

BOX No. 21

ALFRED UNIVERSITY

College Opening Addresses

by

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The opening of the eighty-seventh year of Alfred University brings new interests, new problems and new opportunities. It is well to pause on the threshold of the year for a brief analysis of the outstanding features that mark this beginning of a new college year.

We make progress by noting both achievements and failures, and correlating the materials at hand out of which the future is to be made.

Last year was a notable milestone in Alfred's history. It was an epoch making year in various respects.

1. It was the year of a great financial campaign which completed the raising of over \$400,000

and which gave Alfred an unquestioned ranking among the standard "A" class colleges of the country. The standardizing agencies of the country all recognized the distinctive achievement which won an appropriation of \$100,000 from the General Education Board. That fact gave Alfred a new rating never before enjoyed. The co-operation of the student body in this great achievement, to the extent of student subscriptions aggregating \$10,000, was a demonstration of student loyalty never excelled by any college.

2. The unprecedented enrolment of last year taxed to the utmost the laboratory facilities of the college and convinced the Trustees of the necessity for a new laboratory building to be erected at once.

3. The Pre-medical Course was reorganized and enlarged to meet the requirements of all "A" class medical colleges.

4. A large athletic schedule was organized and carried through within the income of the Association, ^{ec} and a margin of some \$700 was saved to be applied on the debt of preceding years.

5. The students of the college enlarged the scope of self-government ideals by making officers of the classes or organizations responsible for infractions in discipline by classes or organizations. The students also instructed the ^{ec} Senate to take active measures to prevent infractions as well as to impose penalties for such infractions.

6. Banquet contests, having long outgrown their early limits and safeguards, and having become an institution of grave danger, and serious concern to the authorities and patrons of the ^{DC} University, were abolished by two successive and decisive votes of the student body, while a system of less dangerous and objectionable contests was successfully inaugurated.

7. One fraternity acquired a handsome home which it enjoyed during the year, and a sorority established itself in an independent home and demonstrated its ability to finance and carry out a successful year's program.

8. An index system has been established and applied in the grade ratings of the several groups of

students.

Other significant achievements of the past year might be noted, but these are sufficient to indicate the vantage ground of this ^{new} year over any previous year. All this accumulation of sentiment, idealism, experience and traditions, from year to year, is an important element in the material out of which colleges are made, and by means of which, immaturities, errors, blunders and exccrescences are eliminated.

The year upon which we have now entered may not have to its credit, in the end, so large a number of major achievements as the one just passed; but it has even greater possibilities for progress than any previous year.

1. We shall soon be in possession of the new science laboratory, which will enrich the opportunity for high class work in Chemistry and Biology beyond anything Alfred has ever yet enjoyed.

2. Two additional fraternities have just acquired excellent homes of their own, in which they are now established. All these new student houses add rooming and boarding facilities to the University for a hundred students or more and increase the value of the educational plant by more than thirty thousand dollars. This year should establish relations and traditions among these excellently housed fraternities that have not been practicable heretofore. I should be glad if this year could develop an inter-

fraternity council which would aid in guiding and standardizing fraternity activities. That is a step in the way of progress that should soon be made.

Bitterness and unsportsmanlike rivalries are limited among institutions within a college, as among colleges themselves, to periods of infancy and immaturity. Twenty-five years ago there was a fierceness and bitterness of rivalry and competition among colleges themselves that has now largely passed away. Maturity and standardization generate self-respect, confidence, and comradeship.

3. In athletics the year starts off with exceptional promise. The large number of men who are out for football indicates a much wider interest in the sport among the men, provides a larger number

of men from whom to select a winning team and conforms to the rapidly growing sentiment of the country that all students should participate in athletics in some form or other. The recent agreement between Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, restricting eligibility, limiting practice time, and coaches limiting practice time, and otherwise reforming the sport, will help smaller colleges to eliminate the professionalism which, in many places, has become so offensive in recent years. I am sure Alfred is making an honest and successful effort to maintain clean, sportsmanlike athletics, and still produce a winning team.

Criticism has been made that social matters interfere with athletics at Alfred. It has been

said that because Alfred is a coeducational institution we can never expect to get good practice and good scholarship both from our men. Social engagements take up so much time and are so much on the minds of students that we can never expect to get proper training or high scholarship. I resent that criticism, as a necessary condition of coeducation. I do not believe that it is necessary, but that a proper self-respect and self-control can do away with every cause for such criticism.

I regret, however, that there has in the past, sometimes been just ground for such criticism. The fault and the criticism has not been limited to our men. College women who encourage excessive social attentions from young men, and permit them to

consume time, thought, and energy, in these matters that should be devoted to study and training, are just as disloyal to the college and to athletics as are the men who permit themselves to be imposed upon and to be led into criticisable neglect of study and training.

Education and scholarship are the first requisites of a college. Athletics, while desirable, are secondary. Social activities and relationships are wholly incidental. They are pleasant and profitable in moderation and under proper restraints, but when they become the absorbing motive of college life, the college has degenerated into a social club.

I greatly desire that this year shall demonstrate

to the Alumni Advisory Board on Athletics, and to the alumni and friends of the college, that Alfred men and women can no longer be justly criticised on this ground. It is not necessary that our college, and our college life should be compromised by a few soft, silly-headed couples that must always be seen together about the campus, in the library, hanging around dormitory doors, or strolling about the streets, both out of and in study hours. A healthy resentment by the student body of such silliness, will soon put a stop to a proclivity to "spooning" and hand-holding which has sometimes become painfully disgusting.

Such healthy resentment will also greatly elevate the standards of scholarship, as well as advance athletic records.

4. The action of the student body last spring in ~~confering~~^{ing} larger responsibilities and powers upon the ~~student~~ ^{sc} Senate, ^{sc} gives an unusual opportunity this year for widening the usefulness and effectiveness of the ~~Senate~~. ^{sc} This achievement will, however, be very largely dependent upon the support and co-operation which the student body gives the ~~Senate~~. ^{sc}

There seems to have grown up, in the past, a kind of upper class organization, unauthorized by any student or university authority, but with self-delegated responsibility, for independently administering discipline among ~~the~~ students. The new interpretation of the ~~Senate's~~ ^{sc} responsibilities and duties, removes any excuse for an executive body acting

independently from the ~~Senate~~.
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• The student body, acting with the ~~Senate~~ and
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under its leadership and direction, may now make the
Student ~~Senate~~ more distinctly an executive and
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judicial body than ever before. Such elevation of
the ~~Senate~~ to its rightful place as an elected and
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representative body, will remove some very just and
adverse criticism of our student activities. I look
upon this exaltation of the function of the ~~Senate~~,
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as one of the most attractive possibilities of this
college year.

5. One other opportunity for notable achievement
this year, which I must mention in conclusion, is in
the correlation of the religious and spiritual life

of Alfred University. About 80% of the student body is now made up of people who observe Sunday as a Sabbath. Last year they represented sixteen different denominations. The village church, worshipping on Saturday, cordially invites all who wish to do so to unite in that worship. But there has been a growing Sunday-keeping congregation for many years. There is also now a larger number of Sunday-keeping families in the village than ever before. Recently there has been organized ~~the~~ the Union Church of Alfred, composed of residents and students who worship on Sunday. At the service last Sunday at which over a hundred persons were present, fifty signed the membership pledge of the Union Church.

I confidently expect that within the year this membership will be doubled or trebled. It is a fine development of the religious life of the college and community, and it is a step forward which will make this year notable in the history of Alfred.

In the light of all these facts, and with the largest total enrolment ever enjoyed by Alfred, I look forward to the completion of the eighty-seventh year as the best and most successful year in Alfred's history.