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## OTTAWA'S OPPORTUNITY.

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342

discussing a business, one estimates opportunity in terms of growth and expansion; in estimating the opportunity of a school, however, the standard weight and measure must be not growth and expansion, but service. The goal of a business is productiveness in terms of dollars; the goal of an institution of learning is service to mankind. No school is worthy of the name, which holds before itself any goal other than this. For that reason we shall ignore in this paper the business side of the school, the side that deals with its material growth merely, and shall discuss only the internal and vital phase of the problem of opportunity.

"Has Ottawa University a special opportunity before itself at the present?" The question is a fair one, and worthy of careful consideration. If we consider the problem from the point of view of service, another question immediately suggests itself. "What is the special line of service expected of the University?" To state this clearly may be of profit to us, inasmuch as not infrequently in the rush and pressure of the days' demands, we are led to forget the major issue for which we are striving.

The first type of service which the university was planned to perform, consists in the inspiration of men and women to larger and nobler lives. No matter how the school may grow and flourish externally, if it forgets this element of its purpose, it has signally failed to perform its function. To touch the life of young men and women with the quickening fire of truth, to inspire their souls with noble ambition and splendid impulse, to arouse to being and conscious

action the dormant powers of a sleeping soul, that constitutes the first mission of the school, and is one of its reasons for being. For Ottawa University this is the first and foremost line of opportunity. There is no higher work than this, to interpret into the growing life the human ideal of the Christ, and to speed the day when young men and women in the common walks of life, in business and profession, shall be living the teachings of the Master.

In the second place, Ottawa University is a denominational school, founded and supported by the Baptists of the state of Kansas. We are glad to welcome to our hospitality all young men and women, who desire the life-giving touch of our high work, and no restriction or pressure is brought to bear on any because of creed or denomination. But, Ottawa University is the official school of the Baptists, and as such ought to be, and may be the moulding and inspiring force in the life of its constituent body. Here lies a splendid and noble avenue of activity: to mould the thought and prayer of 45,000 eager, earnest men and women, to breathe its ideals and inspiration into the innermost heart of one of the mightiest bodies in this state, to stand as the fountain-head of service, to touch with healing hand, to teach and preach, and lead until step by step its mission here too shall have been fulfilled, and, thanks to its influence and power, the will of God shall be done on earth. That denominational school which forgets this phase of its mission is untrue to its trust, and has denied its origin and parentage. It is the business—nay rather, it is the splendid opportunity of Ottawa University to touch and quicken a great denomination to a larger, and broader, and nobler service.

In the third place, it must not be forgotten, that every great school is an engine of mighty power for civic integrity and progress in the community and state that has given it harbor. Education is not a panacea for moral disease, nor for selfishness and greed, but it is a preventative and deterrent from crime and error. It is a notable fact that in the small villages and towns of our country the leaders in social, political and moral affairs are the men who have touched somewhere the smaller denominational colleges of the land. There is a silent something that permeates the common life of these schools, which sooner or later asserts itself in the later life of the student, and makes him, wherever he goes, a harbinger of a better state of things in public morals. The denominational schools of the land are moulding our public policies, our public conscience, and our public thought. Ottawa University has played its part in this great work. Silently and irresistibly, sometimes in high places and sometimes in the common walks of life her sons and daughters are moulding the destinies of the state of Kansas, and we may well look with interest



and care at this phase of her opportunities. For a school which does not sooner or later touch the common people, and elevate the tone and quality and content of the common life of the community at large, is an abnormality, and an economic error which is sure to perish of its own weight.

This then is the triple service which Ottawa University is called to perform. Can it now be fairly said that the present offers a special opportunity for the performance of this work? Again a number of factors must be briefly passed in view before an answer to the question can be definitely framed. In the first place every change, be it externally good or bad is an hour of special opportunity, for every change offers new and untried combinations of forces and possibilities which may lead ultimately to results unlooked for in both magnitude and quality. Now the past few months have been pre-eminently a period of change in Ottawa University. The Faculty have changed to some extent. New blood has been infused, a different point of view has been seized, a new alignment of forces produced—who may tell the results in each of the channels of service above suggested. We speak not in terms of derogation of those who have gone. Their work will live after them, and speak their praise. We, however, who are here now, whether we be students or teachers, are confronted not by the past, but by an insistently pressing present, which neither slumbers nor sleeps, but rushes with headlong speed to the struggle with our strength. This day, this hour, this moment is big with opportunity, such as last year we were not qualified to apprehend and realize. Now, if we seize the moment, we may wring from the very fang of defeat a victory that will leave a trail of results down through the ages in the lives of men who shall come after us.

A second element which needs to be born in mind when we look to see whether the present holds special opportunity for us, is the improved condition of the material equipment of the school. Never before in the history of the school has the material equipment been on so satisfactory a basis as at the present time. Thanks to the effort and successes of those who have gone before, the University owns and controls now, including all its resources, moneys and property worth a quarter of a million dollars. Her class rooms are large and well equipped, her campus ample and beautiful, and her facilities equal to the highest demands that are likely to be made on her in ordinary college work for some time. If one bears in mind the close relation which exists between equipment and efficiency in service we may here declare an element of special opportunity.

A third element in the situation that ought to be considered in this hasty review of the situation is the public attitude toward insti-

tutions of learning, and toward Ottawa University in particular. There is no other country on earth, in which the public mind is so completely open to influence from the schools as in our land. It would be hard to find anywhere a set of circumstances which yield so readily and willingly to the touch of an institution of learning as do those which surround us here in Kansas. The public conscience is tender to the touch of earnest, honest men, the public intelligence is keen to find new truth, the common life is sensitive to higher impulse. It will not always be so. The time will come and that right speedily when the process of crystallization will begin, and the formative period be closed. Therefore he who would make his mark must make it now, ere his chance has slipped him by. The condition which now obtains with us, once obtained in the older states of our union. But today they have become crystallized into a stereotyped form, and mighty indeed is the arm which works in a life-time, the work which any man of good sense and honest heart may work with us sometimes in a month. Today is Ottawa's opportunity for this work. As an institution of learning, as individuals, and as an organized body we may work this great work.

This now brings us to the always practical problem: "How can we lay hold of these special opportunities which are thus readily to hand?"

The first and most important condition of successful service is absolute devotion to the high ideal of our calling. He who falters or swerves or hesitates, blocks the work. He who loses sight of the goal ahead will lose the path. He whose eyes are glued to the clock, whose ears are alive only to the signal of release, who longs for nothing so earnestly as for the cessation of toil, and the days of relaxation, has missed his calling, or misunderstood his mission. We say this not of any one man, or of any one group of men connected with the University, but of all, first and last, from the members of the managing board, through the ranks of the alumni, friends, faculty and present students down to the lowest camp-follower. This is the hour of fate, of opportunity, lose it not, waste it not, loiter not, but strike, strike IT, the one thing we are struggling for, to serve and to bless. The temptation to yield to the trivial is always with us. The calls to the right and to the left are legion in number and sleepless in their appeal. Faithfulness and devotion to the highest ideals of life, these are our first elements of need if we would serve aright.

Secondly the element of hearty and voluntary co-operation is indispensable. The elements of distrust, of suspicion, of selfish ambition, of time-serving must be banished from conference hall, chair, class room, and lecture-hall. Everywhere, student, teacher, alumnus,

and advisor must be true to his trust in the simplest and best light he has, bearing in mind that he is part of a great co-operative organism in which no one part or element reaches its fullest function unless it receives ungrudgingly the warm, hearty help and service of every other. Ottawa University can not escape meeting success in service if we can accomplish this one end.

That student who realizes that for him his relation to the school is the hour of hope, the time when his soul may receive that supreme touch of inspiring power which shall send him out to noble, splendid service, that teacher who knows with burning eagerness that now is the time when he may give the touch or speak the word, the delayed message of encouragement, of advice, of appreciation, of suggestion, that friend who realizes the material basis of all spiritual effort, and who yields unsparingly of his abundance for the emancipation of man-kind from its limitations; these are the men and women who will help in seizing the special opportunity of this hour.

I have for Ottawa University for this current year no hope greater than this, that in the life of every student there may be instilled that silent, imperceptible, burning power that shall drive him on in the face of weakness, and pain, and hunger, and poverty, and despair, to do the work of God in life, that this year the denomination may feel the quickening, moulding, spirit in-breathing power of the school, that this year, wherever the alumnus or the former student shall be found, the community shall be purer and sweeter and stronger for his presence. If at the close of the school year these things shall have been realized, then we have met the great opportunity of the present. If we have failed in these things, though we may increase our endowment, though we may swell the number of students, though we may pile up our buildings, the year shall pass away into the memory of mankind as a failure of the most dismal sort.

