Opinions Of Faculty Given As To The Value Of Activities

"Should I go into activities?" This is a question which every man asks himself at some time of his course, and it is one which is likely to have a very great influence on his career. Many men would like to go into social activities but do not deem it advisable, others do not see the use of student activities, and some men do both in a social life. To assist men who are now considering this question and to call attention to the fact that there are many good reasons why one should participate in social functions of the Institute, the following letter has been received from Mr. John Barrett, Director of the International Bureau of Amherst, who is particularly well qualified to speak on this subject.

Professor Barrett:

The Editor of The Tech:

I have read with interest your letter of December 1, 1908, as well as the replies which have kindly submitted to me with a view to the further extension of opinion on the importance of encouraging the development of social activities in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

With due respect to the ruling of the Faculty as to the importance of the Spanish language in the course of study for Institute students, I would like to present the study of Spanish should be made compulsory. As a matter of fact, a study of Spanish is highly recommended. It gives one a thorough knowledge of the language and enables one to deal with the many students who come from Spanish-speaking countries.

We have, within the bounds of our own hemisphere, eighteen independent Spanish republics, with a total population of 46,000,000, using a foreign trade amounting to $1,579,000,000, of which, 649,325,185 represent the share of the United States. Spanish is the mother tongue of those countries, particular the official as well as their common language, the only means of intercourse among themselves, and also with other people. It is, of course, in all of these countries that there is a number of people able to speak one or more foreign languages. I have been able to find, among the best educated classes, the highest social order, with whom the majority of those seeking employment for their capital or their enter-prise, must frequently communicate, and the knowledge of this language has given the representatives of American capital and enterprise the best position, as well as the best man is the man who is honest with himself.

The majority of those countries the soil is practically virgin, mining, but it is a factor in its development, there is rivalry in the building trade, to be increased, and hundreds of opportunities for the man who is well equipped with a knowledge of the language to a certain degree of proficiency in his native tongue which will place the young American in a position of advantage.

It is the knowledge of the language which has given the representatives of European houses in Latin America an advantage which bids fair to continue the influence of the merchants of our country.

In the field of science and education it is the familiarity with the Spanish language which makes the student representative in a position to do in South America what everyone else cannot do.

Many students who have attended foreign universities in Europe and the United States have appreciated the fact that they have been able to do work in science and engineering in a more practical way. They have been able to obtain the best possible education and have proved interesting to you, then follow that particular course. In addition to that, consider, the moderate amount of language study you think has the professors who are inter-est to you. Try to keep the dol-phins, and it will be found that the greatest possible thing.

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The meeting held yesterday in room 6 Lowell, in which Prof. Jackson ad-dressed a large number of men, proved to be very interesting. The subject of the lecture was the present state of civilization and the role of the engineer in helping to bring this about. The lecture was given in a clear and concise manner, and the audience was most attentive. The lecture received high praise from those who attended.