

as can may find your way to its privileges and its associations. Last year was started, in modest rooms over the mechanical laboratories, what is perhaps the most democratic of all our efforts in this direction. That is what has come to be called the "Tech Union," which is nothing other than a suite of comfortable rooms, provided by the kindness of a few friends, in which Institute gatherings may be held, where a dinner may be partaken of at small cost, and where it is possible for the poorest as well as the richest student to spend a comfortable and joyous evening in the company of colleagues and teachers. For myself, I am impressed each year more and more with the fact that we Americans spend great sums of money, out of which we get very little pleasure. The ability to have a good time with small means and under simple surroundings is one which we need to cultivate, and in the Tech Union that opportunity is made easy. In the large sitting-room of the Union have just been placed two hundred of the new songbooks just issued at the close of last year, which I hope may serve to add to the sociable character of the place.

There are other agencies, which I will not take the time to mention minutely, which give our students the opportunity for intercourse and contact with those outside the Institute, which I hope you may avail yourselves of freely. And particularly let me commend to you as engineers, that you avail yourselves of frequent opportunity to "rub elbows" with working men. As engineers you must stand in direct contact with such men, and if we are ever in this country to work out the problem of right relations between employers and laborers, you men who are engineers must help to that solution. You stand between capital and labor; you give a hand to each. You ought to be able, if you are educated, broad-minded, sympathetic men, to understand that each of the parties in this dispute has rights which the other ought to respect, and that both have obligations to the public which they must in the end recognize and respond to; but they will be brought to recognize their mutual obligations and relations all the quicker if you men who are engineers can bring to the study of such problems an open mind, a judicial spirit and a sympathetic appreciation of the difficulties of each.

There is one project in the Institute, the immediate aim of which is the promotion of this sort of contact, about which I will say just one word. Within a quarter of an hour's walk of this building lies a tenement house district of the city of Boston, made up of 25,000 working people, factory hands, casual laborers, and the more poorly paid grades of clerks. It is a district almost barren of social influences and in which the ideals of people are being shaped more and more by ambitious leaders, who become unconsciously, not only political leaders but

moral leaders. In the midst of this district stands what is called "Tech House," a three-story brick building, fitted and equipped as a residence, in which a half dozen Institute students, sufficiently interested in the social and labor problems of the day to rub elbows with working men and working women, have their home. In addition to these six men who are daily coming into contact with the population of this region, there is need for several score of men, who can give an evening, or even an hour a week to some form of personal service. The men to volunteer are the men who can saw wood and show a group of small boys how to saw wood; men who understand the rudiments of telegraphy, who can make simple demonstrations in electricity for the edification of other men; steamfitters and engineers, or who can play ball or cricket or can do anything else to interest boys and men who have few wholesome interests in life and who will approach everything new without training and without discipline. Those of you who are willing to give an hour or an evening to such work will get your own reward in the knowledge of the real problems which concern the relations of capital and labor, which affect thrift and waste, and which have to do with the relations of the people themselves to politics.

I urge you all the more strongly to take some interest in these social matters, standing as we do in the midst of a great city, because the college education of to-day is being sharply criticized by business men and by others from this standpoint. The statement is made again and again that the college training of to-day develops the intellect, but not character, that it quickens a man's intellectual faculties, but does not enlarge his moral and social sympathies. If that is a just criticism, it is a most serious one, for I can assure you most frankly that if your scientific studies here furnish you no suggestions as to your relations with other men, if they do not connect themselves with the philosophy of life and of conduct, if they do not strengthen your moral purpose and help to clear your conception of truth and of duty and quicken your sympathies with other men, then you have got only the husks of an education.

I believe this criticism is one to be met most frankly and fairly, but personally I do not believe that the criticism is warranted in any large measure. On the other hand, there have been some very conspicuous failures in the business world, of recent date, for lack of that very intellectual and moral poise which an education ought to give. I do think, however, that many men who come to college and to technical schools fail to think out for themselves the reasons why they come, and fail to recognize, therefore, the opportunities before them and the objects which they may attain. There is no better thing for you to do at the beginning of your school year than to make clear to yourself the reason which brings