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Academic Life and the Great War

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to the Alumni on Commencement Day, last June, he voiced sentiments which should meet with universal approval. We quote:

"So long as national policies were in debate we gave complete freedom, as is our wont and as becomes a university, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of publication to all members of the university who in lawful and decent ways might wish to inform and to guide public policy. Wrongheadedness and folly we might deplore, but we are bound to tolerate. So soon, however, as the nation spoke by the Congress and by the President, declaring that it would volunteer as one man for the protection and defense of civil liberty and self-government, conditions sharply changed. What had been tolerated before became intolerable now. What had been wrongheadedness was now sedition. What had been folly was now treason."

At the October meeting of the Board of Regents of the University of Michigan, Professor Karl Eggert, in the Department of German, was dismissed because of his attitude on the war. The evidence heard by the Regents was that more than once this man spent practically the whole class room time praising the German Government and its methods of conducting the war, and belittling the Government and the President of the United States. During the last three years many other colleges and schools have had a similar experience with men who, because of scholarly attainments, were given positions where they were able to poison the minds of students. It is good to know that a purifying process has been generally adopted.

ACADEMIC LIFE AND THE GREAT WAR.—The war is now and will continue to be an absorbing topic for consideration in its relations to all interests of the Nation. At the formal opening of the University year, Dean Henry M. Bates, of the Law School of the University of Michigan, delivered the principal address. His subject was the relationship of academic life with the war. Mr. Bates is known as one of the most progressive and thoughtful experts on legal instruction in the country, and his words on this occasion demonstrated his wise consideration of the problems of today. He asserted that the true course, so far as education is concerned, is for colleges and universities to keep open for those who are not called to the colors, or other national service, "every avenue of mental discipline, every opportunity to search out and make avail-

able the limitless fields of yet undiscovered truths. But in doing this let no institution, which would not invite from posterity a verdict of shame, oppose any obstacles to the course of any of its sons, or daughters, students, or instructors, who may offer themselves to the service of their country in its hour of need. To dampen the generous ardor, or chill the brave spirits of such as these, would be shameful indeed." He ventured the assertion "that a very large majority of American college students are underworking, rather than overworking; that many are working incredibly little, and that the time thus stolen from the primary function of education is by most of them spent in dawdling, or in the fragmentary, purposeless activities of college side-shows." He also said:

"War is no longer conducted by armies and fleets alone, for its scientific fiendishness calls for the last available energy and effort and thought of entire nations. And thoughtful men in and out of government, with large opportunities for judging, have feared that as a nation we might fail perhaps to live up to that high measure of achievement to which potentially we are equal; that we might not have clear vision and enduring moral courage which come only to well trained men and women, which would enable us to see clearly our goal through the trials and sufferings ahead of us, not confused or misled, or halted, by the clouds of foggy reasoning and dusty error and falsehood, raised by misguided fanatics, or spread with insidious craft by traitors in our midst and enemy spies from abroad.

"These men remember that in our last war at least we needlessly sacrificed hundreds of lives and millions of dollars, by our inefficient methods, our easygoing tolerance of defects and abuses, which should have been eliminated long ago. They have known that we have permitted a prejudice, an irritation growing out of experiences long since past, to affect the attitude of masses of our countrymen toward a great nation whose repudiated government, not its people, was once our enemy, a nation which has long generously admitted that its government was wrong and we were right, a people with whom by reason of community of language, literature, law and political institutions, we ought to be linked in close mutual understanding, if not by alliance, to help maintain the peace and promote the progress of the world. These thoughtful observers realize that the same easygoing tolerance, the shallow optimism, and the happy-go-lucky ways of our people have resulted in our admitting, nay welcoming, men of another nation, brave, brilliant and lovable, to our liberty and our opportunity, and that a few of these men, as Secretary of State Lansing showed in startling disclosures through yesterday's newspapers, have made our soil the base, and our property, our citizenship, and our politics the prostituted means of treacherous plots against a friendly and generous nation of kinsmen. And the same faults of train-

ing, and resultant habits of thought and action have made it possible for great masses of other nationalities to come to our shores and here found and maintain colonies foreign in language, habits, aspirations and sympathies, thus effectually preventing the growth among them of a proper American spirit. But worse than this we have permitted representatives, thousands in number, of one of these foreign nations, now openly, as formerly in reality, our enemy, to maintain through a long stretch of years, a systematic, crafty, far-reaching propaganda for the glory and aggrandizement of the so-called fatherland and at the expense of our interests and our institutions wherever necessary. So far has this dastardly plan gone that men of this nation, welcome not only to the priceless opportunities of our land, but received as guests in our homes, including even the diplomatic agents of their government (representatives, forsooth, of the 'honor and integrity' of the Empire), have with a shamelessness, a treachery, which three years ago we would have branded as absolutely incredible, abused our very hospitality and friendship to plot not only against nations with whom we were at peace, but to embroil us in wars with such nations, to destroy our factories and railroads, and murder our workmen. How could we have believed that such shamelessness possible, except for the proof over their own signatures so recently brought to light through our Secretary of State.

"But again you ask what has all this to do with education? If the diagnosis is correct the connection is vital. I have endeavored merely to indicate a few of the defects in our national attitude and life as brought to light by the searching test of this war. If those defects proceed, as I believe they do, largely from refusal or at least failure to look facts in the face, to think below the surface and to meet obligations and disagreeable situations as they arise promptly and fearlessly, then the remedy lies in a better education. Certainly I am not alone in believing that the undeniably superficial training in many at least of our colleges and universities has bred up a class of men naturally our leaders who lack the disposition and the habit rather than the ability to grapple promptly and thoroughly with the problems of both individual and national life. This war is by no means the last, and probably not the greatest, of our tests. Conditions following the declaration of peace are sure to call for a careful examination of all of our institutions and for greater constructive ability in readjusting them to the new world into which we shall pass. Our industries, our business and commerce, our law and our political and social institutions are certain to be powerfully affected by the changed conditions, and wisely to mould them to the new needs will call for men of the highest ability and severest training."

INTEREST OF BANKRUPT IN LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES.—On November 5th last the Supreme Court of the United States handed down an important decision in the case of *Cohen v. Samuels*,