

means growth. In the first place, it is a virgin soil—not in the sense of purity and innocence, but because age has not worn out its fertility. You come among us with unlimited possibilities; comparatively little preparation, because of your youth, and having in your natures the germs of all sorts of growth, the unoccupied ground for receiving many more.

Your natures are like a piece of newly cleared garden soil, picketed in, it is true, from the incursions of fiercer enemies, but with cracks looking out in all directions, a sub-soil which connects you with the outside, a sky above you open to the droppings of every strange bird, with an atmosphere of breezes, and falling showers, misty with all sorts of seeds, sometimes with killing frosts. It is not the college policy to build a solid wall around you and cover you over as Mr. Eberspacher does his hot-house plants, or to put calculated restrictions about you as the experiment station does its beds. You have just as much liberty as I have, or as your president has, only, being young still, it is thought you may forget things, and they are written out for your guidance. It is no more my privilege to wander about at night, or make unseemly noises, or injure college property, or gamble, or drink, or show disrespect to you or the officers than it is yours. I have a copy of your regulations in my keeping; I know no single one to which I am not directly or indirectly in relationship to college amenable. This morning's service is no more compulsory for you than it is for me, or for those ladies, or for the members of the faculty. I would be ashamed to learn that any of you study more or harder than we, your instructors do. The laws of the college about you are just like palings or props set to young sprouts which are inclined to bend with every breeze; their penalties are efforts to reach your reason, and give you that experience which the world outside would force upon you with many a kick and blow, and bruise and heartless thrust. In the absence of parents, your natural guides, and in view of your numbers, such artificial means of restraint and inducements to do healthy work have to be resorted to.

But, the soil of college life is not an experimental one. The object is not to make a bulletin by testing what sort of a new creature can be made out of you by stuffing you with a certain proportion of mathematical food, feeding you on all the natural