THE NATION'S CHIEF NEED OF THE HOUR

HARRIS WEINSTOCK

WITH NO MARK OR BRAND

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ADDRESS AT THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT OF THE LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

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What think you is the Nation's chief need of the hour? I hear one answer, "a greater navy"; another, "a mightier army"; yet another, "public ownership of the railroads"; still another, "restriction of immigration"; yet another, "a solution of the war between capital and labor"; and so on. These are all important needs, but, to my mind, they are far from the most crying want of the Nation. What the Republic most needs to-day is MEN: Men who, in the words of Holland, "Have strong hearts, true faith, and ready hands; men whom the lust of office does not kill, men whom the spoils of office cannot buy, men who possess opinions and a will, men who have honor, men who will not lie."

Never in this land was there a time when the demand for men was so great as to-day. Not that men good and true are fewer than in the past,—at no time in the history of the country were there so many as now,—but because the demand has outrun the supply. In every walk of life, private and public, the cry is MEN! MEN! MEN! men who combine character with ability; men who can think and act, men who are safe and sound.

The captains of industry and of trade are seeking them with search lights. The Churches, the Universities, and the Forums; the Cities, the States, and the Nation, were never in such dire need as now for high-souled, clean-handed, strong-spirited, aggressive men, who see the need of the hour and fill it, who can assume responsibilities, and discharge them, who know their duties, and fearlessly perform them.
As our National possibilities widen, this demand for men must grow. Unless the want can be met, the Nation, sooner or later, will find itself straight-jacketed, and its growth in every way seriously checked.

Whence is to come this supply of men? Surely not from the gutters, not from the saloons, not from the gambling hells, nor yet from the hothouses of luxurious wealth. The men needed to upbuild and uplift must come largely from our institutions of learning, where brain is developed and mind is trained, where the power to think is cultivated, and where all forces tend to strengthen self-control, raise ideals, and build character. Our schools, as never before in the Nation's history, must be our stay and our hope. It is largely the school that must prepare our youth for the future citizenship. To our colleges and universities we look to give their fullest quota of high thinkers and able leaders.

If you young men and women about to leave these college walls for the great fields of activity stretching out before you have made the most of your educational opportunities, you begin the struggle as possessors, in a higher degree than you otherwise would have been, of the world's four most valuable assets: youth, health, trained minds, and character. With such an equipment the world should be yours.

In ten, or at most in twenty, years each one of you should be filling positions of trust and honor. Each one of you within that time should have become a potent factor for up-lifting and up-building men, as well as the conditions around you. If you fail in this, you will thereby demonstrate that there are weak spots in you which should have been nursed and strengthened.

Let me for an example cite a case in point.

Some twenty-five years ago two young men came out of the University of California. Both were born in modest circumstances; both were regarded as young
men of unusual strength and power; both faced important futures.

The profession of the law was chosen by each as a life career, and to-day these two men, in their very prime, are residents of San Francisco. One is reputed to be a millionaire, and the other is said to be comparatively a poor man. Measured by the yard-stick of dollars, the alleged millionaire has been eminently successful, and the other practically a failure. Judged by the standard of manhood, the rich man has made of life a wretched, dismal failure; the other a glorious success. To-day the names of these two men are known throughout the land, if not throughout the world. The one, as among the greatest living scoundrels, who has been prosecuted by the other, who ranks among the Nation's great patriots and most useful citizens. Abraham Ruef started out as a college man on an even footing with Francis J. Heney. With his talents and his energy he might to-day possess the same esteem and admiration as are now enjoyed by his college mate Heney. Unfortunately for him and for his State, there was a weak spot in Abraham Ruef. Temptation came to him, and greed prostituted his talent, his education, and his character. He was weak, and he fell. To-day all his piles of gold cannot save him from the well-merited contempt and contumely of his fellows, nor can his money, and his bonds and his houses keep him from a felon's cell.

The people of this State gave him, without price, the benefit of the highest education at their command. They searched the world over to provide him with the best and most highly-trained educators. They surrounded him, during the four years of his University life, with every uplifting influence to bring out the highest and best within him and asked of him in return nothing but decent citizenship. He repaid all this generosity and kindness by becoming the people's worst enemy, by
seeking to undermine the very foundations of government, by using his influence to elect to public office weak and vicious men. He employed his keen mind and his sharpened wits, trained at public expense, to evade and circumvent the law, to corrupt its officials, and to loot the city. Thus he has branded himself a base ingrate, and as great a traitor to the Republic in time of peace as was Benedict Arnold in time of war. No better object lesson is needed to show that the mere piling up of gold counts after all for little; that wealth stacked up mountain high, and wealth alone, does not make for happiness or for success; that a dry crust with a pure heart and clean hands is by far the better lot; and that talent and mental training are dangerous qualities to the State and to the individual when misused and misdirected.

The same temptations that came to Abraham Ruef, perhaps in somewhat different forms, came to Heney—and are going to come to you. It remains to be seen whether, like Ruef, you will be weak and fall, or like Heney you will remain strong and stand.

Do not pray to be kept out of temptations, pray for strength to resist them. He who was never tempted may be innocent, but he is not necessarily virtuous. Virtue lies not in ignorance of wrong doing, but in the power to resist. He who was never tempted to do wrong, knoweth not himself, and may be filled with criminal instincts that are simply awaiting an opportunity for their exercise.

Whatever may be your sphere of life, whether you enter the professions or become a part of the business world, temptations will surround you on all sides. As a lawyer, you will be tempted to seek victory rather than justice. As a preacher, you will be tempted to say what your congregation likes to hear rather than what it should hear. As a physician, you will be tempted to exagger-
The Nation's Chief Need of the Hour

ate the ills of your patients, and prolong their sickness so that your fees may be fattened. As a business man, you will be tempted hourly to lie and deceive in order to increase profits, as an employer the temptation will be strong to under-pay and over-work your dependents. As a public official, you will find yourself struggling between the conflicting claims of duty and self interest. Go where you will, do what you may, you will find no escape from temptation.

All the years of your life to this very hour have been simply preparatory. You have been laying in stores that are about to drawn upon. If your ideals have been low, your ambitions base, your thoughts impure, God help you unless you quickly change direction and start out in a new way.

Possibilities are greater to-day than ever before. A man in a given time can now rise higher or sink lower than hitherto in history. If you are bent on going to Hell you can get there quicker to-day than could your father, or your fathers's father. At no previous time were there so many clever men and women as now, lying awake nights devising short cuts to lead you to damnation by making vice more and more attractive. At no previous time, on the other hand, were the possibilities so great as now for character combined with ability to reach higher rungs on the ladder of achievement.

Society has paid its debt to you, by giving you everything that makes for the highest type of citizenship and manhood. It remains to be seen whether you are made of the stuff that appreciates blessings and is willing to repay them.

It has been pointed out that colleges cannot furnish wits, it can simply sharpen them. Your wits have been sharpened. If you become rogues you are likely to become more clever rogues than if you had not been here.
If you are to become high-minded men your training here should more speedily push you upward. The power has become yours to be used for weal or woe.

Even in the past all men were not a unit in favor of college training. Some of the world's strongest and ablest minds looked with disfavor upon a university career. Listen to some of them.

Herbert Spencer said: "Though academic training gives certain fullness of information, and a readiness to use it in ordinary ways, it diminishes the ability to use information in ways which are not ordinary."

When a friend expressed his regret that John Ericson had not been graduated from some technical institute, the great engineer answered that the fact was very fortunate. If he had taken, he said, a course at such an institution he would have acquired such a belief in authorities that he would never have been able to develop originality and make his own way in physics and mechanics.

Edison, probably the most marvelous inventor who ever lived, is quoted as having said that college bred men were of no use in his establishment, and that the men who had not passed through the approved curriculum were better. He is said further to have pointed out that Sir Benjamin Baker, who designed and executed Furth Bridge, the greatest and most remarkable bridge in the world, received no regular engineering training.

Ingersoll said: "You have no idea how many men are spoiled by what is called education. For the most part college is where pebbles are polished and diamonds dimmed. If Shakespeare had graduated at Oxford he might have been a grubbing attorney, or a poor parson."

All this was said of the college of the past. Experience has brought with it wisdom, and wisdom has led to a change in college educational methods. I think it can be truthfully said that the modern college earnestly
strives to encourage original research and the spirit of initiative. It would be unfortunate if it were true that the university of to-day stunts and blunts originality. Primarily it should teach how to find information when it is needed, and how to get an adequate acquaintance with facts. The student should be taught to rely chiefly upon his reason, and encouraged not to accept blindly the statements of authorities. He should be trained, as I believe he is trained, to think, and to think for himself and by himself, thus profiting by all the advantages that an academic training can give and escaping all its disadvantages.

Whatever progress has, in recent years, been made in higher education, there doubtless will continue to be among its students a percentage of failures. A recent writer has cleverly pointed out the following as some of the causes for these failures.

"Why the college man failed: He became saturated with other men's thoughts. He depended too much upon books. He thought his education was complete when he left college. He regarded his diploma as an insurance policy against failure. His mind was clogged with theories and impractical facts. He mistook a stuffed memory for an education, knowledge for power, and scholarship for mastership. He knew languages and sciences, but was ignorant of human nature. He knew Latin and Greek, but could not make out a bill of goods or a bill of sale. He was well posted in political economy, but could not write a decent business letter. His four years in the world of books left him permanently out of joint with the world of practical affairs. He was above beginning at the bottom of the ladder when he left college. The stamina of the vigorous independent mind he had brought from the farm was lost in academic refinements. He thought that the world would be at his feet when he left college and made no effort to win
its favor. He could not digest his knowledge. He knew enough, but could not manage it effectively—could not transmute his knowledge into practical power.”

I take it that every student in this great body, in common with the rest of us, is seeking and hopes to find in his career a fair share of happiness. Next to the possession of character, happiness comes as the result of achievement. What the Nation most needs at this hour is men; if possible, happy men. Nothing can give the human mind so much happiness, and so much self satisfaction, as the surmounting of difficulties, and the overcoming obstacles. The discovery of undreamt-of powers, the development of latent abilities, are sources of greatest pleasure to the human soul. Doing what, to others, seemed the impossible, demands, however, great powers of concentration, demands that the heart and soul and mind shall be focused on the work or the duty of the hour.

A sportsman saw, in a New York newspaper, an advertisement of a recipe that would prevent a shotgun from scattering. He sent two dollars for the recipe, and here is what he got: “Dear Sir:—To prevent a shotgun from scattering put in only one shot.”

Some of you who are about to graduate have had places made ready for you by friends or parents, and without any effort on your part, have awaiting you a ready-made berth. Some of you have settled upon a career, and come what may are determined to follow it, and some of you will step out into the broad world to-morrow with no fixed plans and no definite objective in view. To whichever of these classes you may belong, if you are to fill the Nation’s keenest want of the hour, put in only one shot at a time, and concentrate upon whatever may come to hand.

Some of you are filled with high ambitions for the future; some of you are sadly lacking in ambition, be-
because you want to do big things and do not see big things that need doing, or if you do see them you feel that it is useless for you in your febleness to attempt them. If this is your feeling, let me say to you that the men who have done, and who are doing, the big things, the men who to-day are rendering the Nation the greatest service, began by doing the small, the very small things, began by doing whatever came to hand, however lowly, however humble the task, with all their might, and with no immediate thought of the world's big tasks. The highest and best ambition, after all, is to fill completely the place we are in, and to do the work we are called upon to do, so well that it will stand a search-light test, and thus win for us that peace of mind that comes from service well done.

If you are to become the kind of man the Nation most needs, you must seek to do only the right thing, and do that one thing—whether it be the commanding of an army or the handling of a shovel—as if that, for the time being, were the only thing in the world to be done. Concentrate upon that one task the sum of all you are, of all you know, give to it the best and the highest within you. Let mind and heart and muscle and will all tend and bend toward perfecting the work of the hour so that no one else can do it more thoroughly or more honestly. Do this day by day, and year by year, and you will slowly but surely be climbing up to the mountain top of achievement. Your character will flower, your powers will expand. Your strength will increase, everything you do will have your personality strongly stamped upon it. Your work will be honest, your thoughts will be your own. You will have fitted yourself for higher responsibilities, you will command the confidence and respect of your fellows. You will have shown that you are not unmindful of the lessons taught within these walls of higher education, you
will become an object lesson of the value of modern college training.

I take it that this institution of learning feels a great pride in sending forth men qualified to attain high places in the professions, and in all the other fields of activity. I take it, however, that its greatest pride comes from its graduates distinguishing themselves as pure-minded, high-thinking, noble-hearted men and women. I feel assured of this from the many admirable words of advice and counsel which from time to time have been addressed to you by your great teacher, one of the truly great men of the Nation, David Starr Jordan, whose messages to you have had for their undeviating central thought a plea for character.

If you die as poor as the traditional church mouse, but leave behind an unsullied name, your life will have been a glorious success. Think of it. Can you name the men of wealth, pure and simple, of a century or two centuries ago? I gravely doubt it, and yet going back for thousands of years you can readily think of Moses the sheep herder, Jesus the carpenter, Paul the tent maker, Luther the priest, Columbus the sailor, Bunyan the tinker, Lincoln the rail splitter, and armies of others whose lives were lives of poverty and suffering, but whose characters and deeds will never fade from the memory of man, who will continue to be enshrined in the hearts of humanity so long as civilization shall stand, who by sacrifices, by devotion to mankind, and despite their poverty, have made this a far, far better world for you and for me to live in. That which gave these immortals their power was their manliness, their character, their love of righteousness.

There is but one honest way in which you can hope to repay your Alma Mater for all that has been implanted in your hearts and minds, and that is—to fill the Nation's greatest need of the hour by the flowering of
The Nation's Chief Need of the Hour

your character, by the determination to keep sacred all promises; to prepare for the performance of higher duties by doing thoroughly the work of the hour, by exercising self restraint, by showing the broadest tolerance for the opinions of others, by feeling a keen responsibility for public sentiment, by realizing that you can do your share in molding public opinion.

Thus, because of your higher education and your broader knowledge, you in your own selves can aid in supplying our Country's dire want, thus can you make the world better and wiser, thus will you see the need of the hour and prove equal to it, thus shall you become the pride of your Alma Mater, a glory to American civilization, and a blessing to the Nation.
WITH NO MARK OR BRAND*

David Starr Jordan

In the sixteen years of the life of Stanford University, I have done my part on as many commencement days. I have passed through my hands nearly twenty-five hundred diplomas, greetings to as many men and women, children of promise, who have gone forth from Stanford, into a world of hope and joy, carrying with them for a time at least the secret of perpetual youth.

The class of 1907 is the latest, but not the least, of this series. I shall not take part in its graduation, for on its hopeful commencement day, I am due to reach a far away city, the city of Brisbane, on my mission of carrying Stanford ideals and Stanford experiences to the Universities of the Antipodes.

But, while not with you in person, I shall be with you in spirit, and I shall not spare you the moral lesson, with which it has been the Stanford custom to send forth its college classes. And my text shall be drawn from the experiences of a cattleman and a circumstance connected with his annual round-up.

It is said that in the early days in Texas, Mr. Samuel Maverick owned a ranch so rock-bound that his cattle could not get out of it; so they were never mixed up with the cattle belonging to any one else. For this reason, Mr. Maverick put no mark or brand upon his calves. After this whenever the cowboys found a steer or a calf which had escaped the rodeo at the round-up, they used to say, this is one of Maverick's. And thus, by the laws of association, the name Maverick has

*Read by Professor Stillman in the absence of President Jordan.
come to be applied to the ownerless steer wherever he may be found, the calf that hasn’t any master. And to be a maverick would be a desirable condition if in our state of society a steer were permitted to own himself, to be his own steer with no other mark or brand on him. But as, even in the most favored lands, a steer has no rights except as property, being a maverick has its disadvantages. But again, even in the most favored lands, there are millions of men as thoroughly owned by other men or by other groups of men, as are any Texas steers. Already the man who merely owns himself is regarded in some quarters as a maverick, and names still worse sounding are often applied to him. My plea this morning is for the human maverick,—for the man who is free born, with no man’s brand or tag upon him,—as the hope of free institutions in America.

In this spirit, Abraham Lincoln once described himself as a man of such and such a height and weight, a hater of slavery, and “with no other mark or brand upon him.” What he did, he did because he was a man, his own man, Abraham Lincoln’s man, not because he was a Republican, a Presbyterian, a Free Mason, an Odd Fellow, or a trade unionist, or any other sort of “ist.” Still less was his impulse to action found in the will of any man, politician or corporation, who owned him body and soul. And so Lincoln stood as a fact in American history, a reincarnation of the spirit of the fathers, an individual power making for equality before the law; for equal justice and equal opportunity, the equal right of each man to make his own bargain with his own fate; that sort of equality which forever creates inequality. The best men make always the best bargains.

In a recent address I had occasion to refer to a question once asked by Guizot of James Russell Lowell, “How long will this Republic endure?” Lowell’s reply was, “So long as the ideals of the fathers are dominant