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Copy read by Owen D. Young

A measuring stick to which all men must submit is that settling their value to the boy. They may not like it but they cannot escape his appraising eye, accepting, rejecting them. No more tragic stamp of failure can be put upon a man than that youth has ceased to consider him - has found that to them he means nothing.

A man's success in this business of meeting the boys demand on him depends largely upon whether he is willing to admit that it is his business. It is the whole-hearted acceptance by Owen D. Young, the head of the General Electric, that a part of his regular day's work in the world should be passing on to boys, particularly those who are looking forward to careers in business, as much as he can of what he has learned as he has made his way up, that makes him such a success at it.

Add to this acceptance the fact that he never forgets when he was a boy - a farmer's boy - a college boy - a law student - a youth starting out on a career - and you have his working formula.

He remembers what he wanted and didn't get, what he got that might just as well have been left out, he remembers handicaps and advantages, what he did for himself and what others did for him,

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and remembering all of these things he gives ~~a big part of~~ himself regularly to making available for youth what he has learned.

His interest and activities begin at the bottom - the boy at the start, particularly the boy on the farm. One of the reasons why the radio has been always to him, since his first opportunity to take a hand in its development, a particularly welcome job is that he sees its relation to a little boy on the farm.

"I lived in a house on a hill," he will tell you. "It stood far back from the road. All that you could see was the top of one neighbor's house. When I finished my evening's work I used to run down the long slope on the top of which our house stood, then up another long slope. When I reached the top I could see the main road. I went down there evening after evening hoping that I would see somebody pass. I suppose I was hungry for human beings, just to see somebody moving about, poassibly having somebody call across from the road, 'Hello Owen.'

"I never have been so proud or glad of anything in my business life as the chance to help make the radio a household institution - put it into every farm house to help satisfy the gnawing hunger of the little boy shut off as I was from the world, the boy who runs to the hilltop to see the world go by and considers himself lucky if he sees but a single passer-by."

You can be sure that the boys and girls of any school that Owen Young takes an interest in will have all that the radio

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and the moving picture can give them. In the district school he has built at Van Hornesville, New York, his birth place and his home, there is as perfect a radio and moving picture installation as has been so far developed.

I doubt if in the country there is a more complete equipment of radio and moving picture than you will find in the new Men's Hall at St. Lawrence University - the University from which Mr. Young graduated, back in 1894, where he now serves as President of the ~~Corporation~~ Board of Trustees. That is, he has seen to it that these groups of young people from whom he hopes no doubt to see come scientists, teachers, engineers, and executives ~~(for the General Electric particularly,)~~ are not handicapped by that sense of isolation which tormented him, that they are in touch with the world's men, movements and activities.

"What we must do in developing boys and girls," I have heard him say, "is to free them as far as possible from those conditions which breed inferiority complexes. A thing that bothered me when I first went to Boston," Mr. Young entered Boston University in the fall of 1894 as a law student, "was the difference in the way of living there from what I had always been accustomed to. The elegance in homes was something which I had never dreamed of. It always embarrassed and troubled me. I was conscious that here was something I had not had. I began to realize how meagre things were at home and at college. It made me uncomfortable.

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"When I built the school at Van Hornesville I made up my mind that I would have everything about it really fine. I wanted the children to become acquainted at the start with what was in good taste, wanted them to be used to attractive ways of living."

In order to get the class of teachers that he wanted for the faculty of the Van Hornesville District School it was necessary to provide living quarters - the town having no accommodations for strangers - accordingly Mr. Young added to the school plant a most attractive Dutch Colonial house for the Principal with wings in which there are complete little apartments for teachers. All of this has been furnished gayly, fittingly, most attractively. The children have the free run of the principal's house and there, as Mr. Young says, "see how things ought to look."

"These children will never be embarrassed when they go away out into the world. They will be at ease - I never was. When it comes to comparison they will say, 'Well, you ought to see our school, our teachers' houses at Van Hornesville.'"

Human sympathy aside, Mr. Young's desire that young people should go into the world free from all sorts of inferiority complex is that it makes them more confident at the start in going after the thing they want to do and in preparing themselves thoroughly to do the thing they have chosen.

In his judgment the boy who wants to fit himself for the higher ranks of industry where he dwells should begin by going to college. He is not one of these big business men who think that college

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"spoils"the boy. He thinks it very necessary for business executives - managers - engineers and scientists.

I have before me a letter written only a few months ago in reply to a college President who had asked him about the kind of training that he thought managers in modern business should have.

"I prefer men to be trained in a purely cultural college and not a technical one, because a broad and balanced cultural education is the best qualification I know of for broad and balanced judgment. The very training of specialists serves to accentuate the absence of equilibrium which nature provided when she made certain men with such strong special bents that they can be nothing more or less than specialists. I am not decrying the specialist. He serves a most useful purpose. Nor am I decrying the education of the specialist, but I am saying with conviction and confidence, that the cultural college still has the advantage in training men for high positions in management."

In another letter he writes - "In my judgment, the ideal training for a business executive is a course in some one of the better schools of business, superimposed on the usual cultural courses in the better colleges. This means history, economics, fundamentals of science, sociology, and language in the college. It also means finance, elements of plant management and marketing, industrial relations and similar courses in the business schools. All of this training may be had outside of the college. In my judgment, it can be obtained quicker there and a young man who has such training has better chances of prompt advancement."

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His urgence on college for the boy who aims at the higher ranks in business is never qualified, so far as I know, by the consideration that it may be very hard indeed for that boy to get the college training. He realizes that it will probably be no harder for any determined boy today than it was for him back in 1889, when he made up his mind to go to college. He knows that in one particular it was more difficult for him. His world was against him. His father and mother didn't believe in a college education - no more did the neighbors. The influence that finally turned the scale had to come from without.

Today a boy can point to these very words of Owen D. Young's that I have been quoting as an argument for college.

Mother Young was always frank in talking of the family's attitude towards college.

"We expected him to carry on the home farm - Youngs had settled it - Youngs had carried it on. He was the last of the line. We didn't think he needed college for that but he was always at his books. It used to worry Grandfather Peter, my father-in-law, who lived with us - what he hated most of all was Owen's preaching. "After church if Owen thought there was no one around he would get up on a stool in the front room and preach a sermon. The hired man used to tell about hearing him preaching in the cow shed and how if he came in suddenly Owen would pretend to be doing something else. He never did like to have us catch him at it. I have opened the wood shed door

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suddenly when I have heard him talking out there and he would shut right up and run off. Grandfather Peter used to say, 'I am afraid that boy is going to be a ~~minister~~ preacher, and I couldn't stand that.'

"There were a couple of men here in town," Mother Young went on "who kept putting ideas into his head. One of them taught the village school in the winter and worked in the Cheese Factory in the summer - Menzol McEuen. He was proud of ~~Ollie~~ Owen and kept boosting that he could pass the regent's examination and go to college. Then we had a hired man that had a lot of influence on him - that was George Kesselringer - he was a great reader. It was extraordinary to talk with him - he knew so much. He used to talk all Owen's books over with him, look over his lessons, always had books of his own around - taught him some German.

"We soon found out that he had to have more than a district school so when he was about fourteen we let him go over to the Academy at East Springfield, only about seven miles away; nice little school. We would drive him over Monday morning with a cheese box full of vituals and he and another boy boarded themselves. Then we would ~~get~~ fetch him home Friday night. He graduated there in 1889. He always thought a lot of the diploma that he got there - always kept it."

He did, indeed. It hangs now on the wall of his Mother's home in Van Hornseville, along with some twenty-eight or thirty diplomas and decorations from foreign governments and the greatest of our Universities. In 1927 when the Van Hornesville school was

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dedicated Mr. Young invited all his old school teachers, those of the little red schoolhouse, those of the East Springfield Academy, and among them of course the principal who gave him the diploma in 1889 - Abram Mark Hollister. This gentleman calling on Mother Young at her home up the street from the school, was looking with pride and interest at the great array of dignified documents on the wall, when suddenly he saw in a conspicuous place the one that he had given Owen Young in 1889.

"Look here," he called to one of the family, "see what Owen has done. He has put up here with all these grand papers that little diploma that I gave him thirty-five years ago. To think that he should have cared for it; that he should have remembered it; that he should have placed it here."

And Mr. Hollister was all but breaking down. But greater recognition was to come to him a little later in the day for when Mr. Young made his speech dedicating the new school he spoke of Mr. Hollister as "the one who was responsible for my preparation for college and who in a large measure created in me the desire to go to college."

"If we thought graduating from East Springfield Academy was going to end it," continued Mother Young, "we soon found we were mistaken. He wanted more than ever when he came home to go on to study, go to college. We used to come home nights after we had been down to church or out visiting and there would be Owen with the table

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full of college catalogues. Finally his father said, 'We have got to let him go. He'll never be any good on the farm now.'

"We didn't know how we were going to do it. It didn't seem possible to raise the money. We weren't very happy about it and then Dr. Hervey - he was the President of the school up North from here - Canton - that was the school where they trained boys for our church - the Universalist Church, you know. He came down here to preach - got here in time to see Owen leading Sunday School. Right there he set his heart on having him go to St. Lawrence; talked with us, but we thought we couldn't afford it, beside we needed him. Dr. Hervey talked with Abe ~~Pitlow~~ Tilyou and Abe was for it right away. It was a letter Dr. Hervey wrote that made us finally give in. It wasn't any too easy, as I said. But this newspaper talk about our borrowing a thousand dollars ~~is all bunk~~ isn't true. We had a little money and we saved the rest as we went along. I didn't have a new dress all the time that Owen was in College. We gave up keeping a hired man and when he graduated we didn't have money enough to go to Canton."

Owen Young never forgets that it was the understanding and friendly interest of an older man that gave him his chance at college. He never has and never will cease paying interest in debt to Dr. Hervey by passing on similar help to other boys.

This Dr. Hervey is a man well worth remembering on his own account. I take it that as a boy nobody could have been poorer;

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nobody could have had less or any outside help in getting an education but from the time he was five years old, so he has told us himself, he was set on an education. He worked to get it in a lumber camp, rafted the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh - taught school; finally he was ready for college but with no money. It was then that he learned that if he prepared for the Universalist ministery he could get an education at a new Theological School in Canton, New York, so he decided to be a Universalist minister. Up to that time, as he has said quite frankly, "I had never given a thought as to what I should most like to do in the world. I had but one ambition and that was to get what is called an education."

Dr. Hervey arrived in Canton in 1858, nineteen years old, with $7.00 in his pocket. Four years later he graduated a minister. He had earned and paid to the college $300.00 and he was $300.00 in debt. Cheap enough.

For the next fourteen years he pursued knowledge in the ministry with enthusiastic passion and then the College of Letters and Science of St. Lawrence University finding itself all but bankrupt called Dr. Hervey to carry on a brave effort to save it. There had to be money and that right away. There had to be students. He went after both with joyous energy and when he wasn't on the road, taught all the subjects in the curriculum for which there had not been enough money to provide teachers.

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It was in the course of hunting students that he went one Spring day to preach in Van Hornesville and there look over the boy, Owen D. Young, of whom somebody had told him. Dr. Hervey always liked to talk about this doscovery.

"One of our Theological students told me one day that he thought there was a boy in Van Hornesville that I would like to have. He wanted to go to college and he was a fine lad. So I got up an appointment to preach there. I found a long, lean lad of about sixteen who was acting as superintendent of the Sunday school. I liked him, and I wanted to get him. After church I talked with him and discussed college. He wanted to come. I kept at it but it got to be close to the time of the opening of college and he apparently didn't expect to come. I suspected finances were at the basis of the difficulty, so finally I wrote him to come with what money he had and use that as long as he could. When those funds were exhausted, I would loan him enough to finish his course. It was nothing for me to do. I often did it for the boys, for I had no responsibilities at that time, and didn't use all my salary, so I could afford to help the boys out. Long afterwards he told me that it was this letter which broke down the opposition of his parents. They reasoned that if I was willing to stake my money on Owen I must see something in the boy that was worth educating and so they let him go."

Dr. Hervey did Owen D. Young a first-order service in breaking down the opposition ~~of his parents~~ to his going to college.

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He capped it with one still greater when a year later he brought to St. Lawrence from Massachusetts the daughter of old family friends - ~~Ida~~ Josephine Sheldon Edmonds. Her scholarship brought honor to the college because for many years after she left the head of the Greek Department could pay no higher compliment to a student than to say of his work, "It is almost as good as Josephine Edmonds."

Mr. Young once said at a college banquet where there was much reminiscing, "I hadn't intended to take any interest in the Class of '95 - he ~~belonged to '94~~ - but I find I had to ~~having~~ after discovered the merits of it"- the "merits" apparently being the young woman from Massachusetts who in 1898 became Mrs. Owen D. Young - Dr. Hervey proudly and joyously performing the ceremony.

To the end of Dr. Hervey's life in February of this year, the friendship then begun lasted. The man preached but his love of fresh knowledge never was dulled. He wrote various books on plant life chiefly - made himself an authority on the Algae of Bermuda. Rarely I think does a life run more happily than his did largely so because of the continuous affectionate interest of Mr. & Mrs. Young. In his latter years when his little income which he had always handled with care and discretion was not enough for his needs these friends came in to relieve his anxiety. "You can understand what it means," Dr. Hervey wrote Mr. Young once, "in the way of a little added freedom when I tell you that your gifts increase my income by exactly fifty percent. It makes me feel rich beyond the dreams of avarice. I shall never spend a dollar of it wihout being reminded of that fine

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lad I first saw in the Sunday School at Van Hornesville on that pleasant Sunday morning and wonder at the marvelous changes that have come about in this drama of life."

It was in the Fall of 1890 that Owen D. Young was admitted to the Class of '94 of St. Lawrence University. His friend, Williston Manly, now the editor of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer, remembers him and loves to describe him. "A slow moving young fellow, six feet and more, of physical and a million feet and possibly more, of mental, up and downness. Physically he was thin, mentally he was not thin but broad. His height was capped by a fascinating smile that never came off and the corners of his eyes were garbed with a perpetual crinkle and the orbits themselves with a perpetual twinkle. He moved slowly and walked loosely, as though there was always plenty of time to get to the place he was going, but even if he started late he always got there a little ahead of time. Even when he appeared to be standing still he was going ahead, and when he sat still and just smiled while others were waving their arms and talking, he was always getting somewhere for, before the others had arrived, he would just say a few words and there you had it, the whole thing, all thought out and presented with a smile that took in the entire bunch, the whole thing, carefully thought out and arranged, a mature conclusion from an elongated kid, a conclusion all buttoned up and in a few minutes it would always have the approval of all the "arguefiers."

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The faculty of his day still there and all confess as does the humorous and discerning Dr. Charles Gaines that, "If we had known what we had we would have taken more notice. He was a good student though never at the top of his class. But I soon learned that if I had something I wanted the students to accept it was wise to begin by converting Owen. He had the inititive essential in leadership, took responsibility, held his force together."

His leadership showed itself from the beginning. He led his gang, the little group of the class who boarded together and soon became a solid unit - one to be reckoned with. "Let us stand together and we'll all get what we want" was his counsel. By the same counsel he led his class.

One finds in more than one of the amusing and spirited episodes of Owen D. Young's college life the out-cropping of this natural belief in co-operation if an objective is to be won.

The needs of the college absorbed him from the beginning. It was he, so people of his time tell you, that led in the movement for a gymnasium, something that St. Lawrence had never had. It was not because he would use it. Now as then he had little or no interest in active exercises. Walking alone interested him. But athletics were necessary for a body of students - "A man's college life is far too elastic and expansive a force to be all bottled up in scientific formulae or expended in grubbing out Greek and Latin roots," he argued in the college paper. "Athletics may teach you to curve a ball, and mathematics teach the nature of the curve, without coming into antagonism."

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He led in establishing the first gymnasium and it was he who for the first time in its history was able to put the Laurentian - the college monthly - on a paying basis - a feat which none of the men in the faculty or student body ever forget to mention. "He was a leader and he was a financier by nature and he proved it in college," so they all will tell you at St. Lawrence.

And it should be noticed that what he did was done in spite of very limited means. I have before me the little account book which Owen Young kept for the first year at college. It cost him just $257.00 that included everything, tuition, board, seventy-five cents for a necktie - extravagant youth!

Not all that Owen Young got at St. Lawrence University came from college faculty and college activities. Something important for instance he learned in jail.

"Did you know," Mother Young asked, talking of these years, "that Owen was in jail the first year he went to College?"

There was a twinkle in her eye that made me suspect a trick. Then a chuckle.

"You see it was this way. There were four of the boys living together when Owen first went there. They were called the Simons gang - the name of the woman they boarded with. I guess they were a pretty good gang all right. Well, there was a jailer in Canton that took a great interest in boys - always helping them. He had a top floor in the jail which wasn't occupied and so he suggested

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to the Simm ons gang that they come there and live. Owen wrote home and asked us about it and his father said, 'All right, only be careful to pay your board. I don't want you living off the county.' Owen sent us a postal card once saying he was "back in jail." Of course they read the postal card at the postoffice and all the neighbors were talking about how dreadful it was that 'Mrs. Young's little boy' - that was what they used to call him - 'should have gone wrong.'"

As a matter of fact this jailer proved to be more than once a friend in need to Owen Young and a teacher as well. In the judgment of Erastus Backus, every man should have another chance no matter what he had done and the boys on the top floor saw him taking under his wing more than once, young delinquents that he thought could be straightened out. "Give him to me Judge," he would say. "I'll be responsible." That is, here was a man who was apparently one of the first of our prohibition officers. This unusual attitude towards human beings was by no means lost on the open-minded young student from Van Hornesville. #

Now when a man accepts as part of his days' work training youth for the upper ranks of industry - when this man never forgets what he got and didn't get in college and with this in mind is keenly and constantly active in shaping the training of both the ~~xxxxxxx~~ college and the technical school it is important to know where he puts the emphasis.

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One point on which Mr. Young is particularly emphatic is the general inadequacy of the schools in teaching these young aspirants for high places in big business to express themselves.

"Take our ~~great~~ engineers," he said to me once in conversation, "as a rule they do not know how to tell what they have in mind. They have special plans but they do not know how to present them to the public. In great undertakings, particularly in the utilities at the present moment they are suspected because they were never trained how to ~~stick~~ stand up for themselves, to express their ideas."

"They cannot possibly get publicity men who will do for them what they could do for themselves if they knew how to write and to speak. The very fact that they turn over to outsiders, pay skilled men for this job of explaining is suspected by the public, although it may be quite wrongly suspected."

Nobody knows better than Young the importance in this matter of learning how to talk, to write, of good books. He uses them continually himself. He is a great collector but something more. He reads his books and out of them gets constant help in broad thinking, in just feeling, and, too, that clarity of expression so conspicuous in his handling of people and problems. One of the wants he undoubtedly felt in college was the lack of great books in English. St. Lawrence in his time had a very small library and the bulk of it was theological, I take it. Here as in other things he has been trying to give to the boys and girls now there the thing which he did not have

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and wanted.

He has arranged for St. Lawrence what he calls the fundamental library of English Literature - two hundred books, which in his judgment, everybody who pretends to good thinking and good expressing, should know and should want to own.

This library of two hundred books is one of the best that I certainly have ever seen. This is no place to name these but if anyone is interested in the list the editor of the American Magazine has Mr. Young's permission to send it to him. It will be his contribution to spreading to young business men the gospel of good English as Owen D. Young sees it!

Keen and practical as Young is in trying to stir up youth to get, what we generally speak of as a background, which in his mind is to know straight from crooked thinking and a desire to put this thinking into practice in the world he lives in, he is not a man that is ever willing to take on himself the decision as to what the boy who comes to him for advice should do. That, he contends, is the boy's business.

"I have had some experience with young men coming out of college," he told a group of boys once. "They come to me and say,

'I have graduated and now I want a job.'

"What do you want to do?

'I do not know. I want a job.'

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"What kind of job? What do you want to make of yourself? What target are you shooting at?

'Well,' they say, 'I haven't thought about that.'

"Here they are ready to go out for themselves and they do not know the direction in which they want to go.

"Supposing I tell them 'do so and so' and give them a job and they failed, they are sure to find fault with me and with the world. 'It is not the job I can give you that you should have. It is what you want, what you have convinced yourselves you can make good in. Make up your mind what you want to do and go after it - don't be responsible to anybody else. The man you go to may have much more experience than you but your own intuitions about yourself will tell you more than anybody in the world can tell you. Don't let your fathers, mothers, your teachers, your sweethearts or friends persuade you that you should be this or that. Look into your own minds, your own intuitions and follow them.'"

But if that is the counsel that he gives to the boy seeking a job, as soon as that boy has taken hold he never forgets him. He finds out how he is getting on, puts in a word for him, gives him an unknown boost if he can.

To one lad who had written, asking for a position in the General Electric he replied, "I can't help you - you must help yourself. If I were in your place I would storm the gates of the General Electric until they at least gave me a try out."

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He followed his letter to this boy by one to his Assistant at Schenectady - "I wish you would be sure that if a boy of such and such a name comes around applying for a position, he gets attention. See if he can do anything and let me know."

Mr. Whitney, the head of the great research laboratories of the General Electric, himself a man eager for talent of the kind they want in the laboratories, indefatigable in developing it, told me once -

"Young is tremendously interested in youth in finding out what they can do, giving them a free field. He takes a personal interest in every man that he has been instrumental in getting into the organization. A few years ago he wrote to me about a boy that he knew, a young man who was 'crazy to do research work. Couldn't I talk with him.' Well, that young man came down here and I did talk to him. But he wasn't crazy to do anything and you have to be crazy to do research work - a crazy nut. This young man was a gentleman, fine spirited, diligent but not an inquisitive scientist. He had no background of chemistry, physics, which he had worked out in odd hours; he never had gone on his own experimenting, trying to find out things. A fine, sober, serious fellow, but not the making of a scientist.

"I told him I would give him work for a year but at the end of six months I would appraise him and tell him if he was going to be a success. At the end of six months I talked it over with

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his superior and told him he would never be a research worker, but that he could have another six months. At the end of the second six months I told him, 'It won't do, you will be a failure and you might succeed at something else.'

"He was heartbroken and Young wrote me, 'Couldn't you give him another trial?' And, of course, I did. But he wasn't that kind of a man and I had known it from the start. Then I had an idea. You know we have no end of visitors in this place - teachers want to send pupils through - young scientists come - teachers of science come. Dr. Coolidge and I used to think that we must show everybody through individually, because, of course, that is one way to spread knowledge, but it proved too great a drain on our time and so we began to draw out of the laboratory young men for the task. It occured to me that if we couldn't make a research worker out of Mr. Young's friend we might give him another kind of job where he would find himself, so I asked him if he would not come down and show people about. He took to it immediately. Everyone spoke of how interesting and clear he was. We saw he was truly useful to us.

"Then there came another idea. We are always having demands here for talks, High School teachers, clubs, people interested in science call on us, so I asked this young man if he wouldn't go out to a high school. I was a little dubious but I got the finest kind of a letter from the head of the school.

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"Coolidge or I, one of us, was slated for a talk to five hundred teachers of science at a meeting in Cleveland and neither of us could go. I sent him and I got letter after letter from those scientists, saying, 'He did a splendid job.' This was an important educational group. Now he is handling practically all our mail, doing excellent popularizing - most essential work. And it was Mr. Young's unwillingness to believe we couldn't make something out of this fine chap that did it."

Sometimes these little boosts to a boy, that he has been watching, or a boy who has done something that pleases him, take the form of a letter to the boy's employer. There was a young man kept at Van Hornesville at the time of its electrification - a long and delicate job - who had conducted himself with much tact and skill in the little community that he had won the fond approval of Mother Young, - no surer way to Mr. Young's approval, - so he wrote to his employer.

"Your boy Frank is a great delight. He has done that job with ease and effectiveness. It ought to qualify him for advancement."

Whether that boy, Frank, ever knew of this letter or not I do not know but this is certain that his employer never forgot it. He told me so himself.

The point where Owen Young most directly
Not only at St. Lawrence University but
influences boys and young men, is of course the General Electric.

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One of the most interesting sides of that institution, for an institution it is, is its system of finding and developing talent. Beginning forty years ago the management of the General Electric began to turn loose in the plant young men just out of college as a rule, who were eager for a chance to show what they could do. One of the most valued men in the present General Electric organization came in in this way, the man who is put down on the official organization chart as the engineer responsible for designing, C. E. Eveleth. Born in Burma, interested in science, one of the men that I think would satisfy Dr. Whitney's qualifications for an investigator, he made his way of his own accord to Schenectady. The management probably recognized the signs, having had much experience for he was taken in.and told, "Go anywhere you want - do anything you like. We'll see what you can do best," with distinguished results.

The system has developed since it was begun in 1890 until today five or six hundred Test Boys, as they are called, from the various colleges of the United States are taken in annually to be tried out, given a chance to prove what they can do.

The Test Boys are never allowed to stand still - are rated periodically. The whole idea of the organization is that a good man should never be allowed to get into an eddy - never be submerged; he must always be moving on.

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I was interested in visiting the General Electric to find out if Mr. Young reached these boys and if so, how.

He has nothing to do with the operation of the General Electric. That is Mr. Swope's job and everybody knows what a good job he does. As a matter of fact Mr. Young has no specific job that can be charted. How then does he get over to these Test Boys?

I asked this question of one of them, "Well," he said, "I don't know and none of us know quite what Mr. Young's job is, but somehow you feel him. There isn't one of us that doesn't read everything the papers say about him and remember it; and he says a lot of things that you have got to remember. He makes you feel they concern this business. He doesn't come here as often as we would like to have him. Everybody, I guess, wishes he would stick around more, but when he does come everything he says is passed around. Once in awhile he talks to us. Did you ever hear about that talk on Goodwill he gave to the Executives? I had just come here then and I heard that he was going to talk and so slipped into a corner. I have always remembered what he said.

"'Goodwill is a difficult thing to appraise,' he said," 'Suppose you put it down at a dollar but that has no relation whatever to its value. It is one of those important intangible things in business that cannot be measured. Suppose you come down here grumpy in the morning - you are called on the telephone - you are unfriendly,

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disobliging or give the impression that you are. You are destroying goodwill. Now I want to ask you to do something for me and that is if you feel that way when you come down in the morning bring a stick of dynamite and blow up a building. We could estimate the damage that you do - we could repair it - but we cannot measure or repair the injury that your discourtesy will do.'

"Well," said the boy, "it spread all over the factory what Mr. Young had said, he'd rather have us blow up a building than be impolite or disobliging. You needn't think any of us have ever forgotten that."

These little lessons go over and there is a belief in his friendliness towards them that is valuable.

"He would do more things for us," this same boy told me, "if he could."

And that is true. I have known of one case at least of his arranging something for the Test Boys that no organization in the country could have dragged out of him. That was in 1926 when the groups got it into their head that maybe they could persuade him to come to a Christmas dinner and make a speech.

So one of them came down to New York as an ambassador.

Mr. Young's guardians at that moment were very severe with invitations to make speeches. They were coming from all sides and he had neither the strength or time, in their judgment, to accept them and if he did it for one he must do it for another.

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This was the decision of the office when this Test Boy from Schenectady appeared. "He wanted to talk to Mr. Young and invite him to come to this Christmas dinner," he told them.

"It is out of the question," said the guardian. "He is making no speeches."

"But this is different," urged the boy. "There are six hundred and sixty six of us. We come from all over the world - every state in the union - from Australia and China and Palestine and South America, sixteen different countries. A lot of us cannot go home for Christmas. We have no friends to go to so we are going to have a dinner for ourselves and we do so want Mr. Young to come."

His pleading was too much for the secretary so with some misgivings, she admitted, she arranged for him to see Mr. Young.

He came out from the interview walking on air. "Mr. Young had been wonderful - Mr. Young would go to their dinner - come down from Van Hornesville on Christmas afternoon; he would talk to them. Wasn't he wonderful - was their ever such a man?"

I have this confidential secretary's word for it that Mr. Young was almost as much pleased as the boys themselves that he was to be at the dinner. He took the greatest interest in the preparation of the talk that he was to make. He prepared a wonderful souvenir for them - a precious one - from out of his own fine collection of manuscripts - nothing less than a fac-simile of a rare and amusing letter of Abraham Lincoln - one which has been much mangled in its printing because for a long time it was lost sight of. The man to

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whom it was written once wrote me that he believed it to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire. But it had come to light and around to Mr. Young - a precious document. And for this dinner of the Test Boys he had a fac-simile made.*

It was one of the sad things in the story that after it all he could not get there. Death came to the Young family that Christmas week and Mr. Young was at home, comforting his own in their sorrow.

But you can believe that these Test Boys of 1926 have never forgotten that he planned to go to them; that they never will fail to preserve among their treasures the souvenior that he provided for them.

A.

It is in the developing of his Assistants that Mr. Young comes closet to young men. Since entering the General Electric, he has always had a young man - he picks them himself — at his elbow as his Assistant. Not two or three, but one at a time.

The office of the Chairman of the Board of the General Electric is, of course, organized to save his time and strength. The work is so varied and so heavy that Mr. Young must have at his side an Assistant, trained in his methods and ideas, to supervise his office personal and do things for him. He must have always with him wherever he goes a highly trained secretary familiar with his various interests. He must have an equally experienced secretary in the office making his engagements, ~~classifying his mail so that only that which is necessary for him to consider goes to him. He must have experienced people to answer the letters~~ that do not come to ~~him. He must have young men of tact~~ and courtesy to see the visitors that do ~~not get to him.~~ And besides these Secretaries, he has a Confidential Secretary who handles his personal affairs so that all of his office time is working time and not taken up with personal matters.

* Shall we use fac-simile with explanatory note?

JJA

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who, one by one, he selects from time to time as his Assistant,

There must be a fresh stream of these youths for nobody holds more tenaciously than he does to the General Electric system of allowing no eddies or points of stagnation in the force, keeping men moving upward.

And the result of this has been that out of Mr. Young's office there have been passed to the general organization ~~many~~ young men who carry on his methods of work - his large views of business and of human relations. To better understand this system of his dealings with youth which come close to him in these relations is the story of one of them as he told it to me - Stuart M. Crocker, a graduate from the Young office and now ~~the managing of the head~~ Vice President of the International General Electric. (I promised him not to use it — he told it to me to show me a glimpse of Mr. Young's character — but the temptation is too great, and break my promise.) See 28-A

"When I was in Harvard college I had a roommate by the name of Charles Young and we formed a working partnership in German, he doing the translation one day and I the next. My ~~father~~ Mother died while I was in college, just before the Christmas holidays. A few days later, Charlie Young's Mother ~~leaving me homeless and the Christmas of 1910 Charles~~ wrote me asked me home for the holidays, here in New York. I'd never been to New York, too.

"I had no idea then that Mr. Young was anybody in particular all I knew was that he was in the General Electric, ~~a Vice-President.~~ He was not much in evidence at first but one night after dinner he gave us all big cigars and sat down with us to talk.

"'What are you going to do when you get out of college, boys?' 'he asked.'"

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"Well, I said, ~~I didn't know.~~ I had been offered only one job. ~~It was in Belasco's studio~~ and I wasn't going to take that. What I really would like to do," I told him warming up, "would be to go to Russia or some foreign country and learn all about it so that when I came back I would know more than anybody else."

'Well," her Young said 'that's a romantic plan, but if you make as much of yourself as you want to in a foreign country you will never want to come home. ~~They will keep you there.~~ If you really want to be a power in the world and so be useful to men you have got to be near the ~~money bag in these days.~~ main office.'

"After that visit I went often to the Young's. Mrs. Young was almost like a mother to me.

"One day Mr. Young said to me, 'Well, Stuey,'" - the name by which the Youngs soon were calling Stuart Crocker - "'how would you like a job with the Radio Corporation?' It had just been formed. It was a new thing - exciting - of course I went. But my work at the start wasn't anything but looking after messages, that is, trying to persuade business men that radio was a quicker and cheaper means of communicating, particularly with foreign countries, than the cable. All that mattered then was getting business.

"One day after I had been with them several months one of the officers came to me and said, 'Will you make a digest of this contract for us, make it simple and understandable, one page? The contracts are so long and bulky that the officers have no time to read them. What they want is to know the essential points.' This was outside my

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and at first, beyond me. Easy enough for a three page digest, but one page was a different animal!

regular work. It was a hard job, ~~but of course I did my best with it.~~ After that they kept me busy with digests.

"I'd been two years in the Radio Corporation when one day a secretary in Mr. Young's office telephoned and said,

'Mr. Young would like to see you this evening. Could you come up to his house?'

"'Yes, of course I will,' I said, though I did have an engagement.

"So I went up and he was in his own little room. I shall never forget it. I sat down.

"'~~Stuey~~ Stuart,' Mr. Young said, 'how would you like to come with me and be my ~~Secretary~~ Assistant?'

"Well, I had never dreamed anything so great could happen to me in this world. That was the way I had come to feel about him. The tears ~~began to run down my cheeks~~ started. I guess that was my answer.

"'You have been working pretty hard, ~~Stuey~~,' he said. 'It is November. You finish up down there; I'll talk to Mr. Sarnoff - they'll let you off. There isn't much doing this month down at my place so you take a month up home and get rested and come in the first of the year.'"

It was the first of January, 1922, when Stuart Crocker went to 120 Broadway - the offices of the General Electric - to learn to be ~~a secretary~~ his Assistant to Owen D. Young. He was seven years in the

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the position, the intimate of not only Mr. Young but of the family, particularly devoted to Mrs. Young and to Mother Young. Indeed he has a strong conviction that they have always been Owen Young's better halves.

The position took him far afield - to Washington with Mr. Young in 1922 when as a member of President Harding's Unemployment Commission, he headed the important committee on Business Cycles.- to Europe in 1924 on the Dawes Commission and again in 1929 when the Young Plan was in the making in Paris. The intimacy was as close and constant as ~~that of~~ a young man could be with an older man and the way that intimacy stood the test of experience is convincing proof of the quality of Owen D. Young as an educator in business thinking - methods - outlook - as well as to the quality of material that he had in this young man.

"I had to learn a lot about his way of working before I could be of much use - an Assistant ~~a secretary~~ always must. I learned you couldn't hurry him. When he had a problem on his mind he always gave it right of way - couldn't get him to think or talk about anything else. You would think to see him he was loafing. He'd sit relaxed, that pipe of his always in his mouth - feet up - head back - or if we were in the country he'd go off by himself walking for hours turning the thing over I suppose.

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"He is a trial ~~to his secretaries~~ at these times. The thing we thought important he would neglect. I have known of his shoving aside a letter which involved a great sum to take time to write a long letter to a boy who wanted a position - I couldn't understand it. I see now he wasn't ready to write the letter I was interested in. He was cleaning out his mind, so to speak, doing things that were different - that he enjoyed doing. When he did come to the letter he was ready for it.

"He might be slow in getting to a thing but when it was worked out it was done. He has a remarkable habit of putting a thing out of his mind once he has come to a conclusion. This is because he doesn't let it go until he has what he thinks a right solution.

"I understood, after I'd been with him a little while, why the extra work of digesting contracts had been asked of me at the Radio Corporation for Mr. Young had the digests. A man in his position must have the essentials of many documents. He has no time to read the long reports that are handed in, but he must know the gist of them; he must keep track of public opinion, at least Mr. Young thinks that is the part of the duty of a business man. He wants to know what all kinds of people are thinking. Of course he cannot read all the opinions so he must have ~~a secretary that~~ one who can make digests for him - digests that really give you the pith of the matter. He wanted to find out if I could do that. Yes, he had done so before he took me on!

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"Besides that he has to have somebody that can gather facts - that's the most important part of the work of the Assistant ~~secretary~~ to such a man ~~in his position~~.

"But he had to teach me what gathering facts meant. He would say, 'Look up this for me, will you?' It might be quite a complicated matter and as I went about the work I would form an idea of what the facts should mean - what should be done in regard to them - and I would hand him in a report in which I had marshalled facts supporting my view of the matter. The first time I did that Mr. Young looked at me and said,

'Stuart, I did not ask you for your opinion in this matter. I asked you for the facts. I take it that what I am here for is to make decisions. Of course if you do not want to get me the facts I can get them for myself.'

"Well, I could feel myself turning red all over and I went out and said, 'that man will never catch me that way again.' It was a great lesson. I have secretaries to train now and I find that again and again they have to be taught to give me the facts rather than their opinion of the facts.

"He never got excited. I am easily stirred up. Sometimes when I would be indignant about somebody who had done something that seemed to me wrong I would say to Mr. Young, 'I am going to get that fellow and get him right off.' He would purse up his lips and say, 'You better wait and think it over. Perhaps you will change your mind, but even if you don't I wouldn't be too noisy about it. I wouldn't let him know, ~~I was after him.~~'

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But I've always found myself in good company in my astonishment — but I won't tell on them! 34

"The longer I was with him the more I loved him and the more he amazed me. They used to say that my tongue was always hanging out, watching Young straighten out tangles that seemed to me beyond unraveling. It was so in business and so in international conferences. How he does it has always been a mystery to me.

"Of course I loved my position. I used to say to my wife, 'I don't want any other job in the world. I am perfectly satisfied with it.'

"Then one day, along in 1929, Mr. Young called me in and said,

'Stuart, we have to do something in this country about the piling up of money. We must get it over on the other side some way. I think the General Electric can take a hand. We are going to organize an international concern, take over a fourth of the stock of a lot of foreign electric companies, buy it outright. That will be making our contribution towards turning the money the other way. We'll not interfere with the organizations - with the operation of the companies - have nothing to say about how they do their business. We merely buy into the company. Now, how would you like to go in as an organizer?'

'But, Mr. Young,' I said, 'I am happy where I am.'

"'~~All right~~ Stuart, ~~but you~~ don't want to grow old being my assistant. One of these days I won't be here, ~~and you will be out of a job.~~ You ought to get out and make your own job. It is time for you to go now.'

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"Stuart, you ought to get into the financial and foreign end of our business — go it on your own — and find out what you can do with responsibility for action."

'But, Mr. Young,' "I timidly objected," 'I don't know anything about international finance! ~~This is a big proposition.~~' He looked at me and smiled.

'How much are two and two, Stuart?' "he said."

"Well, I said, they are supposed to be four but sometimesthey call them five or three.

'Always four. How much are two times two? You know that. How much are two divided by two? You know that. Now take these as your bottom facts and add as many ciphers as you wish and if the ciphers bother you, drop them and think only of two plus two, two divided by two. You have enough of Cape Cod in you' - I was ~~born~~ raised up there' - 'to know how to handle a hundred dollars. I've seen you! Well, multiply it as many times as you wish and do just as you would with your Cape Cod hundred.'

"That is like Mr. Young. He always thinks in simple terms - talks in simple terms, gets his examples from the common things of life, the small things of life. The way it is with the small things of life it will be with the big things. The trick in his judgment is in not letting size bother ~~you~~ him.

"Of course," Mr. Crocker went on, "I see him rarely now. But I know that when I have a problem I can go to him. I may have to wait for an appointment as long as ten days - we do sometimes. And we get to thinking that he doesn't understand how important it is - that he is neglecting us. But the moment you get in that all evaporates. You know right away that he is glad to see you.

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"He doesn't sit up and blow out his chest and say, 'Well, now give me the facts,' as some executives do - give you the sense that they are in a hurry - that you must be very quick about it. He settles back; puts his feet on the radiator, rests his head on the back of his chair, slumps down, pipe in his mouth.

'Well, Stuey, what have you got on your mind?'

"And then I tell him. He never grabs my story. He doesn't say, 'Oh, I see, Oh, I know all about that.' He doesn't interrupt and say, 'Now you are wrong there, aren't you? This is so and so.' He just lets me tell it in my own way. You may think as you watch him there that he doesn't know what you are saying but when you are through he'll possibly ask a question, keep quiet for a time and then he'll say,

'Well, of course I don't know much about this, but it seems to me if I were in your place I would do so and so.'

"And you say to yourself, 'Why, dammit, why didn't I think of that before.' You know he has struck the solution and your mouth is wide open with surprise.

"Sometimes, of course, when you take a problem to a man, your personal problem, you leave out a thing or two for one reason or another, possibly something of which you are a little ashamed. If Young seems always to know and he will look up at you with a little twinkle and say something or ask something that makes you realize that he has guessed what you have been keeping back.

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"Now this problem that I take in is not his problem and he has no possible interest in it, but he gives the best of himself to my problem and he throws the most unexpected light on it."

One senses in all these young men who have passed out from under Owen Young's teaching into places of responsibility a real feeling of deprivation. It is like taking bread away from a man to take away the stimulating intimacy - things enjoyed. But they understand well enough, all of them, that to walk alone, to take on responsibility, to play their own part in the world, is what he has been training them for. He is not trying to build about himself a group of men to make things easy for him, he is trying to make men who in succession will go out and carry on his ideas of what American business should be and must be in the world.

I never heard a finer tribute paid to a man than that from the director of one of our great corporations - a product of Owen Young's efforts as an educator and executive.

"He taught me the importance of straight right thinking in business. Around here we always ask ourselves when we are in trouble - 'What would Mr. Young do if he were here?' If we can figure that out we feel sure we are right."

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