ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE INAUGURATION OF REV. WILLIAM C. ROBERTS, D. D. LL. D. AS PRESIDENT OF LAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY; JUNE 22, 1887, PP. 5 - 48

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## **VARIOUS.**

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OF

# REV. WILLIAM C. ROBERTS, D.D. LL.D.

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PRESIDENT OF LAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY.

JUNE 22, 1887.

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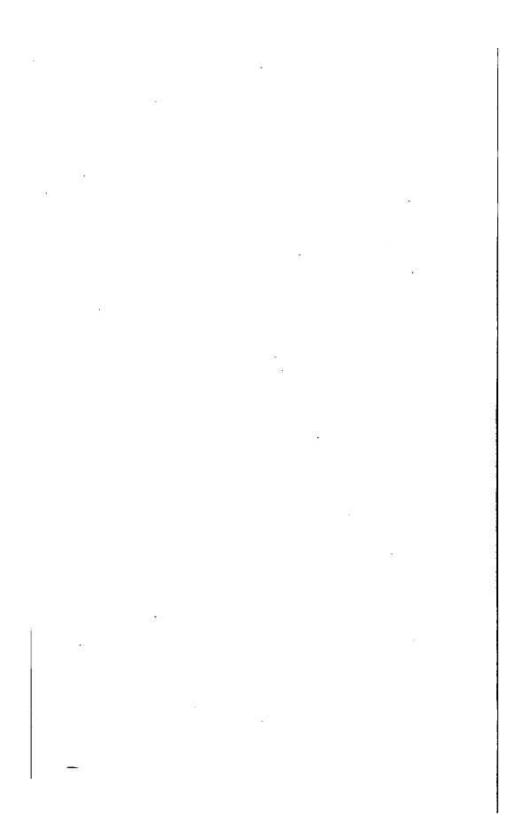
### A GLANCE

AT

FOUR ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION,

nv.

REV. SIMON J. McPHERSON, D.D.



#### A GLANCE AT FOUR ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION.

An enterprising young Review has recently persuaded nearly a dozen leading American educators and literary men to write articles, "frankly personal," on the theme: "How I was Educated." As I will not weary you, before the real orations of the day begin, with a formal address, I shall confine my remarks chiefly to a partial analysis of their interesting statements. I can do so the more gladly because they apparently confirm an old opinion that the principal elements of a successful college education cluster around four essential points.

The first nucleus-preliminary, if you like-is made up of one's original family influences. Like President Dwight, we may well accept that keen dictum: The first rule in education is to select the right father and mother. Accordingly, ex-President Kendrick observes: "My education began in the cradle, and back of it. Though my father died when I was but three years old, I can see how largely he determined my individuality and history." Mothers are even more influential. Augustine, Chrysostom and the Wesleys, Napoleon, Madame de Staël and Marie Antoinette, instantly recall Monica, Arethusa, Susannah Wesley, "Madame Mere" Letitia, Madame Necker and Maria Theresa. But I need not urge the notion of this "original" bias in a Presbyterian institution, where every student is known to betray distinct traces of Adam and Eve. We all know that the laws of heredity will assert themselves.

The chief modifications of these laws too, are worked out in home training. Dr. Edward Everett Hale gratefully says: I had the great, good fortune to be born in the middle of a large family. And all well meaning parents would do well could they arrange to give that place to each of the nine or thirteen children." Another good hint to parents is also dropped by that distinguished celibate, the late Archbishop Hughes: "Give me the training of a boy until he is ten, and you may then do what you will with him." Roman Catholic practice will show whether this theory has any truth. Heredity and early training certainly determine vital qualities. One is health; and without a good physical basis a student is about as successful as a lame race horse. Another is habit, at once the sea into which the streams of life empty, and the fountain out of which the streams of character and destiny flow. A third is the right balance of ambition, which finds its best equipoise in the circle of parental and filial impulses. It is the home that teaches us

"To sit, self-governed, in the fiery prime Of youth, obedient at the feet of law."

To put it in more homely phrase, it is the home that furnishes at least the raw material of education. Unless the home lays down the right foundations, the university will be comparatively powerless.

A second vital factor in education is found in the stimulas of healthy student associations. It is probably true, as one has said, that you can get more facts out of a ten-dollar encyclopædia than any person can acquire by four years at college. But the business of changing a crude boy "into a well-trained gentleman is doubtless more simply and certainly done in a good college than anywhere else; " and a good college is one that has good students. It is a miniature world. President Angell attests the example of hard work and the inspiration of manly purpose that student-life gave him. A person's ideals and aims are largely determined by his surroundings. Chicago's commercial atmosphere usually produces business men. But Mr. Thomas Wentworth Higginson accounts for his literary career by the fact that he was "born and cradled" in the college atmosphere of Cambridge, the home of professional authors. But without dwelling on the general facts, let me mention two special advantages from these associations. For one, I see a peculiar advantage in the pastimes of student days. Much scorn is now expressed for college athletics. Of course, they may be abused to the neglect of study, or even to the injury of health. But there are dangers on the other side. A book-worm, whose heart's juices are dried up, is a monstrosity. We continue to be young only as we retain capacity for guiltless enjoyment. President Andrew D. White, who sat behind George W. Smalley in Yale's boat during the first race with Harvard, says truly that "the most detestable product of college life is the sickly cynic. Students need healthy games, guarded only by common-sense rules. It is better, even, that an occasional bone should be broken, than that graduates should live as puny invalids and die prematurely of nervous prostration.

Then again I like to see students associated in active, oldfashioned literary societies; for these teach them how to apply the acquirements of the class-room, how to focus their ideas and how to think on their feet. Presidents Barnard and Robinson testify with enthusiasm to the help which they received from such college societies. We all know that many of . the public and professional men of England were debtors to "the Union" in Oxford. Yale I think, does not now furnish as large a proportion of popular leaders as in the days when "Linonia" and the "Brothers in Unity" were prosperous. One of the chief distinctions of Princeton for nearly 125 years, has been found in the admirable "Whig" and "Clio" halls, which constitute the strongest single influence in the college, I devoutly hope that Lake Forest may have large and flourishing debating societies.

The third necessity of an educational institution is to have inspiring teachers. So far as internal forces go, this is the prime essential. A college may be great without great age, great endowments or great buildings, but never without great teachers. Germany understands this fact, and students flock to that university which has the best teachers, or perhaps only one or two of the best. Arnold alone made the name of Rugby known over the world. Jowett has rendered Baliol distinguished among the colleges of Oxford. Horace Mann, single-handed, lifted little Antioch into notice. The genius of