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# The Higher Education of the People

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

Wednesday Evening, January 28, 1891

BY HERBERT B. ADAMS, Ph. D., PROFESSOR IN THE JOHNS HOPKINS  
UNIVERSITY

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[Reprinted from Appendix to Report of the Society's 38th annual meeting.]

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## THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE.

An address delivered before the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, January 28, 1891,  
by HERBERT B. ADAMS, Ph. D., Professor in the Johns Hopkins University.

## I.

The beginning and the end of great historical movements are always interesting objects of study or contemplation. Men like to know the sources as well as the outlets of great rivers like the Nile or the Mississippi. Assembled here in this state capitol, in this noble university-town, midway between the Father of Waters and the Great Lakes, near those "Historic Waterways," of which one of your own historians has written, let us consider the historic origin and democratic tendencies of one of the noblest of all great currents of human progress, the Higher Education.

Far back through the deserts of past time we may ascend this stream. High up in the mountains of Egyptian, Babylonian and Grecian history we may find its sources. The higher education came first in the experience of every ancient and of every modern people. There must always be mountain springs and upland lakes to feed the broadening floods of mighty rivers like the Nile and the Mississippi in their fertilizing course through the great plains of popular culture. If you choke these springs and exhaust these lakes, the rivers will run dry and the whole country will become an arid waste. Then will arise famine in the land of Egypt and dearth in the Mississippi valley. Ill favored, lean-fleshed kine will begin to come up out of those rivers, and they will eat up the well-favored and fat kine that once fed in the meadows.

The governors and law-givers of ancient Egypt provided well for the higher education. In the three great educational capitals of that country, Thebes, Memphis and Heliopolis, began the development of land surveying, geometry, astronomy, and of all our mathematics and geography. The priests of Egypt invented our system of dividing time

by years and months. It was to Egypt that Roman emperors and Roman popes had to turn for instruction whenever they needed to reform the calendar. All the arts and sciences of antiquity were cultivated in those old university towns along the river Nile. Egyptian priests were the best physicians and surgeons of their time. They were skilful oculists and could perform most delicate operations, like the removal of cataract from the eye. Greek philosophers and students went to Egypt for special training very much as Romans afterwards went to Athens, or Englishmen to Florence and Bologna, or Americans to Paris and Berlin.

The entire Hebrew nation went to school in Egypt, and learned from Egyptian task-masters the first rudiments of manual training. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. It was probably in the university town of Heliopolis that he was trained to become the law-giver for his people, as the Egyptian priests were the law-givers of Egypt. It was by the bitter waters of Marah and not at Mount Sinai that Moses first promulgated statutes and ordinances. There is a profound meaning in the fact that the whole history of the Hebrew people was a process of higher education in the law as given by Moses. And it not a remarkable fact that a high priest of this same people, whose education proceeded from one well-trained man, should have been the first in the world to ordain the establishment of common schools?

It was in the year of our Lord, 64, shortly before the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and the consequent dispersion of the Jews, that the high priest, Joshua Ben Gamala, imposed upon every Jewish town the obligation to support a school. If the town happened to be divided by a river, with no means of transit by a safe bridge, it was ordered that a school must be kept on each side. Probably this ordinance was never carried out, but the idea of Jewish town schools nearly sixteen centuries before the compulsory education was introduced in Massachusetts is sufficiently remarkable. Indeed, the Massachusetts law seems to have been further anticipated by a provision in the Jewish Tal-

mud, which required that a town school should have a single teacher if the number of pupils did not exceed twenty-five. For more than twenty-five the town had to employ an assistant teacher. If the number of pupils exceeded forty, two masters were required.

This Jewish law was really more generous than that proclaimed by the good fathers of Massachusetts in 1647. Their law made it obligatory upon every township with fifty householders to have an elementary school, and every community with one hundred families to have a grammar or classical school to prepare boys for Harvard college. The motive of the Puritan legislators of Massachusetts, in thus providing for the higher education of the people was, in their own quaint words, "that learning may not be buried in the grave of our fathers, in the church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors." The Jewish motive for proposing compulsory education in 64, A. D., was as patriotic and far-sighted as that of Prussia, after her defeat at Jena in 1806, or as that of France after the surrender of her emperor at Sedan. All three nations, the Jews, the Germans and the French, sought moral and intellectual recuperation from apparently overwhelming disaster by resorting to the higher education of the people, and all three nations have succeeded in their noble purpose.

The common schools of America sprang from sources higher than themselves, from English traditions of college education, from earlier fountain-heads of learning far back in historic mountains, from springs more remote and mysterious than were once the headwaters of the Nile. The history of education is one long stream with a continuous, inexhaustible flow from such upper tributaries of science as the schools of Thebes, Memphis, Alexandria, the Græco-Roman world, and from such later well-springs of learning as the Benedictine monasteries, the cathedral schools, the colleges and universities of Europe. America began her educational history with the foundation of classical schools and colleges in New England and Virginia. The impulses received from university men in colonial days gave



character and direction to the educational policy of these United States, as is clearly seen in the Ordinance of 1787, which has been called "the *magna charta* of the North-west Territory." The noble provisions in that ordinance for schools and free institutions mark its authors as liberally-educated and far-sighted statesmen. Daniel Webster, in one of his greatest speeches, said: "We are accustomed, sir, to praise the law-givers of antiquity, and we help to perpetuate the fame of Solon and Lycurgus; but I doubt whether one single law of any law-giver, ancient or modern, has produced effects of more distinct, marked, and lasting character than the ordinance of 1787. . . . We see its consequences at this moment, and we shall never cease to see them perhaps, while the Ohio shall flow."

One of the consequences of that ordinance is the excellent school system of the state of Wisconsin, and her present school fund of \$348,000. Governor Peck, in his recent message to the legislature, January 15, 1891, justly observed that "For twenty years the progress of Wisconsin in educational matters has been remarkable, and much more rapid than in many older states."

Historically speaking, all forms of popular culture have proceeded from higher sources than the common level. Neither science nor religion could have gone forth in fertilizing streams for the benefit of mankind, unless there had been mountain springs above the plain. There never was a time in the history of colleges and universities when the intellectual and moral good they represented, and the beneficial influences proceeding from them, did not vastly transcend whatever local evils or temporary abuses may have crept into academic life and administration. Church and state and domestic life have all suffered from unworthy representatives, but that fact does not militate against the eternal worth of family institutions or of civil and religious society.

Universities have always been closely associated with great popular or intellectual movements. From their very origin, European universities have been inseparably connected with the highest interests of the people. In the

twelfth and thirteenth centuries we find them practically identified with the rise of the Italian republics, and with the spirit of municipal liberty exhibited in the guilds, or trades-unions. In fact the word university means simply a corporation, and it was used either for a commune or a guild. When the communes of Italy acquired wealth and independence, there was great rivalry among them in the encouragement of higher education. The universities reflected the character of the towns which encouraged their growth. Both town and gown were thoroughly democratic. Universities were simply voluntary associations, guilds or corporate unions of scholars and teachers for higher educational purposes under municipal patronage. If the city authorities did not treat the university well, professors and students simply migrated to some other town, whose tradesmen and boarding-house keepers received them with open arms. Many of the Italian universities, like Padua and Viacenza, were the direct result of student-secessions from Bologna, "the mother of studies." Leipzig was first recruited by a migration from Prague, and Cambridge was built up by defections from Oxford and Paris.

The vast number of students who attended these mediæval universities, shows what popular institutions they were. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Bologna had ten thousand students and before the close of that century there were twenty thousand. Paris was even more popular than Bologna and remains to this day one of the greatest university centers in the world. At one time, mediæval Oxford is said to have had thirty thousand students, ten times as many as in the more aristocratic era introduced by ecclesiastical influences after the Protestant reformation.

College men in our day, accustomed to the yoke of absolute and personal government, have no conception of the self-governing spirit which pervaded all mediæval universities. So democratic were the ultramontane and cis-montane student nations at Bologna, that each nation elected its own *consiliarius* and each of the two great university bodies, with the aid of their *consiliarii*, elected the rector and all other governing authorities. In Italy, pro-

fessors taught, like St. Paul, in their own hired houses. It was, therefore, "an easy thing," says Laurie, "for the whole university to migrate and desert the town, which owed much of its prosperity to them." The most characteristic and constitutional feature of a mediæval university is that of "a free autonomous organization of teachers and scholars." At Paris, the students and their masters were grouped in four great nations. On account of the youthfulness of the students, the masters chose the procurators or heads of nations, and the procurators erected the rector. Subsequently the masters organized by faculties, or *collegia*, each with its own dean. John Richard Green, speaking of Oxford, said: "The university was a state absolutely self-governed, and whose citizens were admitted by a purely intellectual franchise. Knowledge made the 'master.' To know more than one's fellows was a man's sole claim to be a 'ruler,' in the schools; and within this intellectual aristocracy, all were equal. When the free commonwealth of masters gathered in the aisles of St. Mary's, all had an equal right to counsel, all had an equal vote in the final decision. Treasury and library were at their complete disposal. It was their voice that named every officer, that proposed and sanctioned every statute. Even the chancellor, their head, who had at first been an officer of the bishop, became an elected officer of their own." The university of Cambridge is still called in its calendar, a literary republic.

The services of the Oxford reformers to classical and biblical scholarship are well known. The torch of the new learning was brought from the Italian universities to England by Grocyn, who studied Greek in Florence and began to teach it at Oxford in 1491, one year before America was discovered. Let no American ever raise his voice against the study of Greek, for the revival of the Greek science of geography in the fifteenth century led the way to the discovery of a new world. It was the renaissance of Greek studies that awakened the spirit of free inquiry and intellectual liberty. It was a knowledge of Greek that enabled John Colet, at Oxford, to lecture on the epistles of St. Paul.

So great were the services of the English universities in the sixteenth century that Henry VIII. once exclaimed to his hungry courtiers, who were urging him to lay hands on academic endowments, "Sirs, I tell you that I judge no land in England better bestowed than that which is given to our universities."

The encouragement of higher education by government aid, in one form or another, has been a recognized principal of public policy in every enlightened state, whether ancient or modern. Older than the recognition of popular education as a public duty was the endowment of colleges and universities at public expense for the education of men who were to serve church or state. It is a mistake to think that the foundation of institutions by princes or prelates was a purely private matter. The money or the land always came from the people in one form or another, and the benefit of endowment returned to the people sooner or later. Popular education is the historic outgrowth of the higher education in every civilized country, and those countries which have done most for universities have the best schools for the people. It is an error to suppose that endowment of the higher learning is confined to Roman and German emperors, French and English kings. Crowned and uncrowned republics have pursued the same public policy. Indeed, the liberality of government towards art and science always increases with the progress of liberal ideas, even in monarchical countries like Germany, where, since the introduction of parliamentary government, appropriations for university education have greatly increased.

The total cost of maintaining the Prussian universities, as shown by the reports of our commissioner of education, is about two million dollars a year. Only about nine per cent of this enormous outlay is met by tuition fees. The state contributes all the rest in endowments and appropriations. Prussia now gives to her universities more than twice as much as she did before the Franco-Prussian war, as shown by the report of our commissioner at the Paris exposition in 1867. In that year France gave her faculties

of higher instruction only \$765,764. After the overthrow of the second empire, popular appropriations for higher education greatly increased. France now appropriates for college and university faculties \$2,330,000 a year, more than three times the amount granted under Louis Napoleon. Despotism is never so favorable to the highest interests of education as is popular government. Louis XIV. and Frederick the Great, according to the authority of Roscher, the political economist, regarded universities, like custom-houses, as sources of revenue, for the maintenance of absolute forms of government. The world is growing weary of royal munificence when exercised at the people's expense, with royal grants based upon popular benevolence, and redounding to the glory and profit of the princes rather than to the folk upholding his throne. Since the introduction of constitutional government into European states, representatives of the people are taking the power of educational endowment and subsidy into their own hands, and right royally do they discharge their duty. The little republic of Switzerland, with a population of only three millions, supports four state universities, having altogether more than 300 instructors. Its cantons, corresponding upon a small scale to our states, expend over \$300,000 a year upon the higher education. The federal government of Switzerland appropriates \$115,000 to the polytechnicum, and \$56,000 in subsidies to cantonal schools, industrial and agricultural; besides bestowing regularly \$10,000 a year for the encouragement of Swiss art. The aggregate revenues of the colleges of Oxford, based upon innumerable historic endowments, public and private, now amount fully to two million dollars a year. The income of the Cambridge college endowments amounts to quite as much. But all this, it may be said, represents the policy of foreign lands. Let us look at home and see what is done in our American commonwealths.

Turning at once to the great west, we find that Wisconsin pays one-eighth of a mill tax for her university, and that yields \$72,000 per annum. Wisconsin has given for higher education over \$1,200,000. Nebraska is even more generous

to her state university. She grants three-eighths of a mill tax. The state of California grants one-tenth of a mill tax, which yields over \$76,000. Besides this, the university of California has a permanent state endowment of \$811,000, yielding an annual income of \$52,000, making a total of \$128,000, which the state gives annually to its highest institution of learning. Altogether, California has expended upon higher education more than two and one-half million dollars. The state of Kansas gives its rising university at Lawrence \$75,000 a year, "levied and collected in the same manner as are other taxes."

The principles of state aid to at least one leading institution in each commonwealth is established in every one of the western and southern states. In New England, Harvard, Yale, and other foundations of higher learning appear now to flourish upon individual endowments and private philanthropy; but almost every one of these collegiate institutions, at one time or another, has received state aid. Harvard was really a state institution. She inherited only £800, and 320 books from John Harvard. She was brought up in the arms of her Massachusetts nurse, with the bottle always in her mouth. The towns were taxed in her interest, and every family paid its peck of corn to support President Dunster and his faculty. Harvard college has had more than half a million dollars from the public treasury of Massachusetts. While undoubtedly the most generous gifts have come to New England colleges from private sources, yet every one of them, in time of emergency, has come boldly before representatives of the people and stated their want. They have always obtained state aid when it was needed. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology once became somewhat embarrassed financially, and asked the legislature for \$100,000. The institution got \$200,000, twice what it asked for, upon conditions that were easy to meet.

Turning now from historic examples of state aid to the higher education by individual American commonwealths, let us inquire briefly concerning the attitude of the Father of this federal republic towards institutions of science and

sound learning. Washington's grand thought of a national university, based upon individual endowment, may be found in many of his writings, but the clearest and strongest statement occurs in his last will and testament. There he employed the following significant language:

"It has been my ardent wish to see a plan devised on a liberal scale, which would have a tendency to spread systematic ideas through all parts of this rising empire, thereby to do away local attachments and state prejudices, as far as the nature of things would, or indeed ought to admit, from our national councils. Looking anxiously forward to the accomplishment of so desirable an object as this is, in my estimation, my mind has not been able to contemplate any plan more likely to effect the measure than the establishment of a *University* in a central part of the United States, to which the youths of fortune and talents from all parts thereof may be sent for the completion of their education, in all branches of polite literature, in arts and sciences, in acquiring knowledge in the principles of politics and good government, and, as a matter of infinite importance in my judgment, by associating with each other, and forming friendships in juvenile years, be enabled to free themselves in a proper degree from those local prejudices and habitual jealousies which have just been mentioned, and which, when carried to excess, are never-failing sources of disquietude to the public mind, and pregnant of mischievous consequences to this country. Under these impressions, so fully dilated, I give and bequeath, in perpetuity, the fifty shares which I hold in the Potomac company, \* \* \* towards the endowment of a university, to be established within the limits of the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the general government, if that government should incline to extend a favoring hand towards it."

Washington's dream of a great university, rising grandly upon the Maryland bank of the Potomac, remained a dream for three-quarters of a century. But there is nothing more real or persistent than the dreams of great men, whether statesmen like Baron von Stein, or poets like Dante and Petrarch, or prophets like Savonarola, or thinkers like St. Thomas Aquinas, the fathers of the church and of Greek philosophy. States are overthrown; literatures are lost; temples are destroyed; systems of thought are shattered to pieces like the statues of Pheidias; but somehow truth and beauty, art and architecture, forms of poetry, ideals of liberty and government, of sound learning and of the education of the youth, these immortal dreams are revived from age to age, and take concrete

shape before the very eyes of successive generations. The idea of university education in the arts and sciences, is as old as the schools of Greek philosophy. The idea was perpetuated at Alexandria, Rome and Athens under the emperors. It endured at Constantinople and Ravenna. It was revived at Bologna, Paris, Prague, Heidelberg, Oxford and Cambridge, under varying auspices, whether of city, church or state, and was sustained by the munificence of merchants, princes, prelates, kings and queens. Ideas of higher education were transmitted to a new world by Englishmen who believed in an educated ministry, and who would not suffer learning to perish in the wilderness. The collegiate foundations laid by John Harvard in Massachusetts, and Commissary Blair in Virginia, were the historic models for many similar institutions, north and south. George Washington, the chancellor of William and Mary, when he became president of a federal republic, caught up, in the capital of a westward-moving empire, the old university idea, and gave it national scope. There upon the bank of the Potomac he proposed to found a national university, drawing its economic life from the great artery of commerce which connects the Atlantic sea-board and the great west. As early as 1770, Washington described this Potomac route as "the channel of the extensive and valuable trade of a rising empire."

Was it not in some measure an historic, although an unconscious, fulfillment of that old dream of Washington, when, a hundred years later, Johns Hopkins determined to establish upon the Maryland side of the Potomac, a university with an economic tributary in the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, which follows the very windings of that ancient channel of commerce? Forms of endowment may change, but university ideas endure. They are the common historic inheritance of every enlightened age and of every liberal mind; but their large fulfillment requires a breadth of foundation and a range of vision reaching beyond mere locality. Universities that deserve the name have always been something more than local or provincial institutions. Since the days when Roman youth frequented the schools



of Grecian philosophy, since the time when ultramontanes and cismontanes congregated at Bologna, since students organized by nations at Paris, Prague and Heidelberg, since northern Scots fought southern Englishmen at Oxford, university life has been something more than national. It has been international and cosmopolitan. Though always locally established and locally maintained, universities are beacon lights among the nations, commanding wide horizons of sea and shore, catching all the winds that blow and all the sun that shines, attracting, like the great light-house of Ptolemy Philadelphus on the island of Pharos, sailors from distant lands to Alexandrine havens or speeding the outward voyager.

## II.

We have seen the historic origin of higher education and the generous ways in which it has always been supported in Europe and America. Let us now briefly notice the present democratic tendencies of universities, and see what these institutions are doing for the people. There is in England in our time, a remarkable educational movement called university extension. It is a movement towards educational democracy and it presents a striking contrast to the old educational aristocracy represented by the privileged classes, who for many generations, monopolized the colleges of England.

There is a new spirit in the academic life of to-day. Men are coming out from the cloisters and quadrangles of those conservative old universities of Oxford and Cambridge. They are bringing to the English people, in their towns and rural districts, some of the best fruits of academic learning in the form of local lectures, given in systematic and instructive courses. University extension has been well defined as an organized attempt "to bring the university to the people when the people cannot come to the university."

University extension is undoubtedly a part of that larger democratic movement which in England has gradually advanced during the present century. It is interesting to reflect that all the great landmarks of popular progress in the mother country are within the memory of living men. The widening of the suffrage by successive reform bills, the emancipation of Catholics, Jews, and women, the institution of compulsory education for children, the establishment of local examinations, local lectures, local colleges and colleges for women, these are all very recent events and indicate the popular direction in which conservative England is now rapidly moving.

Pioneer attempts in the direction of higher education for the people were early made by university men like Dr. Thomas Arnold, of Rugby (1795-1842), Frederick William Robertson (1816-1853), Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872), and Charles Kingsley (1819-1875). All of these eminent teachers and churchmen lectured and wrote for the benefit of English workingmen. Dr. Arnold, while writing his history of Rome and teaching the classics to boys, found time to lecture on English history in a mechanics' institute at Rugby and to write editorials on economic and social subjects for the Sheffield Courant. Robertson assisted in the organization of the Workingmen's institute at Brighton. Maurice founded the Workingmen's college, in London, in 1854, an institution which still flourishes under the guidance of university men. Kingsley wrote popular novels like "Alton Locke" and "Yeast," upon the condition and needs of the workingmen in town and country. He instituted "penny readings" in his parish for popular entertainment and instruction. Under the name of "Parson Lot" he contributed many suggestive articles to a paper founded by Maurice and called Politics for the People. All of this educational work was more or less individual and philanthropic. It was the intellectual and spiritual outgrowth of the Chartist and Reform movements in modern English politics. It was an attempt to meet the rising demands of a democratic age and to direct dangerous social currents into safe and useful channels.

The example and good work of these pioneers in popular education have not been forgotten. These men's lives entered into the history of their time. Much of the unselfish and devoted spirit of university men in our day is the historic outcome of those broad and liberal movements in education first quickened by individual influences in school, church and society.

University extension is the academic supply of trained lecturers to meet a definite local demand, which first arose in associations of school teachers in the north of England and among workingmen in great industrial centres. In response to many local petitions the university of Cambridge first took the field in 1873. Oxford followed in 1878. A joint society, representing the two great universities and many smaller institutions, was formed in London for the extension of university teaching. The work of university extension has now reached vast proportions. In the year 1889-90 no less than 148 courses of local lectures were delivered under the auspices of Oxford university. Cambridge furnished 125 courses and London 107, making a total of 387 in one year. Nearly 18,000 people attended the Oxford courses in 1889-90; over 11,000 those of Cambridge, and nearly 11,000 those of London. Altogether it is estimated by the latest and best authorities upon English university extension that over 40,000 Englishmen, outside university walls, have been reached in a single year by these new and democratic methods of promoting higher popular education.

So remarkable are the facts concerning the popular success of university extension that it must be recognized as a wonderful revival of the original democratic spirit which created the mediæval universities and gave Bologna and Paris each 20,000 students. Professor J. F. Jameson, of Brown university, speaking to American librarians concerning the popular character of mediæval universities, said:

“In the middle ages there was no barrier between the students of England and the country people. Education was profoundly democratic. The reformation and the national movement came at the end of the fifteenth

century, and education began to be an aristocratic thing. Higher education especially came to be the possession of the favored few. Now following the movement towards political democracy has come this movement towards democracy in education, and one of its fruits is university extension. One of the last aristocracies of the world is the aristocracy of education."<sup>1</sup>

In the *University Extension Journal* for March, 1890, there is an interesting article by the Rev. S. A. Barnett, upon the *University of the Future*. The introductory paragraphs suggest the likeness of the mediæval and modern democratic spirit in academic life:

"Academic critics sometimes carp at the university extension system; they forget that it bears a near resemblance to the early growth of Oxford and Cambridge. The force which made the universities was a great popular movement directly affecting a large portion of English youth; people were more mobile in those days, and men of every class could throng to Oxford or Cambridge without great disturbance of the national life.

"Any yeoman's son might be a 'clerk of Oxenford' if he could find board and books out of alms begged for in the streets. Modern comforts and the tyranny of trade have changed all this. A man will not, or cannot, leave the arm chair or the desk on the impulse of the moment to hurry to the feet of some great teacher. The population is too great to find accommodation at two, or even at twelve centres of learning. Democratise the universities as we will, they can only receive the few within their walls.

"The force which created Oxford and Cambridge is still at work; there is, again, a great popular movement in the search for knowledge, and that movement can now be met, not by inviting students to leave their homes, but by sending teachers to the men and women whose lives are fixed round the ganglia of industry. The university extension system does, in modern days, what the universities did in ancient days—it is their child and not their rival."

The number of itinerant lecturers employed by Oxford last year in extension work was twenty-four. Cambridge had precisely the same number. The London society employed thirty, eight of whom also lectured for Cambridge and two for Oxford. The entire force of university men engaged in this public educational work is, therefore, sixty-eight. It may be added, in this connection, that the staff of university extension lecturers is practically distinct from the university faculties, who have quite enough work to do upon their own academic premises. Young men, graduates,

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<sup>1</sup> *Library Journal*, Dec., 1890, p. 118.

fellows of colleges, are encouraged to undertake this missionary work. In order to avoid possible failure or mistakes, candidates for extension courses are required to submit their entire plan of public instruction to critical examination by university authorities and to lecture before a critical audience of academic experts.

The average number of lectures in an Oxford extension course has been about seven. Cambridge and London usually give longer courses, averaging about twelve. The main point of difference between the English university extension system of lectures and the old-fashioned lyceum course is this: the extension course is confined to one great subject and the lectures are all given by the same man; whereas, under the old system, single lectures by different individuals made up a kind of variety-course, without unity or method. University extension lays all possible stress upon the idea of continuous progressive instruction upon one important theme, like the French revolution, or Irish history. Accompanying the lectures there is always a printed syllabus or outline of topics, which every student in the audience has in his hands. This syllabus saves note-taking and affords the student a convenient means for reviewing at home the substance of the lecture. Printed questions are sometimes appended to the syllabus, and these questions may be answered by the student at his leisure. The answers are sent by mail to the lecturer, who examines the papers and publicly comments upon them, without mentioning names, in a class conference held before or after the next lecture.

In every university extension audience, which is as miscellaneous as the congregation of a church, there is a saving remnant of earnest students who are eager to profit by instruction from the lecturer. Experience has shown that about one-half of every popular audience is disposed to do some private work in connection with university extension. In order to encourage private reading, the lecturer often takes with him from the university a small collection of books relating to the topics treated in his course. These books are exhibited to the class and are lent

out under reasonable conditions. Sometimes public libraries co-operate with the lecturer and put certain books upon reservation, on a so-called "university extension table" in the public reading room, where students can examine the literature recommended by the lecturer.

Mechanics' institutes, local colleges, high-schools, academies or literary societies often secure a university extension course under their own special auspices and invite a larger public to profit by the lectures. In cases where lecture funds or endowments already exist, the support of university extension becomes an easy matter. The ordinary cost of a course of twelve lectures is about \$325; the university fees \$225, of which \$200 goes to the lecturer, and \$25 to the examiner. Local expenses are estimated at \$100. Lecture circuits are frequently arranged so that the burden of expense becomes lighter for towns or classes that are grouped together, with some regard to the convenience of the lecturer.

At the end of the course the university appoints an examiner, who, upon the basis of the printed syllabus, prepares an examination paper for the class. Two kinds of certificates are issued by the university; one is called "Pass," and the other "Distinction." Prizes are sometimes offered by the university or by local philanthropy, for the encouragement of university extension students. These prizes are usually in the form of good books, sometimes, however, in the form of scholarships which enable students of talent and promise to spend some time at the university in laboratory work or quiet study.

The middle wall of partition between the English universities and the English people, has now been completely broken down. University extension students who have successfully pursued a three-years' course of local lectures, embracing six unit courses of twelve lectures each in one group of studies, like literature and history, and two other unit courses in Latin and one other foreign language, together with algebra and Euclid, are allowed by the university of Cambridge not only to enter the university without examination, but to have credit for one year's ad-

vanced standing. By two years' residence and successful study at Cambridge, a university extension student can obtain a bachelor's degree. By this liberal arrangement, any natural genius who has been discovered among the sons of the people, is encouraged to go forward and enjoy the highest advantages which university education can afford.

One of the most interesting features of this modern democratic movement toward the higher education of the English people, is the so called "summer meeting" of university extension students at Oxford and Cambridge in the long vacation. In much the same way as American students study in the laboratories and libraries of Harvard university or of the university of Wisconsin in the summer season, do the school teachers and young people of England visit those old and attractive colleges on the Cam and on the Isis. In the absence of the regular students, the so-called "extensioners" occupy the lecture rooms and laboratories. They listen to instructive courses given by the most famous professors in England. They visit art galleries and museums. They have garden parties and receptions. They make charming excursions on the river or into the country and have a most delightful academic picnic for a fortnight in the month of August. Such visits to Oxford and Cambridge, make young England more appreciative of the old universities, and at the same time, bring English professors into closer touch and sympathy with the English people.

This idea of a summer school, the English borrowed from America. Chautauqua assemblies and the summer schools of science instituted by Professor Agassiz were among the first types of such summer work. Another excellent educational idea the English have avowedly copied from Chautauqua, and that is the idea of home-reading circles, which have now assumed a national character under the direction of the National Home Reading Union. In England the courses of home reading are marked out by university men and are of a very superior character. The formation of students' associations has gone hand in hand with the university system of local lectures. Students

meet together in local clubs, very much after the manner of Chautauqua literary and scientific circles.

The English have borrowed so much from America in the methods of encouraging higher education among the people that it would not be unfair if America should import the university extension system and adapt it to our democratic needs. Indeed such adaptation has already begun in various ways: (1) under the patronage of Chautauqua; (2) in the so-called university and school extension, instituted by Mr. Seth Stewart among the teachers of Brooklyn and New York; and (3) in the societies for the extension of university teaching in Philadelphia and Washington. Mr. Richard G. Moulton, the most experienced English lecturer in the field of university extension, has been lecturing in various eastern cities and has given a strong impulse toward the organization of local lectures upon the extension plan. The most active centre of organization at the present time is in the city of Philadelphia, where there is a large industrial population and where there is a superb field for local courses of instructive lectures. Mr. Moulton has been engaged to spend ten weeks in the work of local organization in the various wards and suburbs of the Quaker city.

The subject of university extension is no new thing in the state of Wisconsin. It would be bringing coals to Newcastle to attempt to persuade this progressive "city of education and laws" that university extension means the higher education of the American people. In the catalogue of the university of Wisconsin for 1888-89 stands this noteworthy statement: "It is no more impracticable to extend the popular range of university education than to extend the sweep of university courses. It can scarcely be more prophetic to contemplate the higher education of the masses to-day than it was to look forward to the common education of the masses a few centuries ago." From this same catalogue it appears that the university of Wisconsin, quite independently of English influence, has already become a pioneer in a very democratic educational



movement. We find, under university direction, a well-developed system of popular scientific instruction, whereby the results of original investigations and of agricultural experiments are conveyed to the people, not only through the medium of printed bulletins, but more directly by local lectures and popular discussions.

We discover the origin of the Wisconsin farmers' institutes in the suggestive talks of the late Hon. Hiram Smith, and in the intelligent law drafted by Mr. Charles E. Estabrook and enacted in 1885. By this law, as amended in 1887, the board of regents of the state university was authorized to hold institutes for the instruction of citizens of Wisconsin in the various branches of agriculture. The board of regents was authorized to expend \$12,000 per annum for the maintenance of this kind of work.

It is with no less surprise than admiration that an eastern student of institutions examines the reports of the proceedings of these farmers' institutes, 120 of them held for two days each, and at various centers all over the state of Wisconsin during the past two years. One sees what plain, practical subjects interest the people, and how closely science may be applied to their actual needs. One is impressed with the vast amount of original contributions that Mr. W. H. Morrison, the energetic and efficient superintendent of agricultural institutes, has been able to secure from the people themselves, through local talent, the spirit of co-operation and self-help. Indeed, these published reports are, as he well says, "the product of the farmers of Wisconsin." The members of local institutes, men and women, pastors and teachers, have all worked together with scientific professors from the university to make this educational experiment wonderfully successful.

An observing traveller and appreciative eastern writer, Mr. Charles Dudley Warner, said in his "Studies of the Great West," published in Harper's Magazine, April, 1888:

"Wisconsin is working out its educational ideas on an intelligent system, and one that may be expected to demonstrate the full value of the popular method—I mean a more intimate connection of the university with the life of the people than exists elsewhere. \* \* \* The distinguishing thing,

however, about the state university is its vital connection with the farmers and agricultural interests. \* \* \* I know of no other state where a like system of popular instruction on a vital and universal interest of the state, directed by the highest educational authority, is so perfectly organized and carried on with such unity of purpose and detail of administration; no other in which the farmer is brought systematically into such direct relations to the university."

Let us consider for a moment upon what historic foundations this remarkable system rests. Next to the Ordinance of 1787, by far the most important educational enactment in America was the government land grant in 1862 for colleges of agriculture and the mechanic arts. By the terms of this grant, which has been called "a far-reaching measure of peace," enacted in the midst of civil war, 30,000 acres of public land for every senator and representative in congress were given to each state in the union. This splendid endowment was to be used by each state for the "maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, *without excluding other scientific and classical studies*, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts." Was there ever such a noble agrarian basis for the higher education of the people? All the friends of university extension in England are to-day rejoicing over the right just conceded to the county councils to apply to the encouragement of local lectures the education fund arising from a liquor tax, or the so-called "extra spirit duty." This fund varies in different English counties from \$10,000 to \$115,000. The financial basis of university extension in England is henceforth secure; but far better than the liquor taxes of England or the tobacco taxes of colonial Maryland and Virginia, for the support of the higher education of the people, was the United States land grant for agricultural colleges in 1862.

The state of Wisconsin used this land grant wisely. Instead of wasting it upon a separate foundation, as did so many of our states, instead of establishing a purely mechanical or agricultural college and thus violating the spirit of federal law by "*excluding other scientific and classical*

*studies,"* Wisconsin used her land grant in connection with her own university, thus strengthening the agricultural and mechanical interests of the state by building upon good scientific and classical foundations already laid. The state of Connecticut pursued the same wise policy in identifying her agricultural and mechanical interests with the Sheffield scientific school of Yale college. Vermont, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Minnesota, Nebraska and California pursued much the same sensible policy of uniting higher educational interests. Concentration of state resources is the governing principle for higher education. Distribution of state patronage and the encouragement of local self-help are the best rules of public policy as regards common schools: centralization for the higher; decentralization for the lower.

The state of Wisconsin has observed these unwritten laws which have been clearly revealed by the educational experience of these United States. The whole history of federal and state aid to higher education in this country, has been thoroughly investigated by one of the former fellows of history in the Johns Hopkins university, Dr. F. W. Blackmar, now a professor in the state university of Kansas. His array of facts and suggestive conclusions regarding the true educational policy of an American state or commonwealth are incontrovertable. Wisconsin needs, however, no argument to prove the manifest success of her own state policy of concentrating educational energy in that great central reservoir, the university, from which helpful influences are now being extended throughout this entire state by means of farmers' institutes, mechanics' institutes and teachers' institutes. The whole country knows what educational facts are already accomplished here. It may be added in this connection, that the friends of university extension in eastern as well as western states, are beginning to inquire very carefully into the good example of the university of Wisconsin. Educationally, as well as physically, Madison is a city set upon a hill and she cannot be hid.

But there is one undeveloped side of university extension in Wisconsin for which an earnest plea may here be made, and that is the side of liberal studies relating to man and society, such studies as history, literature, art, political and social science. Man does not live by bread alone, nor yet altogether by mechanics and useful inventions. Mr. Goschen, president of the London society for the extension of university teaching, and a member of parliament said in a public address to English university extension students, 'A man needs knowledge not only as a means of livelihood but as a means of life.' This sentence touches the key-note of the highest university education for the people in contradistinction to industrial and technical training. The latter is a means of livelihood. University education in the highest sense should be an end in itself, not simply a means of money-getting but of a free and noble intellectual life, with power to enjoy and to appreciate the best which has been thought, said or done in the world. This is the highest education, this is true culture. The studies which contribute to it are rightly called cultural. College men regard such an education as liberal, humanizing. When a student rightfully obtains the degree of bachelor or master of arts, it is upon the basis of liberal not of technical or professional studies. These are both legitimate and necessary, and have their proper place in the higher education of the people; but there are still higher intellectual interests which need to be fostered in every enlightened system of state education.

President Chamberlin in his recent address on university extension, delivered just one month ago before the Wisconsin teachers' association, in Madison, December 29, 1890, said the Wisconsin system of extra collegiate work, as thus far developed, has been industrial rather than cultural. Nevertheless he discerns in this state higher tendencies in the growth of adult classes in history and literature, and in local courses of lectures upon these subjects. At the same time he sees the practical difficulties in the way of the highest forms of university extension. The teaching force of the state university is already overtaxed. Profes-

sors cannot neglect their regular work and turn aside from eager and devoted students in order to seek possible hearers elsewhere. If university men have any leisure at their command they ought to spend it in scientific work for the honor of their university and the help of the people. President Chamberlin sees ultimate hope for university extension in Wisconsin along cultural lines, in the selection of specialists who shall make extension work their educational business.

This is the only possible solution of the problem. A regular staff of university extension lecturers in history, literature, art, political, social, and natural science, should be trained up among the graduates of the university. The burden of expense for local lectures should be thrown, for the present, upon the communities that desire higher and more liberal education for their adult population. President Chamberlin sees in your high schools and in your public school teachers a possible means for local organization and educational development. He suggests special lecturers, well-trained in two or three particular lines, who might form educational circuits among neighboring high schools and give them weekly lectures upon an itinerant system. Thus around public school teachers and their advanced pupils might be rallied, in evening classes, the most intellectual people in the community. Other possible centres of local organization might be suggested, such as church societies, Chatauqua literary and scientific circles, labor unions, local institutes and public libraries, now called the people's university.

Hand in hand with university extension through the state of Wisconsin should go library extension. Here lies the manifest opportunity of the Wisconsin historical society. In close pursuance of that policy of institutional co-operation which has made the agricultural college all the more efficient by reason of association with the university, this historical society should become intimately, if not legally, allied with the historical department of the faculty of liberal arts. From this fresh combination of forces might proceed energizing, quickening influences

upon the historical culture of the whole state. In addition to her farmers' and mechanics' institutes, Wisconsin should have a great variety of historical and literary institutes, local clubs like those now flourishing in Madison and elsewhere. Local lectures should be given to the adult population by graduates of the university; and just as Oxford sends her young men into rural towns and mining districts with travelling libraries, for the illustration of public courses of instruction, so the university of Wisconsin and her state historical society should together send out well-equipped apostles of liberal culture for good and helpful work among the people. Why should not the historical department of the university and the historical society thus work together for the higher education of the state of Wisconsin? Indeed, they are doing so already, in a representative way, and need only public encouragement and larger opportunities to make their co-operation more widely efficient.

In reading a sketch of the state historical society, written by its accomplished secretary, Mr. R. G. Thwaites, and published in the Magazine of Western History for March, 1888, one is impressed with this statement: "While historical students come from long distances to use the library, and many readers from outside of Madison are in the rooms daily, perhaps the majority of those whose faces are familiar in the outer precincts of this temple of knowledge, are the young men and women in attendance on the university of Wisconsin, to whom the library is an exceptionally great boon; it is regarded by students and faculty alike as one of the chief attractions of student life at the Badger capital." If the advantages of the library of this society are so highly appreciated by the sons and daughters of the people during a brief period of academic training, how much higher would be their appreciation of this literary arsenal, when, after graduation, they go forth upon educational campaigns and need the best weapons which the state and its historical library can supply? Mr. Thwaites said in his latest report, January 15, 1891, that this library now numbers nearly 141,000 books and pamph-

lets. In another connection, he once said of this treasure-house of knowledge, "it is especially rich in Americana, being only surpassed in this particular by two other historical libraries — both of them east of the Alleghanies." He meant the library of Harvard college and the New York state library, at Albany.

In the historical library of the Johns Hopkins university the catalogue and published volumes of the Wisconsin historical society, were among our earliest and most valued acquisitions, thanks to the kind offices of your scholarly librarian, Mr. Daniel S. Durrie. Our seminary students have long known of the famous and extensive pioneer collections of Dr. Lyman C. Draper. Ten years ago one of our seminary, now a corresponding member of your society, reviewed in *The Nation* that splendid historic story of "King's Mountain and Its Heroes." And we all know that Dr. Draper has collected materials for many more volumes of frontier history.

Professor Turner, after using the fur-trade manuscripts belonging to this society, has made in a report to your society, a brilliant contribution to the economic and social history of Wisconsin. His work was accepted as a doctor's thesis by the Johns Hopkins university, and it will soon be reprinted in revised form in our "University Studies." He himself is now a worthy transmitter of that rare spirit of historical research which Professor William F. Allen represented for twenty-two years among the students of this state. What joy that master of classical learning and critical scholarship used to take in the growth of your splendid collections of manuscripts and other materials for American history? How he would still rejoice in the prospect of a great school of original workers and historical teachers who are likely to extend the combined influence of this society and of this university throughout the length and breadth of the land? One of the most hopeful signs of the times in Wisconsin is the joint investigation undertaken by the corresponding secretary of this society and the historical department of the university, concerning the origin and status of the various foreign groups of population in

this state. Such an inquiry if worked out in detail will give sociological results of profound interest not only to the state but to the whole country.

In the annual report of the executive committee of your society for 1890, is found this encouraging statement:

“The special privileges granted in the use of the library to the historical department of the state university, during the past two years, have been continued with satisfaction to all concerned, during the present college year. The increase of attendance upon the seminary course in American history, has been such that the room on the second floor of the library, formerly set aside for Professor Turner’s semi-weekly classes, proved too small and they are now comfortably quartered adjacent to the library reading rooms. The seminary students are engaged on lines of original work, and it is important that they have especial facilities for the consultation of records and newspapers and map files, besides the standard works. Every effort consistent with the proper execution of our trust has been made and will be continued, to enlarge the library’s capacity of usefulness to the public. In meeting so far as may be, the needs of the state university students who daily throng our rooms, we are engaged in an educational work of much importance to every section of the commonwealth which is represented in the classes of that institution; and nothing is more gratifying to us than the cordial appreciation of our labors in this direction, which is evinced on so many occasions by both faculty and students.”

In a suggestive article published in the Milwaukee Sentinel, January 11, 1891, proposing a closer affiliation of the university and this society, it is stated that about ninety per cent of the use of the state historical library comes from university students and professors. It is evident, therefore, that the historical society and the university are already closely allied in spirit and are practically co-operating toward the same higher educational ends. It is the part of wise legislation to recognize accomplished facts like these and to extend their influence to the people at large.

The library of the Wisconsin historical society plainly needs better rooms, more light and air, more healthful circulation among the people. One can see at a glance, the present crowded condition of your rooms, and a reader of your history can quickly discover how the present situation came to be what it is. One can follow the whole development process of the library, from that little book case with fifty public documents kept by Librarian Hunt, in the of-



fice of the secretary of state, down through the dark, damp, and dingy basement of a Baptist church, up again into the light of day in the south wing of the state house, where, after various vicissitudes, it has completely outgrown its once commodious quarters and now requires nothing less than a spacious, independent and fire-proof building for its 141,000 books and pamphlets, for its extensive museum collections and portrait gallery. The historical library and museum of Wisconsin, should be conveniently situated as regards the university, and be capable of extension by its librarians, and your university graduates and teachers throughout the entire state.

Is this scheme visionary? Then the regents of the university of the state of New York are dreamers, for they are now planning, upon a large scale, for library extension from Albany. The federal government, the National museum and the Smithsonian institution in Washington, have been for many years engaged in distributing scientific documents among the people, in lending scientific specimens to local museums, and, in the noblest of all public works, the "diffusion of knowledge among men."

In conclusion, it may be urged upon all members of the historical society, of the state university, and of the state legislature, to work generously and harmoniously together and to strengthen all existing foundations for the higher education of the people. Bring representatives of your public school system and of your public libraries, of your colleges and university, into more hearty and efficient alliance. Co-operate with every respectable agency for higher education, whether by summer schools, teachers' institutes, mechanics' institutes, farmers' institutes, or by the distribution of good literature in popular form, and the institution of home reading circles and university extension lectures. Break down the antagonism between mental and manual labor. Make industrial and technical education as honorable as classical culture and the learned professions. Teach the science of government and social science, European as well as American history, in the public schools. Then shall we have greater respect for our fellow-men and

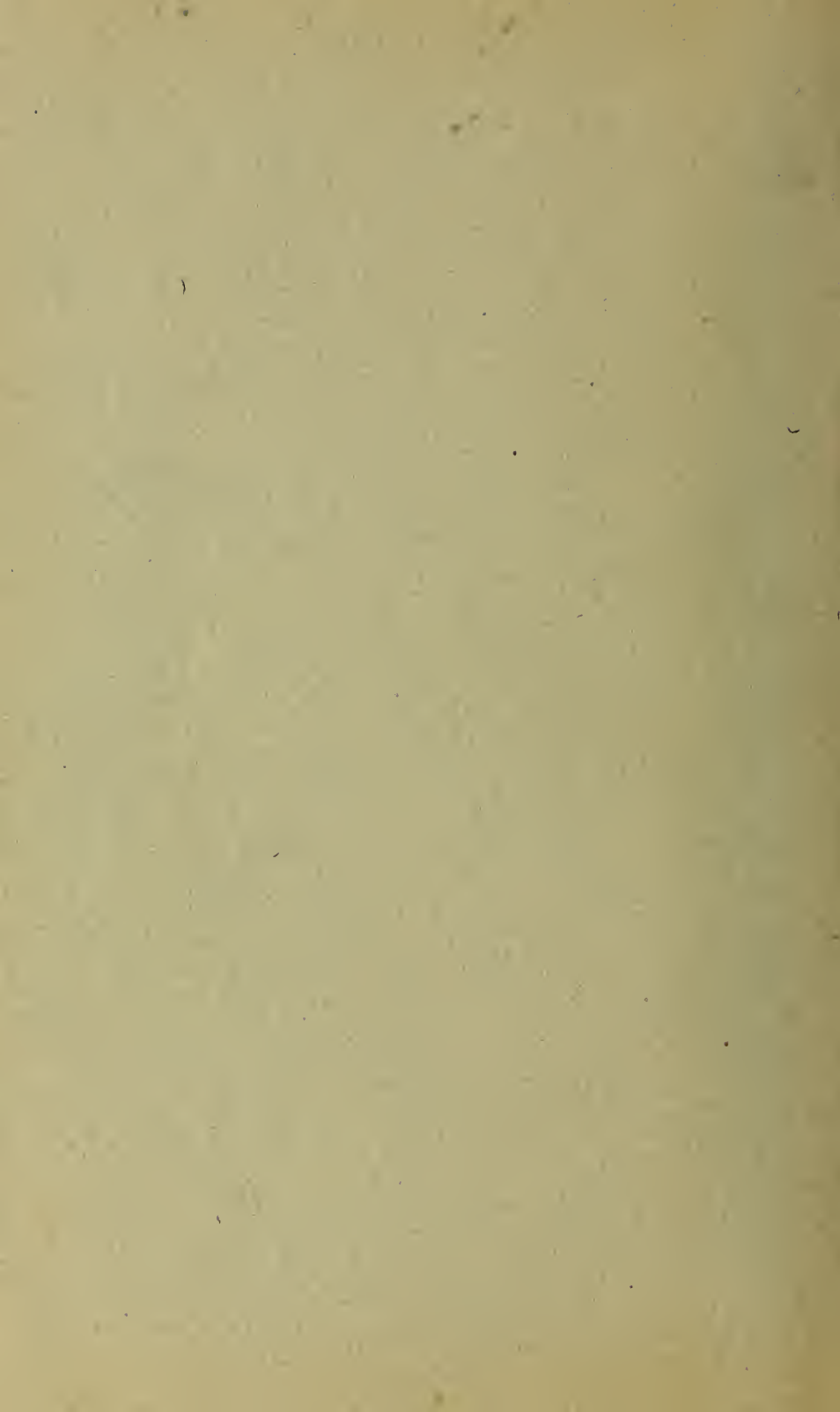
toleration for all the world. Then will our American people begin to appreciate the necessity of supporting all forms of education, even the highest, by the combined efforts of society and the state. A noble popularity must be given to science and art in this enlightened republic. The people of every state should be led to see that the higher learning is not for the benefit of a favored few, but that it is beneficial and accessible to the sons of citizens, of whatever station.

In the proper co-ordination of the common school system with the high school and the university, the western states are leading this nation to a more thoroughly democratic state of society, with fewer artificial distinctions of culture, with more of the spirit of human brotherhood than the world has hitherto seen. The whole country needs this popularization of culture. With universal suffrage and the sovereignty of the people at the basis of our political life, popular intelligence must be cultivated so that our citizens may be both able and willing to hold fast all that is good in human history, not only civil and religious liberty, but all that makes for happiness and righteousness in a great nation.



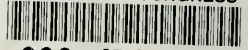








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