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The Denominational College and the State University

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The Denominational College and the State University

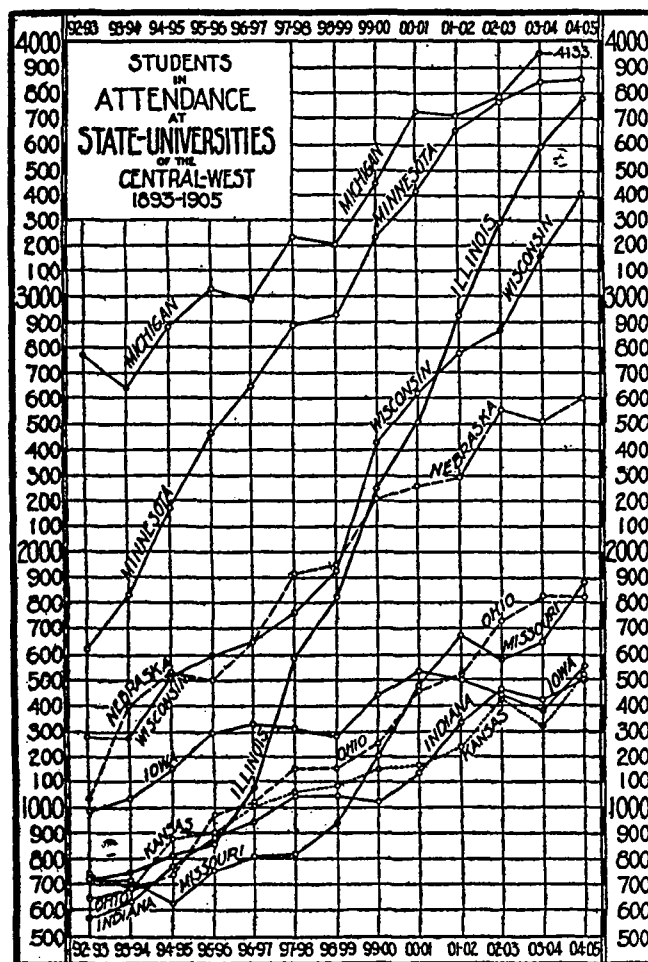
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The present emergency of the State University along the line of religious education and the imperative need of action is abundantly evident. In 1896-7 the ten leading State Universities of the Mississippi Valley enrolled 13,000 students; in 1904-5 their total attendance was 26,000, i. e., in eight years they have more than doubled their enrollment. The present aggregate enrollment of our state institutions—and we do not here include the normal schools—is fully 70,000. This development may be traced in the diagram on the opposite page.

These students are men and women whose future leadership, influence, and financial prestige are certain to bulk large in the future of the country.

Statistics already published refute the charge of religious indifference formerly made against the State school, and the work of the College Christian Association attests the ease with which religious interest may be organized and aroused to activity. The pressing question is, What are we to do for the 70,000 young men and young women in the State universities and colleges? It is but proper for the denominational college to provide religious instruction for its students, and a non-sectarian school built up by private gifts can do the same without fear of criticism; but state support drawn from people of all faiths and opinions puts a new face on matters. Religious instructors free from denominational bias are well-nigh impossible to find, and anything else would arouse just criticism and opposition.

Here are 70,000 students. Preaching and pastoral visitation are not sufficient, good as they are. Something else is necessary. The University career is a critical period in a student's life. It is the period during which he is adding knowledge to faith. He is passing through an experience of orientation, and unless religious instruction keep pace with discipline in other lines, he cannot avoid invidious comparisons. The weekly ser-



mon must be supplemented by the teacher-student element by regular, systematic, scientific discipline.

The present trend is toward the associated college, i. e., an institution—presumably denominational—located in the vicinity of a state university or other leading educational centre and co-operating with it. Standing on separate grounds, the associated college seeks to eliminate needless competition, supplements and is supplemented by the institution with which it co-operates, and

simply represents the efforts in another field of the same people that founded both institutions.

Today present efforts at co-operation are of two forms, guild halls and associated seminaries or colleges. The guild hall makes no attempt at academic rating. It provides a home for such students as desire a social centre and dormitory privileges, a place where they may meet and come to know the leaders of their several denominations, and opportunities for instruction for such as will carry on the work from personal interest. Two excellent examples of such foundations are Westminster Hall, at the University of Kansas, and the Bible College of Missouri at the University of that state. Should those in control deem wise and their patrons approve, these two plants by widening their plans and adding to facilities could develop into associated colleges officially recognized and credited by the respective universities.

An interesting situation exists at the University of California. A number of theological seminaries have either been located on sites adjoining the University grounds or plans for such a step are under way.

Such a plan is one of mutual benefit. The presence of a theological faculty rounds out the University circle. On the other hand the influence on the seminary cannot be overestimated. The student of divinity finds himself in possession of library and other facilities such as he could not enjoy in an isolated seminary unless it happened to be located in a large city. And, further, the opportunity to select studies from the large range of the University curriculum and to attend the public lectures provided by a large institution, and the stimulation to a wider reading would immeasurably enlarge his intellectual horizon. Best of all the young man grows up with the kind of men with whom he must one day live and serve as pastor. No better parish can be found than that among one's associates in the different colleges of a great university. The young clergyman learns how to deport himself among men and the other man learns to respect the clergyman.

The Associated College is not necessarily a theological seminary, though in Canada—the term being used in a broader sense than in the United States—the seminary is sometimes so classed.

The first Associated College in the United States must be credited to North Dakota. By agreement between the presidents

and governing boards of the institutions concerned the Methodist College of the State, the Red River Valley University, has been moved to a site adjacent to the State University. We quote from the "Memorandum" the basis of co-operation agreed upon:

As a basis of co-operation between the State University and the Methodist Church of the state, the following suggestions seem practicable:

1. That the Methodist Church change the name of its institution from the Red River Valley University to Wesley College.

2. That a building or buildings be erected in near proximity to the State University, but on a separate campus, to include a Guild Hall, such recitation rooms as may be required for the work proposed, possibly dormitories for young women and young men, and a president's house.

3. That the course of study may be:

(a) Bible and Church History, English Bible, New Testament Greek, Hebrew, Theism, and such other subjects as the college may elect in pursuance of its purpose.

(b) A brief course that may be designated as a Bible Normal course, intended specially to fit students to become efficient Sunday-school teachers and lay workers, and upon the completion of which certificates of recognition may be granted.

(c) Instruction in music and elocution may be given if desired and appropriate certificates granted.

(d) Guild Hall lectures.

4. That the State University grant for work done in subjects included under (a) above, such credit toward the B. A. degree as it gives to technical work done in its own professional schools and to work done in other colleges of reputable standing: Likewise, Wesley College shall give credit for work done in the State University in similar manner as preparation for any degree or certificate it may offer.

5. Each institution shall have full control of the discipline of students upon its own grounds.

6. It shall be deemed proper for students to take degrees from both institutions if they so desire.

At the University of Toronto a similar plan has been in successful operation for several years. Six colleges located in the city of Toronto have become associated with the University, either

federated, i. e., by act of Parliament, thereby becoming organically united with the institution, or by affiliation, i. e. by act of the University Senate, the union not being organic. Victoria University, Methodist, supports arts college and theological seminary, Wycliffe, Church of England, and Knox, Presbyterian, are theological seminaries only; St. Michael's College, Roman Catholic, supports grade and high school work, arts and commercial courses, and also prepares candidates for the priesthood. University College is a secular arts college. The Presidents of these associated colleges are ex-officio members of the University Council and Senate. Entrance requirements are those laid down by the educational authorities of the Province. In this way the heavy expenses involved in museums, laboratories and the like, are in the University and the expense is shared equally by all. The several denominations provide religious training for their own and thus relieve the University of a serious embarrassment. The success of the enterprise wherever it has been tried, has warranted its existence and already other similar projects are under way.

This plan provides three invaluable features in the University scheme:

1. An educational element in a field vital to well-rounded discipline and one in which the state institution is for the present hampered.
2. A guild hall where may be held public lectures, social meetings and such student gatherings as may from time to time most conduce to the welfare of those concerned.
3. Dormitories, in which point many state institutions are deficient. The dormitories is the phase of college or university life to which the old graduate looks back with greatest enthusiasm. Here center the traditions and memories that hallow academic life.

A fourth feature may be added (see the North Dakota plan), that of a form of university extension, in which the associated college ministers not only to the students in attendance, but to all—at least of the supporters—ministering to those otherwise denied opportunity.