

We should do well not to deprecate the value of such practical courses as those just mentioned. For girls, a course in Shorthand or Child Care, and for boys, a course in Crop Rotation or The Manufacture of Textiles, may contribute more to their future happiness and well-being than any single course in science or languages. The economic basis of life cannot be disregarded. Furthermore, such organized instruction may be used to give the student a professional pride in doing well work which too often is regarded as unrelieved drudgery. Nursing is an excellent example of an occupation which requires arduous labor, nervous strain, and distasteful tasks, but which is often practised with an enthusiasm resulting from a professional sense of the importance of the work to be done.

It is clear, therefore, that into the realm of formal education has been obtruded a wide variety of practical courses involving particular techniques and skills which may be of great economic benefit to students in their future lives. There is no question that these courses will continue to be taught, but it may well be questioned whether they should be taught in the college or taught somewhere else. The tendency at present seems to be to include them in the liberal arts curriculum, colleges extending their programs to include professional and vocational courses, while many strictly vocational schools have added "cultural" courses until they have become in name, and often in fact, liberal arts colleges. The arrangement is often expressed as "learning to live while learning to make a living," or in some similar phrase. The danger here is that "learning to make a living" will dominate the student's thought to the exclusion of all else; hence we find many students and some instructors expressing impatience with such subjects as languages and higher mathematics when they might be spending time on something "practical." It is only fair to say that the reverse attitude is taken in some professional schools, where students are thought to have developed too narrowly professional a point of view and to need the broadening effects of a better general education.

In considering so important a problem, the college faculties should take the lead and approach it in a spirit of compromise. It is foolish for teachers of the traditional subjects in effect to draw their skirts about them and cry, "Away, ye unclean ones!" to the newer vocational courses. The basis for including or excluding the latter is a matter of first importance for consideration by college faculties, which should be willing to suggest possible ways of handling the whole problem in the most efficient manner.

As an approach to the problem, we may arrange the possible subjects of instruction in three separate groups: 1) work which involves primarily the acquirement of manual skills; 2) work which is designed to prepare the student for a specific profession but which requires a relatively high degree of mental effort and intellectual discipline; 3) work which is primarily cultural, preparing the student for a vocation only in the general sense that it develops his mind and helps him better to understand the world about him.