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Quaker Young People in Quaker Colleges -- Why?

By Levi T. Pennington.

We are living in the days of the world's agony and the world's great need. Never in the lives of men now living has there been louder or more insistent call for service. The war has placed upon us every one a thousand obligations that did not exist or that were not recognized five years ago.

But we need to bear in mind the truth, ^{which} ~~that~~ even the advocates of war and the strongest defenders of this war in particular are admitting, that war settles nothing. The world's problems will remain for solution when peace is finally declared, no matter when that peace shall come nor what its terms ~~shall~~ ^{shall} be. The world's problems, industrial, social, political, international, will remain for the solution of the on-coming generation.

The Rebuilding of the World.

The world must be rebuilt, for much of its fabric has disintegrated and much of the rest has been torn down. ~~Human workmanship~~ ~~governments say, must be brought into the world on the right way.~~ The world is sick with deadly disease; that disease must be cured or civilization dies. The world has gone astray. It must be brought back to the right way.)

The stupendousness of the task ~~of rebuilding the world~~ is sufficient to make the stoutest heart quail, the strongest mind falter. But it must be done, and the young people of today must do it.

A Problem of Leadership.

The accomplishment of this colossal task is chiefly a problem of leadership. Only ~~under the leadership of~~ men with minds clear and broad to grasp the problems, with hearts full of courage to face the difficulties and dangers of them, and with wills strong and persistent to conquer them can ^{bring} the world ~~be brought~~ into the new day for which we all labor and pray. This is the problem underlying the other problems of the rebuilding of the world:—How shall we develop the leadership for the ~~new~~ ^{new} bringing in of the world that is to be? What sort of leadership is required, and how may it best be produced?

We need to recognize, too, that while the need of leadership in the years that are immediately before us will be greater than in all modern times if not in all times, we shall be facing such a dearth of leadership as the world has not seen for many centuries ^{if in all its history}. At the beginning of this world ^{word} Oxford and Cambridge, Heidelberg and Berlin, Paris and Louvain emptied [^] their potential leaders into the great hopper of war. They are gone. By the tens of thousands the ~~the~~ men who should be the leaders of the coming generation have been destroyed, ~~by the world's worst war.~~

How shall we supply the places of these ~~leaders~~ that are gone, and ~~produce~~ produce the many new leaders for the multitude of new tasks that ~~the~~ the world ~~is~~ facing and will be facing when the war ends? What sort of leaders are required, and how are they to be provided?

An Educated Leadership.

First of all, we must have an educated leadership. To realize this, it is only necessary to reflect that while less than one in a hundred of the people of America graduate from college, very much the largest part of the great leadership of the country,

in every prominent line of human endeavor, comes from this less than one per cent. of our people. With every passing year the importance of thorough educational preparation for leadership is increasing. For the great problems of the future, only strong, broad minds will be adequate. We must have an educated leadership. No young man or young woman should be satisfied in these days of on-coming opportunity and responsibility to make less than the fullest possible preparation for the fullest possible life of usefulness and service. *Young man, if you are not in college fitting yourself ~~for~~ for larger life, why not?*

But it is not enough that the leadership of the future should be educated. The world has had educated leaders in the past quarter of a century, but where have they ~~made~~ led us? The world at war ~~is~~ is the answer. No leadership that gives keen, strong minds alone can lead the world aright. Education of the head without rightness of the heart ~~leads~~ leads to the power with which the leader of men may ~~hurry~~ hurry them to their own destruction and to the wreck of the world. We must have a Christian leadership, if the world is to be safe.

And where can this Christian leadership best be developed? ~~The question almost answers itself.~~ Certainly not in the schools from which Christ is largely excluded, or where, at the very least, Christianity must take a secondary place. Certainly not in those schools where there must be no teaching that would not be equally satisfactory to Catholic and Protestant and Jew, Christian and agnostic and atheist. Equally certain it is that the place for the development of Christian leaders is in the colleges founded on Christianity, maintained for the purpose of the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ, the colleges where Christ is given His rightful place as Master and Lord, in management, in class room, in faculty and in student body.

In these days when such tremendous responsibilities are upon those who care for the real spiritual advancement of the world, it is difficult to see how Christian parents can be tempted, by anything that can be offered in the way of advantages of any sort, to send their young people to other than distinctly Christian colleges. ~~The world needs Christ more than they need culture; and the world needs Christ more than it needs culture.~~ For their own interests and for the sake of their potential service to the world, the young people from Christian homes should be attending Christian colleges ~~these~~ *today* ~~even~~ even more than in ordinary times.

A Quaker Leadership.

These are days of testing for the Society of Friends. Is our existence justified? Have we a message for the world so distinct ~~and~~ so important that we, a handful of people compared with the great denominations, should maintain ourselves as a separate part of the body of Christ in the world? Unless we can answer these questions in the affirmative, it surely seems that there is little excuse for our continued existence, and that this would be a favorable time for the Society of Friends to cease to be.

But while some few -- it is surprising how very few! -- have left ~~us~~ during these days of stress and strain, to most of us the idea ~~of~~ Quakerism ~~should~~ ^{should} to exist in the world is utterly unthinkable. Most of us are ~~so~~ certain that to ~~be~~ ^{Friends} has been committed some truths so vital for the world that we must maintain them, at whatever cost, until the world shall accept them, to its immeasurable blessing. Quakerism must be maintained -- most of us are very clear on that point.

If this is the case, then our educational responsibility ought to be clear to us all. ~~The church cannot be maintained in these days without the maintenance of its educational work.~~ If Quakerism is to be maintained, Quaker education must be maintained. This ought to be the concern of every Friend, old and young, rich and poor. Every prosperous farmer, though he have not chick nor child, should feel his responsibility for the maintenance of the right kind of Quaker education, and should learn to give by thousands where many are now giving nothing. There are Friends in America who ought to give hundreds of thousands for ~~Quaker~~ education. In ten years every ~~Quaker~~ young man and young woman ^{among good} should be in reach of a thoroughly equipped, well manned, substantially endowed Friends college.

This financial problem of our denominational education is largely the problem of those who are no longer young.
But the thing that every young man and young woman among Friends ought to be facing is the responsibility of acquiring as good an education as possible, under circumstances that will not only build up ~~Christian~~ Christian character, but that will strengthen those principles of love and ^{peace and} good will, of personal relation with ~~our~~ God and personal guidance by Him, of right worship of God in the secret soul and right service for men in the public life, for which ~~Quakerism~~ ^{Quakers have} always stood, and for which ~~we~~ stand today as no other denomination in the world ~~stands today~~ does.

Results of the wrong course.

There is a tremendous personal loss that comes to the young man or young woman who neglects the opportunity of getting a Quaker education. Many a young man from a Quaker home is today living for self and in bondage to sin, because he went to a ~~strange~~ college where the ~~glory~~ ^{glory} of this world ~~was~~ ^{was held up as} the thing to be desired, rather than the ideals of the Christ. Many a Quaker father whose ~~son~~ has gone forth "to slay and to be slain" is grieving today because that boy is not in a service that ~~our~~ Quaker conscience can approve and that God can own and bless; and ~~he~~ ^{is} realizing too late that the reason ~~for~~ the war ideal instead of the peace ideal is dominant *in his son* is because the young man got his education, not where Quaker young men develop Quaker ideals, but where ideals foreign to the truth as we know it ~~and believe it~~ are upheld and taught.

Denominational
There has been a terrible loss to Friends, which still goes on, because Quaker young people are educated in other than Quaker schools. Under the shadow of one of the largest and strongest of our Friends colleges, a minister in another denomination is preaching week after week. He was converted in a Friends meeting, and became, as a boy, a Friend. He began his boyish service for the kingdom of God in a Friends Junior Christian Endeavor society. He came up through the Intermediate society, the Y.P.S.C.E. and the Sunday School. As a young man of High School age he was a splendid worker in every department of the ~~society~~ ^{church} in which a young man could serve. Then when it came time for him to go to college, there was no Friend to help him, no Friendly agency to assist him to get to the nearest Friends college. But the principal of the High School, ~~who belonged to another denomination,~~ was friendly, and the way was opened for him to attend a college of another denomination. Ways of self help were provided. He graduated from ~~the college of this other denomination,~~ he entered the ministry in that church, and today, in a Quaker college town, he is ^{pastor of} ~~a meeting of a denomination,~~ he who by every ~~influence~~ influence but that of education would have been a minister among Friends.

4.
Interests of the Kingdom Paramount.

But the chief interest is neither personal nor denominational, important as both these are. The world needs that which Quakerism has, and which so large a part even of the Christian world has lost or had never really found. Unless our position is maintained and advanced, the world will be terribly the loser. ~~When the Kingdom of God is established~~ In the interests of the Kingdom of God, there is great need that the truth that Friends have in trust for humanity be maintained and promulgated. Who are to do this? Quaker young men and young women, educated in Quaker colleges. Nobody else can do the task adequately. Even all the Quaker young people who could possibly prepare themselves for it could not do it as adequately as could be desired.

Our government recognizes the importance of a thorough education for our young men and women, and from the president down ~~they~~ our national and state officers are urging every High School and College student who can possibly do so to go on with his or her education. If for the purposes ~~of a~~ ^{world} governments of this ~~kind~~ ^{young people are urged} our young men and women ought to prepare themselves by thorough education, how much more ought every young man and young woman who has owned the ~~the~~ mastery of Christ to make the fullest possible preparation to carry out the plans of the government of the Kingdom of Heaven.

In these days of present need and future requirement, it ought to be the ambition of every young man and young woman to ~~be~~ achieve the best possible preparation for the best possible life. It ought to be the determination of every Christian young man or woman to get this training where Christ is given His rightful place, and where the best preparation can be made for the advancement of His kingdom. And both ~~the~~ ^{Quaker} young men and women and their parents should see to it that Quaker young people are educated in Quaker colleges, that the Christian ideals which ~~Quakers~~ ^{Quakers} have seen more plainly than other denominations may conquer the world for Christ.