris and the revival of the French provincial universities; the reorganization of the University of London and the founding of the newer English municipal universities at Durham, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, and Bristol; the newest members of the German system in the universities of Frankfort, Dresden, and Hamburg; and the conspicuous development of state institutions in our own country—to name but a few, in the new California under Wheeler, the new Illinois under Draper and James, the new Texas under Houston and Mezes, the new Virginia under Alderman, and the new Wisconsin under Van Hise. And at this very moment there are building two new universities in Hungary, three in Canada, and two in Japan, while plans are being formulated for new institutions in China, Australia, and South Africa. Within the memory of all of us there have arisen on the benefactions of American philanthropists the Johns Hopkins University under Gilman and Remsen, Cornell University under White and Adams and Schurman, the University of Chicago under Harper and Judson, Leland Stanford under Jordan, and Clark under Hall; while the same period of university building has witnessed equally striking evolutions in the older American private foundations, notably the new Harvard under Eliot and Lowell, the new Yale under Porter and Dwight and Hadley, the new Princeton under McCosh and Patton and Wilson and Hibben, the new Columbia under Low and Butler, and the new Pennsylvania under Harrison and Smith.

It has been remarked that an inventory of present-day universities would reveal thirteenth-century universities, fif-

328 Rice before the War—and after

teenth-century universities, nineteenth-century universities, and twentieth-century universities in formidable array and considerable confusion. There are universities that swear by Plato, others by Euclid, and others by Adam Smith. Some uphold the Thirty-nine Articles, while others worship radium and helium. From glorified engineering shops to scholastic sanctuaries, they offer the widest possible choice of type.

Nevertheless, there has been evolving a composite conception of the university in some such characterization of its functions as follows:

First, from the persistent past, in which there are no dead, to embody within its walls the learning of the world in living exponents of scholarship, who shall maintain, in letters, science, and art, standards of truth and beauty, and canons of criticism and taste.

Second, for the living present and its persistence in the future, to enlarge the boundaries of human learning and to give powerful aid to the advancement of knowledge, as such, by developing creative capacity in those disciplines through which men seek for truth and strive after beauty.

Third, on call of State or Church or University, to convey to its community and commonwealth, in popular quite as much as in permanent form, the products of its own and other men's thinking on current problems of science and society, of government and public order, of knowledge and conduct.

Fourth, in support of all institutes of civilization and all instruments of progress, to contribute to the welfare of humankind in freedom, prosperity, and health, by sending forth constant streams of liberally educated men and women to be leaders of public opinion in the service of the people, constant streams of technically trained practitioners for all

the brain-working professions of our time, not alone law, medicine, and theology, but also every department of service and learning, from engineering, architecture, commerce, and agriculture, to teaching, banking, journalism, and public administration.

As thus conceived, the university is a great storehouse of learning, a great bureau of standards, a great workshop of knowledge, a great laboratory for the training of men of thought and men of action. Under this conception of its functions the university has to do with the preservation of knowledge, with the discovery and distribution of knowledge, with the applications of knowledge, and with the making of knowledge-makers. Singling out one line of its activities, the business of a university is to teach science, to create science, to apply science, to make scientists. To be even more specific, its objects in the department of chemistry are to teach chemistry, to create chemistry, to apply chemistry in all the arts of industry and commerce, and to make more creative chemists. This conception of the manifold function of a university in scholarship, in science, in social service, and in civilization corresponds point by point to the fourfold function of the career of a scholar or scientist: in scholarship, a conservator of knowledge; in science, a creator of knowledge; in citizenship, a contributor to public opinion; in service, a controller of the destiny of the cherished institutions of civilization.

However, even to those who recognize in patriotism, education, and religion supreme enterprises of the human spirit, education itself is proverbially a dull subject whose technical details are sometimes dry as dust. For instance, I am by no means convinced that a discussion of the metaphysics of the optative mood in Greek would be especially edifying on this occasion. Then, too, mathematical studies are poems of a

variety better appreciated when read in private than when declaimed in public. Nor are you likely moved at this time by any overpowering desire for relief from the perplexity of that dear old lady who said she could readily make out how astronomers determined the distances and dimensions, masses and motions, constitution and careers of the heavenly bodies, but for the life of her she never could understand how they found out their beautiful names.

But studies and standards, students and staff are elements of a university programme quite as important as are a machine-shop, a file of journals, a lively imagination, and a printing-press, its other constituent parts. If a university should take all knowledge for its province, it becomes necessary to undertake a classification of knowledge, a problem never yet done with satisfaction to any one except perhaps the last man attempting it. Nor is the problem rendered inordinately simple when restricted to a programme in science, for, to say nothing of more recent modifications upheaving in character, the scientific thought of the nineteenth century has been made by Dr. J. Theodore Merz to align itself in a stately march of no fewer than ten views of nature: the astronomical, the atomic, the kinetic, the physical, the morphological, the genetic, the vitalistic, the psychophysical, the statistical, and the mathematical views.

Yet all would agree, I think, that in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology we have a logical series carefully coördinated in subject-matter and sequence, furnishing the theoretic foundations for the applied sciences of engineering, economics, eugenics, and education. Furthermore, there would also be agreement in the opinion that this coördinated series should be flanked both right and left by history and its interpretation, as a great laboratory in which to test all plans for political or social reform; by philosophy,

as a clearing-house for all theories and methods of knowledge; by letters, as the record in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" of all human striving after sweetness and light; and by art, the creative imagination's flowering product in the ennobling and enriching of the content of life. Our studies are thus to be centered in the fundamental branches of pure science with a view to solutions of problems of applied science in engineering, whose chief business is the development of the material resources of the world; in economics, whose cardinal problem is that of the distribution of the wealth thus produced; in eugenics as the newest of the sciences, but really in idea no younger than Plato, which by taking thought would add cubits to the stature of the race; and finally in the latest of the experimental sciences, namely, education itself, in whose philosophical, psychological, and physiological foundations are now being sought the surest means of training the intellects and stimulating the imaginations of men.