

## THE PURPOSE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY or college education should not be the ambition of every young man and young woman. Only those intellectually gifted should have that ambition. This is particularly applicable to the children of poor parents. While poverty is not in itself sufficient reason for denying any one the prosecution of higher studies, yet only those poor students with extraordinary talents and will-power should be encouraged to follow an academic career. The government itself might provide scholarship for these deserving students. But a person with only an ordinary ability will find it very difficult to succeed in his academic profession, and if he has to depend on it for a living, disillusionment and despair may be the only reward awaiting him at the end of many years of hard struggle to obtain a diploma from a college or university. The average student, especially if he is poor, ought to be satisfied with a vocational, as distinguished from a professional career, if he wants an education that will be useful to him and to the community in which he lives. And let me say that he need not feel humiliated or ashamed of his lot, for the

true worth of a man is measured not by a diploma but by his proficiency in his chosen line of work.

This is an idea that must be popularized among our people—that an academic education is not, in itself, of value to any one who receives it, unless he is capable of making a practical and socially beneficial use of it. Those who must depend upon their toil for their livelihood will be less exposed to becoming parasites and a charge on the community, if they pursue such courses of study as will most likely insure to them a steady work and gainful occupation.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not minimizing the value and importance of academic education. At no time in the history of civilization has it been so necessary as at present for a people to have their own technological leadership in order to survive the economic struggle for existence. This is the reason why I have taken steps to place this State University in a position to produce such leadership. The proposed transfer of the University to a more appropriate place, where academic spirit may better be

fostered and the student body may be more closely supervised not only in their studies but in their daily lives; the contemplated employment of foreigners as professors and instructors, so as to obtain the best available assistance in the training of our youth in the arts and sciences; the plan to improve the library, laboratories, and other equipment of the university, as well as the other reforms which, with my approval, the Board of Regents is now considering—all these measures are plain evidence that I believe in the need of intellectual leadership and that I look upon this university to provide the nation with that leadership.

Incidentally, let me say that the objections to the bringing of foreign professors which, I am informed, have been raised by some persons are neither sound nor convincing and will not deter us from carrying out the plan. Such objections are inspired by a purely Chauvinistic nationalism. It is no reflec-

tion upon our people that, for the time being, we should have to enlist the collaboration of foreign educators. The University of the Philippines is still very young, and it can hardly be expected to have formed already a competent teaching staff of its own on every branch of human knowledge. Even much older universities readily employ foreigners as professors whenever needed—why should we hesitate to do the same? We cannot afford to sacrifice the vital interests of our people for a mistaken national pride. There are no prouder people on earth than the Japanese, and yet they did not hesitate to acknowledge the need of foreign assistance in matters of education, and they did secure this assistance for many years, with the result that they have been able to accelerate their cultural and material progress, and can now stand on a level with the most advanced nations of the world.—*Manuel L. Quezon, excerpt from his commencement address at the University of the Philippines.*

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*“I, I, Sir!”*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW was on a battleship upon one occasion when the admiral asked him: “Mr. Shaw, can you tell me who, in your opinion, is the most eminent playwright of the day?”

Quick as a flash Shaw replied: “Aye, aye, sir.”