

WESTERN  
DES MOINES, I.

# The CONTINENT



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## The Influential College Man

EVERY YOUNG FELLOW who has ambition enough to want a college course has dreams of becoming in the days beyond his college experience—when he is "out in the world," as the common phrase goes—a man of influence and leadership.

Why, though, should he postpone those dreams till after college work is done? Why should he not count on being a man of influence in college? Suppose a boy going up to college should carry in his heart the hidden desire to begin right there his career of good influence?

What shall he have his eye on? Is it not that he will try to have his four years in school count somehow to make his institution a place more congenial to fine ideals of living?

Down at the fundamental base of things, the main reason why any conscientious man wants to live in the world a life of good influence, is simply because he does not want his generation to suffer, in the eyes of generations following, the reproach of having let the world slip lower during the period when he was alive. In place of that he wants his time to be credited with some gain if possible.

And looked at rightly, that motive in college ought to be immensely intensified, for it is concentrated into a briefer time and on a smaller group.

The challenge to live an influential life is much greater in college than in the world, since the power of one man's influence tells more quickly and more evidently in the special circumstances of college life. Generations are shorter there; society is more compact.

Students of years gone by have given the school certain traditions tending to high ideals. What student is willing to have it said that in his time those ideals were shattered and trampled down? Or if a different kind of students have blighted the institution with unmanly and debasing traditions, what honorable youth is willing to let it be said after him that in his time there was no improvement?

These remarks are, of course, not intended to encourage any prospective college student to start for school this fall with his thoughts set on showing himself there a mighty reformer. Anybody old enough to go to college ought already to have learned that presenting one's self anywhere as a person piously dedicated to setting other folks right is the very worst possible way to acquire influence.

Influence is not achieved or cultivated by pretensions to either wisdom or piety. It is attained instead by living a clean, simple, unassuming life of hearty brotherhood among comrades whom one loves and wants to be loved by—living patiently and quietly and helpfully until the circle one lives with has come to trust alike his sincerity, his unselfishness, his discretion and his sympathy. Then influence comes without need of seeking for it.

But the thing which a student entering college this fall or any other fall can resolve on from the first, is that he will put himself on the side of the best factors that he finds in his chosen school.

He will undoubtedly find a group of manly fellows who have set out to deal with life seriously and meet its obligations on the highest plane. He will also find a group of the indifferent and careless—the fellows whose best ideal of life so far is to have a good time.

And the man who would have his college career count for strengthening college ideals can at once identify himself unmistakably with the more serious group. That does not mean, of course, that he needs to cut himself off from the others, but he can make them know that he lives definitely by another rule.

Perhaps at the first it may seem irksome to keep always studying one's college behavior with a view to shaping every action for the good of the society in which one lives. But this is the only way anybody lives an influential life in any society, and if a boy asks for influence in the world outside of college, he might as well begin so in college.

# The Kind of Young Men the Church Wants

BY CLELAND B. McAFEE

**T**HERE are four special traits needed today by men who are to be ministers of the gospel, traits which young men may well look for in themselves and which their pastors or other advisers may seek in them. Their presence helps to create a presumption that God has called a man to this work.

First, spiritual concern growing out of some measure of spiritual experience. That goes along with the very idea of the ministry. A minister is a saved man, but he is also in the business of saving. If he does not care about people or is not willing to learn to care, he ought not to go into the ministry in these demanding times. But if people seem to him valuable and important by reason of some inherent quality which they have or some quality which the Christian gospel can give them, then he is in so far of ministerial material.



Dr. Cleland B. McAfee

His spiritual experience may be wholly unlike other people's; it must be his own. But it must be there, and it must make the gospel of Christ seem to him supremely worth while for what it can do with a man who needs to have something done with him. It needs to be plastic, not a hard and fast experience which cannot stand alteration and expansion. He cannot demand that his experience be duplicated in everybody else, but he must be so eager to see the work of the gospel appear in the lives of other people that he will detect it in forms very unlike his own.

## Large Tasks Demand Intellectual Power

Second, some measure of intellectual ability; in these days, by all means, the larger the better. Hearers sometimes say they do not want intellectual preaching. But the thing that they do not want is any kind of preaching that is not the outcome of spiritual experience and concern. Granted that, then they always want as much intellectual power as a minister has to expend on his sermons. The gospel was not given merely to be lived in all the world, but to be preached there, and the minister must be a man who knows how to preach.

A traveling man said in my hearing the other day that he went about a good deal and always went to church, but that most of the sermons he heard were simply not worth the time it took to listen to them. He added his opinion that most of the people who go to most churches do not listen to the sermon, because they cannot; it does not command their intellects. Let that judgment be called drastic; it still remains that we mightily need a better quality of sermons throughout the whole church, sermons with more in them, with better digested thought, with wider application to life, with finer appreciation of shades of thought, with more to grip them.

This intellectual equipment is needed also for the mastery of the large tasks of the church in which the minister ought to be the leader. He is not, of course, to do all the work, but the part he does do is done with the head. He has to be brains for a large part of the enterprise. Thinkers need not want any wider scope for their power than the ministry offers today.

The third and fourth traits should be mentioned together, since they are really the two which go to make up the power of leader-

ship—loyalty and courage. Loyalty looks backward and outward on one's fellows; courage looks forward and outward on one's enemies. Pushed to extreme, loyalty makes up your tough conservative, to whom the ancient things are the only ones worth while. Pushed to extreme, courage makes up your flighty liberal, to whom every new notion is sure evidence of the divine presence. Some of these extremists the church doubtless can always use to advantage, but it is betraying no confidence to say that the present supply is so nearly adequate to the demand that no more need be sought for. No man lives in whom one or the other is not accented, but the two together make a vigorous combination.

## Be Loyal to the Old, Courageous Toward the New

There are certain great loyalties due to the past. A minister is an heir to much that is too fine to be discounted in the interest of novelties. It is not a crime to be orthodox, nor does it reveal mental feebleness. And, on the other hand, if we believe in a living Spirit of God in the church today, we are committed to freedom for the acceptance of any new light that may come to us. Challenging every new proposal of truth with the query whether it can be squared instantly with everything we have had handed down to us is poorly concealed skepticism about the present guidance of the Spirit of God. The same principle applies to the matter of church methods. Old ones are not to be abandoned because they are old; loyalty to them is right. But new ones are not to be discounted because they are new; courage is right also.

These two blend into the spirit of leadership. Recently I have been hearing a great deal about the need for leaders in the church. Several interested laymen in one section of the church answered my question as to the kind of ministers that district needed by saying, "Give us men who can lead, no matter what they believe, men with big plans and daring enough to inspire other people with belief in those plans!" That is not to minimize belief, because men without a solid belief are not safe leaders. But the demand is a legitimate one. Scared believers are particularly out of place in the ministry. Gideon was told to send all the "fearful and trembling" home before the battle came on. When real fighting is to be done, cowards clutter up the battle field badly.

Men in the ministry are called to be loyal and courageous, then faithful to what has been in the past but absolutely fearless for what will be in the future. For such men the seminaries are ready. They exist to help them into strength. Other types of men seminaries frequently get, and for them they do their best, but this picked type—spiritual, intellectual, leaders in spirit and purpose—the seminaries are eager for them because they are peculiarly the men whom the church needs.

## Some Essentials in School Selection

BY T. H. McMICHAEL

**I** ASKED a high school boy to tell me the first thing he would consider in selecting his school, and he answered: "Whether any of my friends are there or not." I asked another, whose answer was, "The brand of athletics." I asked a father, and he said, "The cost"; a mother, and her answer was, "The distance from home." Evidently the things to be made sure of are many and varied. It is hard, therefore, to select five or six factors and to say these are as fixed and as definite as the five points of Calvinism.

At the risk, then, of overlooking some and over emphasizing



Nearly 1,000 Young Men from Colleges of the Middle West Gathered at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, in Annual Y. M. C. A. Conference