

## MISCELLANY

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### HIGHER COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

What was probably the most important meeting in the interests of commercial education yet held in the United States, was that at the University of Michigan on February 5, 6 and 7. This was a convention of educators and business men called to discuss various practical and academic questions presented by the inauguration of schemes of higher commercial studies. The conference was arranged for and held under the auspices of the Michigan Political Science Association. Professor Henry C. Adams, as secretary of the association, had largely to do with planning the meeting. For months he was in correspondence with men having experience in various parts of the country, and the well-balanced program with the commendable representation from institutions of the East, the Middle West, and as far west as Utah, were ample evidence of the care with which preliminary work had been done.

The opening discussion was by President Edmund J. James, of Northwestern University, on "Recent Tendencies in Education as a Result of Social and Industrial Changes." The address by President James was introductory; its great value to the meeting was that it placed upon colleges and universities the necessity of providing a different and a better type of education for business men, than that they are now giving.

The second day's program was full and solid. The morning was termed the educators' session, at which three papers were read. Professor Scott, of the University of Wisconsin, led under the head of "Place of Commercial Education in a College Course." Professor Scott laid down as fundamental that commercial education can be adapted to different grades of schools and to students in different stages of development. He contended that we may properly have commercial instruction in the post-graduate courses of the universities, in the undergraduate college courses and in secondary schools. (At the closing session of the meeting Professor Dewey, of the Massachusetts Institute, further emphasized the same principle.) Professor Scott devoted himself chiefly to the question of the four-year undergraduate course in a college of commerce. As Dr. Hatfield said in the concluding discussion, his classification of students was so comprehensive and his arguments were so well fortified that one could but agree with him. Professor Scott was followed by Cheesman A. Herrick, of the Philadelphia Central High School, with a paper on the "Co-ordination of High School and University Instruction in Commercial Education." This paper made a plea for modernizing and liberalizing the secondary schools as well as the colleges, and for the recognition of modern subjects, commercial included, to satisfy college entrance requirements. Dr. Edward D. Jones, of the University of Michigan, next read a thoughtful and suggestive paper on "The Function of the Business Community in Higher Commercial Education." Dr. Jones dealt with such practical questions as excursions of students, student appren-

ticeship in business houses, lectures from business men, use of trade journals and the collection and use of museums of commercial products.

The afternoon of the sixth was taken up with what was termed the business men's session. The proposition set was "What Can a University Contribute to Prepare for Business Life?" This was responded to first by Mr. Edwin H. Abbott, who spoke as a transporter, he having been for thirty years connected with the Wisconsin Central Railway. The second reply was that of the wholesale merchant and was made by Mr. A. C. Bartlett, of the Hibbard, Spencer and Bartlett Hardware Company of Chicago. James B. Dill, Esq., of New York, followed Mr. Bartlett with the "Reply of a Corporation Lawyer." As entertaining speeches the three addresses of this session were highly successful, but as contributions to the solution of the problems for which the conference was called they were of slight value. It seemed that the speakers mistook the purposes of the convention and instead of dealing with a newer and better preparation for business life they dealt largely with platitudes justifying the conventional college education. No doubt a correct explanation of the business men's session was given in the closing discussion,—it was a case of mistaken emphasis.

In the evening of the same day four papers were read: that of Professor Thurston of Cornell, "To What Extent and in What Way Shall Students of Commerce Study Science," a subject which was further continued by Professor Carhart of Michigan; two other papers on "Commercial Education and the Foreign Service" were given by Professors George M. Fisk of the University of Illinois, and James C. Monaghan of the University of Wisconsin.

The science discussion was almost entirely in the field of technology or engineering and ignored the experience of European schools of commerce in the study of commercial products. (*Warenkunde* and *Etudes des Marchandises*.) This was another case of mistaken emphasis, or if it was not, the best form of commercial education is that of a school of engineering with what was termed in one of the closing discussions, "a commercial finish." In answer to the view of the papers it should be said that commercial schools should have some conventional general science study, also something from the field of engineering, but that they need their distinctive scientific work in dealing with the materials of commerce.

Professors Fisk and Monaghan spoke out of their own experience, as both have been in the foreign service; the former dealt most largely with the diplomatic service and the latter with the consular service. They, however, did not confine themselves to these phases of the questions; the comments of Professor Monaghan on German education were particularly interesting and suggestive.

The closing session on Saturday morning was given over to discussion. The men assigned to open were Dr. Hatfield, of the University of Chicago, and Professor Schoch, of Drexel Institute, Philadelphia. Following these gentlemen there was a general discussion participated in by Professors Dewey, Ripley, of Harvard; Loos, of Iowa; Robinson, of Illinois; Sisson, of Bradley Polytechnic; Adams, of Michigan, and others.

It is dangerous to attempt a formulation of the conclusions of the con-

ference, but at least three things appeared to pass by common consent: (1) different grades of commercial instruction should be suited to the needs of different classes and to this end at least three sorts of institutions should be provided: high schools of commerce, colleges of commerce and post-graduate schools of commerce; (2) for the first two institutions just named, technical and special elements should not too much exclude the general and cultural work (a proportion given for the college of commerce was 60 per cent of general work, and 40 per cent of special); and (3) the traditions and conditions of each community and institution must largely guide in dealing with its local problem.

Mention should be made of the gracious and diplomatic manner in which the president of the Michigan Political Science Association, Hon. Arthur Hill, of Saginaw, presided over the convention, and the skillful steering committee work of Professor Adams as secretary. The visiting delegates carried away pleasant memories of the hospitality of President Angell and the Michigan faculty. The papers and discussions of the meeting will be published by the Michigan Political Science Association.

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#### TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE AT TUSKEGEE

In the article on the "Evolution of Negro Labor," by Mr. Carl Kelsey, published in the January number of *THE ANNALS*, the statement is made that "even Tuskegee is not doing so much in this line (training agriculturists) as generally supposed, in spite of the emphasis I know is being laid upon it. In examining its last catalogue I find only sixteen graduates who are farming; of these, thirteen have other occupations, principally teaching. Three others are introducing cotton raising in Africa under the German government. From the industrial department nine have received certificates in agriculture and six in dairying, but their present occupations are not given."

It may be interesting in view of this comment for readers of *THE ANNALS* to know what Tuskegee is now doing to train agriculturists. This year the students in agriculture in the institute fall into three groups: (1) 181 students are engaged in the actual operation of the farm, the truck garden, the orchard, etc.; (2) 79 students are taking "the professional courses"; and (3) 207 students are taking agriculture as a regular part of their academic work. This statement has eliminated the counting of the same person twice and, therefore, shows, as far as enrollment goes, what the school is now doing in agriculture.

But Mr. Kelsey bases his comment upon the unfortunately meagre statement contained in last year's catalogue as to occupations in which our graduates are engaged. This is a clearly inadequate test of the efficiency of the work here because for easily understood reasons—and poverty is not the least—our students in very few cases remain throughout the course. The Senior Class,—the course is seven years in length,—in February, 1902, represented less than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the total undergraduate enrollment. Of the