

pulse is to take their *cachet* as final, and to dismiss all inquiry or criticism as captious. After Rome has spoken, who are you to raise your voice?

Now, it is not necessary to appeal to our past or to general theories of government by public discussion in order to show the folly of this undervaluing of keen and full debate in Congress. We have under our eyes, in the Senate argument about the postal savings bill, which is going on from day to day, an excellent and conclusive example of the great importance of subjecting legislative proposals to the closest scrutiny. These Senate debates have not been, unfortunately, reported in the press with anything like adequacy, but no one who will follow them in the *Congressional Record* can fail to be impressed by their utility and fruitfulness. The postal savings bill was reported with a fine air of completeness. The people wanted it; it was "sure to pass"; obstructionists were to be swept out of the way. Senator Carter, who was in charge of the matter, pressed for an instant vote. But full debate was insisted upon, and it has been of the greatest use. Besides the attacks on the constitutionality of the bill, made by Senators Rayner, Bailey, Bacon, and others, the text of the measure itself has been mercilessly analyzed and such defects brought out that Senator Carter himself was forced to admit the necessity of many amendments and much recasting. It appeared that such vital points as the method of withdrawals by depositors, the liability of funds held in one State being drawn upon to meet demands in another, the whole question of the reserve which banks must hold against deposits of postal savings, had been entirely forgotten or slurred over by those who drafted the bill. Holes were knocked in it by one Senator after another, and the final form of the measure will be very different from what it would have been but for this most enlightening debate. It was a striking instance of the way in which the truth is brought out and the public interest served by free argument and the impact of mind on mind.

Not only is the worth of Congressional debate held too cheap by the general public, but the capacity of Representatives and Senators is grievously underestimated. Of course, there are windbags and dunderheads among them. It

is often exasperatingly difficult to get to the real points at issue. But when large matters are up and free play is given to intellect, there is as much of it available in Congress as in any place we know. It naturally takes a measure which is not made one of party to bring out the full force of the reasoning powers which Congressmen can apply to it. This is the case with the postal savings bill. Registering the decree of no caucus, it has to take its chances with the acute criticism which unfettered minds may pour upon it. Any one who studies its full report in the *Record* will get a new idea of the intellectual resources of the Senate, and of the enormous advantage to the public of having such men as Congress possesses to sift and try important bills.

It is inconceivable that the Administration should expect that its darling measures can be exempted from this wholesome searching in the course of their passage through Congress. The Federal Incorporation bill, for example, appears to have been drawn with great care and skill. Beyond question, able lawyers, skilled in corporation affairs, have got their minds together in its construction. But there is nothing like the cross-fire of debate for revealing unsuspected weaknesses or oversights. The most capable draftsmen cannot think of everything. We are not contending for any abuse of the privilege of debate. There must some time come an end of argument, and the vote be taken. But within reasonable limits, the freedom of debate should be cherished and exalted, because only by such public examination of public measures, such attack and defence, such sharpening of iron upon iron, can the people in a democracy be made certain either that the end sought in a given law is one that should be sought, or that the proper means to attain it have been selected.

A NEW ACADEMIC CAREER.

The selection on Monday of Mr. Frederick P. Keppel as dean of Columbia College has called forth many congratulations for the university. The new dean's ability and fine personal qualities are widely recognized. At thirty-five, he succeeds a man double his age, who has long carried the authority of years popularly associated with the high office of dean. Mr. Keppel's connection with

the university dates from 1902, since which time he has been secretary. By virtue of that office, he was in charge of publicity work and other administrative details, with a success to which his promotion now testifies. Unlike Dean Van Amringe, for years professor of mathematics, Mr. Keppel has never been a member of the teaching staff, but has confined himself exclusively to executive work.

It is this fact in connection with Dean Keppel which will, we fancy, attract the widest attention in academic circles. True, Columbia has another dean—Goetze of the School of Science—who is not a teacher; he was promoted from the superintendency of grounds and buildings. But Mr. Keppel's position bulks larger in the college world, and his appointment seems a deliberate affirmation of this new policy of choosing deans solely for their executive experience and talents. Since time immemorial the college dean has been thought of not only as a disciplinarian but as a teacher and as shepherd of the faculty. However his duties may have varied from time to time, or in this or that place, the ideal of the dean as a man of deep learning and a teacher of the youth over whose conduct he watches parentally, has usually prevailed. At Harvard to-day Dean Hurlburt is professor of English, though his actual teaching is limited. His predecessor, Dean Briggs, was also in the English Department. At Princeton, Dean Fine teaches mathematics, and at New Haven Dean Wright gives courses in Latin; and such professorial activity of deans is the rule in practically all the colleges. Plainly, therefore, Mr. Keppel's selection is a marked break with tradition.

Indubitably, the vast increase in the size of a college like Harvard or Columbia carries with it such an enlargement of the duties and responsibilities of a dean as to have long ago foreshadowed their total absorption of the time of any one man. Even with the creation of special deans for the various graduate and undergraduate schools, the work has grown apace. But more important than this is a marked tendency the country over to create solely executive positions in colleges and universities. It is a new academic career which is drawing into the college life men who may or may not have ability to

teach, but are primarily interested in executive work—men like Anson Phelps Stokes, jr., of Yale, and of Jerome D. Greene, secretary to the president of Harvard. Mr. Greene's record in this position gained him a vote for the presidency of the university when Mr. Lowell was the successful candidate before the Board of Overseers. If men of Mr. Stokes's type, men of means and social position, were to devote themselves to this new career instead of leading empty lives or spending themselves in the pursuit of riches, the country would be far better off. Be this as it may, at Harvard there are now two or three men besides Mr. Greene who are devoting themselves exclusively to executive work of a weighty character. Treasurers, bursars, and secretaries who were business men there have long been; but the man who performs executive duties alone, yet ranks with the instructors and sits with the faculty, is distinctly a modern development.

From the point of view of the teacher there can be no complaint about this new academic reinforcement. Many professors are overburdened with executive work; they must run their department organizations, sit in faculty committees of every sort, and perform administrative duties that never end. Some, of course, enjoy this as an offset to the routine of teaching. For others with a distaste for business and fully absorbed in the dreams of the scholar or the research of the scientist, the coming of the practical man of affairs is certain to be a cause of satisfaction. To hitch a genius to a plough is ever an act of folly—how great the collegiate world recognized when Columbia University lost George E. Woodberry and could not use the talents of MacDowell. Men of this type are too precious to be wasted in the routine of administration; a college could well afford to hire others to do the kind of work from which the teacher who lives in his books and in his classes shrinks.

At the same time, it would be a misfortune if too many of a college's teaching staff should be freed from all touch with the business side of college life. The scientist who devotes himself exclusively to research and abandons all teaching, handicaps his own development. But if teaching reveals to a man the extent and solidity of his own knowledge as nothing else can, a certain

amount of executive work, the give-and-take of the faculty debate and committee discussion, the facing of practical problems, the coming into contact with the undergraduate from another point of view than that of the classroom—all these have their great benefit for the average professor. Where to draw the line is the question. At Harvard President Lowell's programme looks to relieving men of promise both as regards their teaching and administrative cares, in order that they may have time not only for research, but for creative writing. Dr. Lowell is probably not unaware of the criticism that few telling books are now coming from the Harvard faculty, when one considers its acknowledged ability; and what is true at Harvard is true elsewhere. If the new academic executive can help to lift the burdens from the men who have a message to convey or genuine knowledge to set forth, he will speedily appear in all our college communities.

THE FAME OF "CHANTECLER."

That part of the world which points an accusing finger at M. Edmond Rostand and calls him a consummate self-advertiser, can scarcely be blamed. The history of "Chantecler" carries about it all the earmarks of the press-agent's art as it was elaborated more than a hundred years ago by Mr. Puff in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's "Critic." Rostand's latest play has profited by the puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive, and all the other forms of stimulating a sluggish public interest that the long experience of mankind has developed. Years before the play was staged the elder Coquelin went about reciting entire half-pages from the text. From the Gascon village where Rostand was at work came stories of heroic effort and heroic despair that prepared the world for the birth of a masterpiece. Rumor spoke of incidents reminiscent of Virgil's throwing his "Æneid" into the fire. The later developments are a matter of contemporary and universal fame—Coquelin's death, the search for a substitute, the painful and palpitating series of rehearsals and postponements. There was not even wanting a great national calamity to serve as a sombre background for the great national play. Parisians must have turned towards "Chantecler"

with all the more gusto because it offered relief from the horrors they had just escaped.

Yet it would be quite wrong to speak of the new play or its author as if they would only profit by the enormous notoriety they have come in for. The money returns will undoubtedly be great. Given the *réclame* that "Chantecler" has enjoyed, and it is useless, from the manager's point of view, to attempt to discuss the play on its merits. London and New York and Milwaukee would accept it even if it were entirely lacking in dramatic action, in human interest, and in poetic appeal. London and New York and Milwaukee would accept it even if it were the greatest dramatic poem in all literature. But the perils of swollen publicity are as heavy as its financial rewards. Unavoidably, it creates among the better class of readers and theatre-goers a prejudice against the much-acclaimed masterpiece which it will find hard to live down. Publicity is a beast that turns upon its own children and rends them. The newspapers reduce all subjects to an apparently common plane of turbid puffery. If the newspapers the world over go mad over "The Merry Widow" and go mad over "Chantecler," the natural result is to reduce Edmond Rostand's play to the level of Franz Lehar's. The grosser attributes of fame will be the portion of both men, just as they were the portion of the author of "Trilby." There will be "Chantecler" hats and storm shoes and neckbands. There may even be a "Chantecler" cocktail for gentlemen who are not accustomed to go home until morning.

It may be argued, however, that such temporary and tinselled fame cannot harm a real work of art. When the shouting of the multitudes dies, the quieter spirits will come out of their hiding place and render their verdict. If "Cyrano de Bergerac" was a great work of art, it was none the less a work of art because it swept around the world like wildfire. We may go further. We may assert that no amount of advertising can create the tremendous enthusiasm with which Cyrano was received, and that such enormous vogue is in itself proof of exceptional merit in a play or a book. All this may be conceded, and yet the difference pointed out that "Cyrano de Bergerac" made its own