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THE CONDITIONS TODAY

A year ago I called public attention to the difficulties of the University. It is necessary to do so again. As was pointed out last winter, unless considerable relief is granted by the legislature which meets next January, the opening of the next biennium will see a decided reduction of the work of the University and a permanent lowering of its standards.

The income of the mill tax for the present University year is \$2,500,000. In 1911-12 it was \$2,292,000. This is an increase of less than 11 per cent since 1911-12.

Meantime, the purchasing power of the dollar has fallen 50 per cent.

Meantime, the student enrollment has increased 100 per cent. The total registration last year was 9,208. It will be near or beyond 10,000 this year. The number registered November 6 was 8,250.

Meantime, it has been impracticable to equip or man the building for the College of Education.

Meantime, the teaching staff has been inadequately paid for at least two years, and it has been difficult, and in some lines impossible, to get teachers.

Meantime, the research work of the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Engineering Experiment Station, and the Graduate School is insufficiently provided for, and many lines of research are suspended.

AN ADDITION TO WEALTH

The University has proved its direct economic advantage to the people. Many thoughtful citizens now realize that some of the discoveries which the University has made are individually worth much more to the State and nation than all the appropriations which the institution will get in a hundred years.

Only a week or so ago the University announced that it had developed a new variety of wheat which has, on a five year average, outyielded its predecessor six bushels to the acre. Last year there were 2,400,000 acres planted to wheat in Illinois.

The yield of corn, our greatest crop, has been turned from a gradual decline to a decided upward trend, and land is now bought and sold upon the basis of the soil survey conducted by the University.

Meantime, the extension work of the University, carrying information direct to the people, has been diminished.

Meantime and now we have classes too large to teach properly, an insufficient staff, inadequate equipment, and an insufficient number of classrooms and laboratories, so that some of the work has to be carried on under unhealthful conditions.

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Size of Classes

The standard size of class for good work is 25. On November 6 we were teaching at Urbana 838 classes larger than 25, 357 classes larger than 35, and 135 classes larger than 50.

2. Inadequate Space

The present quarters for Physical Training for Women were erected when there were fewer than 600 women students. Today there are nearly 1900. The swimming tank they use is 13x36 ft., and 325 girls are registered to take swimming. The classes closed at that number. The gymnasium has 28 shower baths and 4 tub baths to accommodate classes ranging from 84 to 110 an hour. There are 720 sq. ft. of dressing room space to accommodate from 174 to 212 people at one time. There are 758 lockers, 378 of which are in the basement with no dressing rooms.

The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences reports that the laboratories in Botany and Chemistry are all overcrowded and in most cases inadequately equipped for the number of students daily using them. Piles of boxes, substitutes for lockers for apparatus, are stacked in the laboratories and halls of the Chemistry Building.

The College of Agriculture reports that the Soil Physics laboratories are in such condition that certain types of advanced work cannot be given at all. Similar conditions prevail in Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Crop Production, and Farm Mechanics.

In the College of Commerce the reading and study room was provided for about 250 students several years ago. There are now 1700.

In the Library, reading room space was provided for the 2500 students at that time expected to be in attendance in a year or two after the building was erected. Three times that number now need its facilities. It has 265 chairs. It should have 1000.

In the Colleges of Medicine and Dentistry in Chicago equally bad conditions prevail. There have been numerous changes of staff due to inadequate salaries. The laboratories are over-crowded, equipment is inadequate, and conditions of study unsanitary. Many students had to be turned away because there was no room and no sufficient teaching staff.

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Ilou Ekin

Owing to increase in number of students, loss of men and changes from full-time to half-time positions in the College of Medicine, the efficiency of the teaching staff is from one-third to one-half less than at the beginning of the war.

The Dean of the College of Dentistry reports:

"We have suffered very severely this year in faculty changes, mostly through the decisions of some of our best men to leave the teaching field entirely for active practise. This is entirely because we are unable to pay a decent living wage. We are badly in need of two or three full-time men, but they are not to be had for the salary we have to offer."

Pages of illustrations like these could be given in detail.

3. Teaching Work Curtailed

More than 60 classes provided for in the catalog are not being given.

INADEQUATE STAFF

The number of teachers needed today at Urbana-Champaign to reduce large classes to a reasonable number like 30, is 56, according to our best estimate. In the Medical, Dental, and Pharmacy departments in Chicago probably 10 more are needed. To put these departments on a proper basis next year will require an addition of probably 15 new men. At Urbana-Champaign there are approximately 100 positions unfilled. It should be noted that only one new class subject has been offered thus far in two years, and that was put in as an alternative for an existing class so as to reduce the excessive number in the latter.

REDUCTION OF RESEARCH

The first and most important work of the University is to train young men and women, to develop character, to make them future servants of the people in leading the way in cultural ideals and the economic and social practises that go to make up progress.

But leaders must give out truth. The second great work of the University, therefore, is to discover new truth. It is the people's agency of research. As has been remarked before, if the University did no teaching work, it would justify the appropriations made to it by the results of its research. All our departments are conducting research. The cultural inspiration given to the life of a great people by the work of a Lorado Taft, an Emerson, or a Longfellow, is as important in the long run as the addition to its material wealth from a new chemical discovery. But the former cannot be measured in dollars. The latter often can. Even if we omit the incalculable but intangible additions to the people's welfare made by discoveries of the first kind, it is yet easy to prove that those of the second kind, by their additions to economic welfare, contribute far more than the

University costs. Illustrations are familiar, among them the oft cited coal coking process of Professor Parr and the agricultural work of Professor Hopkins, and now the discovery of "Turkey Red 10-110" wheat; the connection between proper soil inoculation and the growth of alfalfa; a scientific classification and gradation of cattle, horses, and swine, adopted by the Federal Government; the preparation of a serum for the cure of corn stalk disease among animals. Dean Davenport writes: "In miniature, the Agricultural Experiment Station represents the lines of agricultural activities in the State and [its research work reflects its attempt to answer] the queries that are just now uppermost in the minds of its leading farmers."

In spite of the importance of research as just discussed, we have been obliged to discontinue practically one whole line of work in the Division of Plant Breeding, some in the line of Soil Biology, practically all steer feeding and winter maintenance investigations, as well as a large number of others in agriculture.

The Dairy Department is large and yet it is woefully inadequate to meet the demands of the Dairy Industry. Our department has not been able to keep abreast with the development of the dairy business. It lags behind. Especially is this true in the matter of up-to-date, exact information, which can be secured only through research.

The staff of the Engineering Experiment Station during the past year has been reduced below that of the years prior to the war, and as a consequence our research activities have been seriously impaired. The work has been conducted with satisfactory efficiency only in the Departments of Ceramic Engineering and Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, and in connection with certain co-operative investigations where special funds have been provided. Research work has almost been suspended in some of the departments because of the lack of assistance and of the heavy teaching schedules imposed upon members of the faculty. Practically all our locomotive work is dropped because of lack of money. So are researches in other lines.

The State needs new knowledge for its agricultural and industrial progress. In every department of agricultural work men are calling on the University for help that it cannot give because it does not have the knowledge and has not the means to carry on experiments to discover it. The same is true in industrial research and human research.

GROWTH OF STUDENT BODY

Why has the enrollment of the University of Illinois grown so rapidly? Why do indications point to a continued growth?

The outstanding fact is that the public schools of the State have grown so tremendously that each year an increased number of high school graduates are sent to the State University. By January 1, 1921, it is estimated that, in addition to the many town and city high schools, approximately 275 community high schools will be in operation in Illinois. In the ten year period, 1908-

1918, the number of state high schools has increased 75 per cent, while the number of pupils has increased from 54,000 to 111,571, or 105 per cent. A rough authoritative estimate indicates a 50 per cent increase in high school enrollment the past year as over the preceding year.

In 1918 the graduates from high schools in Illinois numbered 16,071. Last spring the number was considerably larger, and in five years more seems certain to double. Yet the public high school system of the State has just started on its program of compulsory education.

If the University cannot, even with its present overload, properly care for all the students who want to enter now, what will the situation be in five, ten, or twenty years?

HOUSING PROBLEM

The University is further confronted with the necessity of housing its students. Many universities provide housing facilities. The University of Illinois does not, except for one residence hall for women. The Y. M. C. A. building has been leased by the University as a residence hall for boys and ninety-five are being taken care of there. The students live mainly in fraternity and sorority houses and in private rooming houses.

SHALL WE RETROGRADE?

The University of Illinois is at the turn of the road. It must retrace the steps it has so rapidly taken in the past several years and become a third or fourth rate University, or else

1. Sufficient equipment must be provided to make the University's work at least as efficient as it was three or four years ago.
2. The staff must be increased in order to care efficiently for the work formerly done and for the additional work that has come in the past three or four years.
3. A margin of income must be provided to care for the increase in teaching, research, and administration due to larger enrollment.
4. The working equipment of the University must be brought up to date. New laboratory equipment must be installed; depleted herds must be replenished; antiquated and worn-out machinery must be replaced.
5. Necessary buildings must be added. The need of a new library building, additional biological laboratory space, a new agricultural group, and new engineering laboratories has been felt for years. They should be erected immediately.

WHAT WE NEED

It is evident, therefore, that the University needs more teachers, more investigators, more equipment, and more room. If its needs were to be provided for by the next legislature in proportion to the increase in the number of students and the rise of prices, it should have an annual appropriation from the State, for operation and maintenance, of two and one-half times its former total and, in addition, a suitable sum for additional buildings. This would mean a total of between seven and eight million dollars a year. Other state institutions are asking for as much as this or more. But we believe that with new economies, careful management, and more favorable economic conditions, we can get on with much less. Therefore it is proposed that the University shall ask from the next legislature only a sixty per cent increase for operation and maintenance, and \$1,250,000 a year for permanent improvement, lands, and buildings, or \$5,250,000 a year.

THE PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

It is intended, therefore, to ask the people of the State, through their legislature:

1. To appropriate for the first year of the biennium for operation, maintenance, equipment, and certain extensions the sum of \$4,000,000 per year, \$2,500,000 of it from the University mill tax and the balance from the general revenue;
2. To appropriate \$1,000,000 a year for the next two years for buildings that must be completed within that period to meet the University's pressing needs;
3. To appropriate \$250,000 a year for two years to begin a new group of agricultural buildings;
4. To amend the mill tax law by changing the rate from two-thirds of a mill to one full mill, which was the original rate;
5. To make it possible for the University to have a continuous policy with reference to its building by passing an additional mill tax law of one-fourth of a mill, so as to provide for the continuance of the \$1,000,000 a year, to meet the building needs of the University for a period of ten years, or until repealed.

This is a large request, although much smaller, as said above, than that of some of our sister state institutions whose enrollment of students is less than that of the University of Illinois. It is a reasonable minimum, a conservative estimate. It is for the people of the State themselves to decide whether it shall be given by the legislature and the incoming administration. If you believe in it, tell your representatives and your senator.

Does every citizen know—do you yourself know

That the present appropriation to the University of Illinois does not even meet maintenance costs, let alone build classrooms and laboratories, or provide other necessary buildings?

That unless relief comes the University may have to close its doors to many students in the early future, as, indeed, it has already done to some medical students?

That no man is able to get along on the same money as in 1913, especially if his family is twice as large?

That the University, whose "family" is more than twice as large, cannot get along either?

What will **YOU** do about it?

Will you make the University problem your own?

Will you see your Representatives and Senator and urge them to support the above program?

Will you write the University saying you have done so?