The ideal college student is he who attains the purpose of college education. That purpose is character. The end of university education is knowledge; of professional and technical education, skill; but that of the college is manhood. Now character is will. Knowledge and mental efficiency are instrumental to will. Will is the centre and substance of personality. The ideal college student develops will. This development involves energy and direction.

Energy of will, like every other human quality, is largely a matter of inheritance; but, like every other quality, may be developed or weakened by education. Energy of will is developed by right doing. Idleness debilitates the will; vice rots it out. The activity must be persistent. Spasmodic activity has little educational value. The student needs to do his work with energy. It is not light reading, but reading lightly that weakens. The student must attack the difficult subjects. Rosenkranz says that, if at the beginning of a day’s mental work, a student will read a few pages of Kant, it will so tone up his mind that any other work will seem easy. On the other hand, if a man begins his work with the daily paper, his mind will probably act flabbily all day. Leave the easy till the work of the day is done. But whether the subject is easy or difficult, the chief thing is to do it with energy. Rest during waking hours should be change of activity. Recreation to be real must be a creation of new will power. Repair belongs to the hours of sleep, and requires entire cessation. Rest, however, is not merely a change of work. For the mature this is true; but for the young, the change must be from work to play. Play requires as much activity, and develops a certain kind of energy, as work. One set of extremists would make life all work, [p. 21] a struggle against the unfavorable or the distasteful; another would make it all play, doing nothing but what is agreeable. The truth seems to lie between. The youth must do the task, must earn his character by the sweat of this face; and, on the other hand, he must play, must give scope to imagination and freedom. But in work or play he must do. There is no telling where the boys will come out; but one thing is pretty well settled, that unless a student develops energy, and force of will, he will achieve little in the world. Of course the student will not confound energy of will with immobility or passive resistance to external incitements, nor with the seeming activity which is forever preparing to do, but achieves nothing.

The direction of will includes the end, the means and the motive. There is need, consequently, of enlightenment, and one function of the college is to enlighten the student in regard to himself, the world, and God. This enlightenment itself develops character; for knowing is always active. Knowledge of the world in which his activity is carried on, and his growth takes place, involves not merely physical, chemical, and organic science, but especially knowledge of man, both as an individual and as organized in society. The student will consequently acquaint himself chiefly with man. This does not mean that he shall study only literature, history, psychology, sociology, but that he shall mingle with men, and become one with them. A large proportion of the failures of students arises from their ignorance of men. This knowledge of self, the world and God, a knowledge which should be growing constantly clearer and deeper, furnishes the materials for judgment as to means and ends. The more energetic and forceful is the man’s will, the more need there is of sound judgment; else his very energy will lead to ruin.
While the choice of profession may well be deferred till the end of the course, the choice of the great goal of life should be made early. The only end worthy of a man is the realizing in himself of the image of God, and the working together with others of like mind in realizing that same image in the souls of others, and in society at large. In the attainment of this end, and in the choice of subordinate and other means, there will be ample scope for the exercise of judgment. The chief rules for judgment must always be the moral law. Ethics, practical and theoretical, must therefore be the subject of profound and life-long study. The student will devote himself to the study of morality as revealed in history and biography, and in the great moral poets, Aeschylus, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning; as set forth in Kant’s *Metaphysics of Ethic*, and, for practical morality, in Wayland’s *Moral Science*; above all, as given in that great repository of ethical truth, the New Testament. The student will bear in mind, however, that to know without doing is to build upon the sand.

For complete moral action, right ends must be sought by right means, and with righteous motives. Man has in common with the lower animals the will to live, as an impulse to action. This impulse is non-moral. He may also act from an idea of what is for his advantage. This is prudential conduct. A man may act from an idea of right, and this raises his conduct into the plane of the ethical. But doing right merely because it is right, and not with delight in right doing, is not the highest type of conduct. The highest motive is love. This is the supreme commandment upon which depends all the law. Not that love supersedes law. Moral law is an expression of the divine nature, and owes it validity to that fact; but God is love, as well as holiness; and the two are not opposites. The student, therefore, aiming at the highest manhood, must act from the highest motive, and pursue right ends by right means. This highest motive does not exclude the lower impulses, the will to live, nor the pursuit of happiness; but it subordinates them to itself, and, at the same time, purifies and elevates them. What was said of old concerning knowledge may be said of education. There are those who seek to know that they way sell their knowledge for riches, honors, or the like; and this is low venality. There are those who seek to know that they may be known, and this is mere vanity. There are those that seek to know that they may be upbuilt, and this is wisdom. There are those who seek to know that they may upbuild others, and this is love.

Only those who seek to know that they may upbuild and be upbuilt attain the true end of education, and so are ideal students. [p. 23]