

Rollins College

Rollins Scholarship Online

Rollins College Record

College Publications and Reports

6-3-1934

Rollins Record, The Aristocracy of Heroism, Jun 1934

Charles Atwood Campell
Rollins College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.rollins.edu/r-record>

Recommended Citation

Campell, Charles Atwood, "Rollins Record, The Aristocracy of Heroism, Jun 1934" (1934). *Rollins College Record*. 1.

<https://scholarship.rollins.edu/r-record/1>

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications and Reports at Rollins Scholarship Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rollins College Record by an authorized administrator of Rollins Scholarship Online. For more information, please contact rwalton@rollins.edu.

THE ARISTOCRACY OF HEROISM

A BRIEF ADDRESS

TO THE CLASS OF 1934

ROLLINS COLLEGE

WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 3, 1934

BY DR. CHARLES ATWOOD CAMPBELL

Dean of the Knowles Memorial Chapel

THE ARISTOCRACY OF HEROISM

You are to be congratulated that through the course of the Baccalaureate Service emphasis is upon Friendship, for this is the golden thread to be woven into the fabric of the years. In addition to personal comradeship I trust you may make friends also with heroism, for though individual friendships are desirable and necessary and beautiful we should make friends with ideals.

I suppose people may be classified in three groups: the important people, the self-important people, and the unimportant people. The only important people are those who are identified with important things.

I propose a challenge this morning that you associate yourselves with supremely significant undertakings. Presumably, we drift idly or we choose deliberately. We are caught in vagrant currents "as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean" or we set out on a charted course.

It is easy to drift. On the one hand is the traditional way—what Robert Browning called the "ghastly smooth life"—the way of softness, the way of self-indulgence, the lifeless acquiescence of Tennyson's "Lotus Eaters", who lived

"In a land in which it seemed always afternoon;
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream
A land where all things always seemed the same."

It is the way of contentment, of complacency, the downy couch of the dilettante. Emerson speaks with contempt of "the scatter-brained—the afternoon men"—the drowsy, enervated men.

On the other hand is the way of moral adventure, the way of high courage, of independence; choosing the difficult rather than the obvious way, the rough way rather than the delicate way, the perilous way rather than the way of "safety first", the way of the Cross, rather than the way of idle day-dreaming. The one is a mere negative subject, the other is a positive agent. Some men yield; some men create.

You have resources, mental and moral, otherwise, you would not be here. Your associations on the campus and elsewhere; your studies, your social and intellectual contacts, your impulses, your standards, and your principles all enter in to your life assets. You have been richly favored. Many sacrifices have been made enabling you to proceed and to come to this anticipated hour. Many loving hearts are turning wistfully toward you as Rollins College bestows upon you its benediction. Your resources are born of privilege. Numberless youth would endure any privation to be where you are just now. But your resources are futile unless they are adequately employed. Your knowledge, your energies and your capacities are but tools, instrumental for diligent use. Education is not the possession of facts but the fulfillment of available values.

Of course, you will be told that the great days of opportunity have passed, that the world is crowded and confused. Remember, the world has been confused and bewildered since the Tower of Babel. But if your eyes are open and your minds alert and eager there are many fine adventures within your reach. It is a stupid world for a stupid man, but it is a thrilling world for a daring spirit.

There are wrongs to be righted, there are errors to be corrected, there are superstitions to be dissipated, there are vicious social habits to be redeemed. There is no valid objection to the crusader. You find him in every realm.

Why not find something sufficiently important to which you can dedicate yourself in complete abandon? After all, it is better to be fully alive than to be half dead, but some men are already dead without knowing it. How much of us is actually alive?

Are you willing to go on with the perennial war madness? Are you willing to consent that the makers of aggressive war and the beneficiaries of tragedy and death are to proceed without protest? Do you expect to be conscripted body and soul at the roll of the drum? Are you convinced that war is the only way out of international disputes? Have we learned any thing at all since the war or are we insane or half-witted or are we merely asleep?

Have you nothing to say and nothing to do when patriotism degenerates into petty provincialism and narrow nationalism, and

that beyond our gates is a stricken world of men, our blood brothers and also sons of a Universal Father?

Can you sleep or drift or play marbles and be happy and contented when greed exploits helpless fathers, mothers and children? Insull is not the only offender: most offenders are not caught. Insull is more than an individual: he is a type and you can find him in any community. How long do you propose the vampire type is to be tolerated? Nothing will happen until you dare. Have you any responsibility in connection with political insincerity and dishonesty? How many students in the class of 1934 have initiative, the spirit of leadership and actual personal responsibility? Are you just a "Lotus Eater"? Are you familiar with the inward workings in city councils, state legislatures and the devious ways of Congress? Is the present political crisis to end with political chaos and revolution? Do you propose to laugh this off? Can you stop long enough to measure the anti-social forces in American life, preying upon ignorance, prejudice, fear and helplessness? Are you willing to be mere puppets dancing to their music while adroit men pull the strings?

Have you looked into haunted eyes of men facing starvation? It may be that you would rather not be disturbed by poverty and heartbreaking anxiety as people die, unfed and unclothed while the world is filled with plenty. Can you do anything? The present situation is not a mere economic collapse. It is far deeper than that. Its

roots are in social indifference, in moral impotency and in spiritual decay. The idea that Science is an infallible god has been exploded. The old prophetic word returns with vehemence, "the whole body is sick and the heart is faint". The trouble is, the supreme loyalties have been smothered by our little loyalties: my job, my home, my party, my rights, my liberty, my country, and the rest "go hang". Unfortunately, there isn't enough real religion to go around and nothing but a God-inspired regeneration can set us right.

"The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart,
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice
A humble and a contrite heart"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

You can not build a world without love and good will. What is the use of damning the passing generations if you are going on in the same old haphazard way? That will not help you at all. Can you do anything? You can take things seriously. You can shame yourself out of indolence and unconcern. You can think, you can act, you can burn if you will pay the price. But alone, you can do little until you learn to cooperate, to relate yourself in genuine friendship to great enterprises.

There is enough redemptive energy latent in the college youth of America to blow into atoms the sinister forces that are de-

moralizing the social order of the Republic. With courage, with mutual trust, with united effort, with patience and with faith in God you can lift somewhat, the crippled world to its feet.

If you are content to be a mere bystander while others play the game you shall have your reward: you will not be hurt, you will not be ostracized, you will not be thrown into jail: you will be just a hanger-on, a poor half and half, and when you die nobody will note your passing, and nobody worthwhile will shed a tear and your epitaph will be "Born a man, died a zero".

I challenge you, I dare you, to enter into the one superb aristocracy in heaven and in earth, the aristocracy of Christian heroism.

YOU AND THE "FIFTY" CLUB

IN common with many other friends you may be asking, "How can I help make the observance of the fiftieth birthday of Rollins a worthy one?"

Why not join the "Fifty" Club?

As is the case with most other educational institutions Rollins College, lacking adequate endowment, has been obliged to supplement its regular income with contributions graciously made by friends. Our best financial advisers believe the Unit Cost Plan—which will be fully effective two years hence—will yield annually a balanced budget. This year, however—the second in this transitional period—the College must raise \$59,000.00—before June 30, 1935.

Membership in the "Fifty" Club calls for a birthday gift for each of the fifty years in the life of Rollins in recognition of, and gratitude for, the pioneering and unique contribution Rollins has made each year of its half century of life.

The "dues" are elastic. Some can give \$100 *for every year* of the fifty. Others with equal sacrifice may be able to offer only *a dollar a year*. If six of you who read these lines will each fix your "dues" at \$100 a year; and if 500 others will "join" with a lesser fee, Rollins College will indeed have a happy birthday.

See Reverse Side for your "Membership Blank"

(OVER)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Dear President Holt:

In commemoration of the Rollins Semicentennial I want to share in your work by joining the "Fifty Club" to aid you and Rollins in your "adventure in common-sense education."

My subscription for \$_____

{ is attached,
{ will be sent.

Cordially yours,

Name _____

Street _____

City and State _____

(OVER)