

# COOLIDGE DEFENDS COLLEGE STANDARDS

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## **TECHNICAL SCHOOLS GOOD**

**But They Can Only Supplement, Not  
Replace the Liberal Education,  
Vice President Declares.**

NEW HAVEN, Conn., May 6.—American institutions have come from the people but they have come from a people directed, led and inspired by the ideals which came from the colleges, Vice President Coolidge declared before a meeting of the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools here today.

"That those who founded these seats of learning were taking a wise course is demonstrated both by reason and experience," the Vice President said. "They wished to secure a certain action on the part of their fellow men. They realized that what men do depends upon what they know and think. They wished to increase the knowledge and thought of men that they might live in harmony with the truth. There was no other course that men could take who believed in freedom. \* \* \*

"No one can examine the history of America calmly and candidly and escape the conclusion that in its main features it has been a success. The foundation and support of that success had its main source, directly and indirectly, in the learning, the piety and the reverence which American colleges had been established to promote. They have been the great builders of character."

Great material prosperity of the last few years had a tendency to alter the accepted standards of success, Mr. Coolidge said, and some of the unthinking drew the hasty conclusion that liberal education should be discarded for something practical. While there was urgent need for technical, industrial, commercial and professional schools, these could not be a substitute for liberal education.

"They cannot replace it, they supplement it," the Vice President continued. "They could not long endure without the support of those influences which flow from institutions of liberal culture. There are men of liberal education who are unable to make a financial success. There are those who know how to live and yet do not know how to make a living. If they make little positive contribution to the general welfare, at least they do not detract from it. There is far more of danger, more of menace, from those who have the power which great financial success brings and yet are lacking the character to administer it wisely. They know well how to make a living, but they do not know how to live. The Caesarism of the present day does not lie in the military life of the Republic, but in the economic life of the Republic.

"If the economic life of the nation be examined it will be found to be largely under the direction of those who have had a liberal education. There is here and there a genius of invention or organization who might appear to be an exception. But if those around him are taken into consideration, if his subordinates are examined, if the means by which he accomplishes his ends are taken into account, there is no doubt of its appearing that he uses in others what he does not possess himself. But to cite such examples is to fail to comprehend the question. Colleges are not for the exclusive benefit of the few fortunate individuals who may happen to attend them; they are for the moral support of society and for the maintenance of the State. While some individual may now benefit directly, every individual benefits indirectly.

"Criticism from the other side is not so easy to answer," the Vice President said. "If our colleges have yielded to the spirit of commercialism, if they have swung away from their original moorings of liberal culture they have, to some extent, ceased to fulfill their original purpose of supporting the foundations of government and religion. The hasty conclusions by those who are on the outside are not to be given too much weight. But there is considerable public opinion which is by no means lacking in expression that there is a tendency in some of our colleges to give too much attention to the criticism of the administration of government and too little attention to the examination and demonstration of the soundness of the fundamental principles of free institutions. There is some feeling, also, that they are not giving effective instruction in the truths of religion. \* \* \*

"The main emphasis of our educational institutions should be put on the soundness of the fundamental principles of free institutions. Self-government, the rule of the people, is a finality. It is the theory of our Constitution. There is only one substitute that can be made for it, and that is the rule of a part of the people. Colleges were not founded to support governors; they were founded to support the Government. If they fail in that they fail in one of their chief purposes."

The colleges would fail of their purpose also, Mr. Coolidge said, unless in addition to instruction in the relationship between man and man there was also instruction in the relationship of man to the universe.

"A rare intellectual power is not sufficient to meet the requirements of life. The chief need of the world is spiritual power, force of character, which is the result of religious convictions," he added.