

conceited "bluffs." We believe that college journalism could do no nobler work than advocate the abolishment of these debasing customs of our colleges, which so many would-be young men regard as the "essentials of college life."

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THE elective system of education as recently adopted by some of our higher colleges is thoroughly in keeping with the spirit of the times. Though there is a long line of antagonists arrayed against it, we verily believe that with the present tendency of the age it will ultimately become the universal system.

This age is pre-eminently a practical one. Men who can apply as well as explain theories are in greatest demand, and the nearer our colleges come to the fitting of their students for practical work the more nearly will they comply with the needs of the times. The great majority of young men cannot afford to attend college just for the sake of "gaining a liberal education," and indeed many who have been so favored are so often found engaged in the humblest occupations as to frequently make such attainment unadvisable.

The present system has no regard whatever for individual differences. To all are prescribed the same intellectual regimen irrespective of its individual effect. Students are not allowed to follow their own choice of studies but

are confined to the prescriptions of the curriculum. Knowing this the great body of students enter college without any other purpose than taking the prescribed course. Ask them what they intend doing after completing the course, and they cannot tell you. What wonder then that we have so many purposeless young men. Carlyle's answer to a young man at college, whom he had queried as to his future intentions, is very significant: Says he, "Young man, a man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder. Have a purpose in life, be it but to kill and dress an ox well."

If a young man is allowed to shape his own course, at least a part of it, while at college, he will do it with reference to some particular end, and that end will invariably lie in the line of his natural qualifications, which fact in itself would stimulate his every effort, for there are few young men who would not be too proud to be found wanting in the course of their own choice. A college faculty, therefore, should specify the *amount* of work rather than the *kind* of work a student should do.

In this age of invention and scientific research the field of human knowledge has become so extensive as to be far beyond the survey of any one individual, and with each recurring year man's sphere of action is becoming more and more specialized. The man who