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What the University can do for the State.

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AT a special luncheon of the Canadian Club, held on the 21st of October, Dr. Van Hise said:

Gentlemen of the Canadian Club,—It is a very great pleasure indeed for me to respond to the cordial invitation of your secretary to address you. I suppose that few present have seen more of Ontario than your visitor. I have travelled your railroads from one end of the province to the other; I have walked along your railroad lines; I have canoed your lakes and streams at various places, from Lake Winnipeg to Lake Timiskaming. Therefore, I know something of the growth of Ontario, and of this city of Toronto during the past twenty-five years. This morning the secretary of the American Club, Mr. Miller, kindly took me to the new suburbs. I was amazed at the growth of the residential portion of the city since I was here three or four years ago.

In speaking upon the subject, "What the University can do for the State," I am talking on a topic assigned by your secretary. I suggested one or two other subjects which I thought might be more interesting, but he insisted that the subject named was the one upon which your president desired that I should address you.

The universities in the United States, whether state or endowed, are far more like than unlike the universities of Canada and of England. The universities of the United States were originally patterned after the English universities. Some have developed in different directions from others; but all have the same fundamental purpose—the teaching of ideas and ideals to the youth of the nation, and the advancement of knowledge. However varied the ways

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in which these two fundamental principles may express themselves, their essential ends are the same.

At the inauguration of Dr. A. Lawrence Lowell, as president of Harvard University, Mr. James Bryce, then Ambassador of Great Britain to the United States, gave an address, in which he uttered what I think was the most pregnant sentiment of the celebration. He said: "A university should reflect the spirit of the times without yielding to it."

A university in reflecting the spirit of the times should not yield its freedom. I do not know how it is in Canada, but we are absolutely free in the universities of the United States to hold any heterodox notions we may choose regarding higher mathematics, or even philosophy—(laughter)—but when we get to subjects such as sociology, political economy, or political science, then many people are somewhat sensitive about what the university teaches. It is clear that the university must hold itself absolutely free to investigate and teach the truth as it sees it throughout the fields of the political and social sciences. Only so can an institution be a university; only so can it be sure not to yield to the spirit of the times. (Applause.)

While these statements are somewhat dogmatically made, I fully understand that the spirit in which this work is done must not be that of the advocate; it must not be that of certainty. We must realize that for all subjects, everywhere, knowledge is incomplete. No man knows everything about a grain of sand; nor ever shall. Therefore, it is the function of the university for all subjects ever to advance toward completion and perfection, without expecting to reach either anywhere. While the university professor should be free to teach and investigate, his attitude must be that of the seeker after truth, that of the judge, and not that of the advocate.

However, it is not these commonplaces that I am expected to emphasize here to-day; they are presented as the trunk of the university, from which the special branches to be considered spring. The fundamental spirit of all true universities in these essential respects are the same everywhere and must continue to remain the same.

Gradually it dawned upon some people in the university world, and first at Oxford, that it was not sufficient to teach students who came to the doors of the university; that it was not sufficient to advance knowledge; that the university had a third function—that of carrying knowledge to the people. Of the Oxford University extension movement you all know. What are the fundamental principles upon which this move-

ment is based? They are these: The advancement of knowledge has been greater in the past sixty years than in two thousand years before. Until about 1850 the development of knowledge was so slow that the ideas which the people might utilize to their benefit were fairly well assimilated; but during the past sixty years transportation has brought all parts of the world together; communication has become instantaneous; discovery has taken place in every direction with amazing speed. Thus, knowledge has far outrun the assimilation of the people. We know enough about agriculture so that if it were only applied in Ontario the agricultural wealth of the province could be doubled in a decade. (Applause.) We know enough about medicine so that, if the knowledge were applied, infectious and contagious diseases could be eliminated from this city in a score of years. We know enough about eugenics so that, if the knowledge were applied, within a generation the feeble minded would disappear, and the insane would be reduced to an insignificant number.

It may be said that it will be sufficient to teach the new knowledge to the boys and girls in the schools; and this, of course, should be done; but since many of you left the schools, a vast portion of this new heritage has accumulated. You have twenty-five or fifty years more to live. And you are but illustrations of the people throughout this province and the nation of Canada. Therefore, it is not sufficient to teach the new knowledge to the children in the schools; it must be carried to the mature everywhere. (Applause.)

It was this situation which led us at Wisconsin to undertake extension work. The extension movement of Oxford began by the lyceum method of instruction. The professors went out and spoke to the people, giving perhaps, two, four, or six lectures upon a subject; and directly after the lectures there were colloquiums. That was good work to do; and work of this class continues to the present time. But the method was found to be limited in its application. For the most part it was a method of pouring in knowledge upon the recipient and not asking the latter to dig out knowledge for himself. It was an informational, rather than an educational method. Therefore, the lyceum method of extension, while it has performed a brilliant service, and will continue to do so, has failed to accomplish all that was expected when the extension movement was launched at Oxford some sixty years ago.

Therefore, at the University of Wisconsin, when re-organizing our extension work some eight years ago, we placed the movement upon a broader basis. In addition to lyceum work, correspondence work was undertaken. At the present time, Wisconsin has about as many students doing work by correspondence as at the university— somewhere between five and six thousand. While a part of these students are doing work of college grade, many of them are doing work of a lower grade. (Applause.) When this plan of correspondence work was first broached to an eastern educator, he asked: "What about your standards? Is it proper for a university to do work outside of the university buildings and not of college grade?" I replied that we did not publish the names of the correspondence students in the catalogue of our institution, or change the requirements for our degrees; and we failed to see that it demeaned us to do such educational work not elsewhere provided for. For our part, at the University of Wisconsin, we propose to do any line of educational work for which we are the best fitted instrument, without regard to anybody's ideas anywhere concerning the proper scope of the university. (Applause.) This does not mean that we are to take up the work of the elementary school or the secondary school. For such work we are not the best fitted instrument; but the university is the best fitted instrument for the education of people not in school who wish to add to their education:

The Wisconsin system of education, in addition to elementary and secondary schools, provides for continuation schools. Although established only two years ago, some fifteen thousand boys and girls who have finished the elementary work are in schools of this kind. But everyone of us should be students in a continuation school throughout life. It is to serve this large purpose for the people of Wisconsin that the university extension division of the university was organized.

Our faculty in the University of Wisconsin—I don't know how it is in the University of Toronto—were somewhat conservative when it was proposed to enter upon this new work. Some were afraid that the standards would be lowered. We said, however, that no department would be obliged to take up extension work. On that basis a few departments began the work, but soon many departments joined in the movement. At the present time opposition to the Extension Division has entirely disappeared. (Applause.) The professors state that the correspondence work is well done—as

well as in the university. We, of course, do not accept extension work alone for a degree; only one-half may be done *in absentia*.

It is a great satisfaction to me that the extension movement has opened the door of opportunity and made an education available to any boy or girl without respect to condition of birth, without respect to his ability to go to college or university. (Applause.) To illustrate: In the little village of Blooming Grove, eight or ten miles from Madison, a boy lived on a forty acre farm. He had a mother, an aged grandfather, and others, to support. It was simply impossible for him to get away from that little farm; but he was interested in astronomy. Not having any money, he made his own telescope, including the lens. Two of the comets discovered one year bear the name of that boy! (Applause.) He took correspondence work in mathematics at the University of Wisconsin; and has now become an astronomical instrument maker.

Thus, extension has a twofold purpose; not only to carry knowledge to the people, but also to find a way for the boy or girl of parts, whatever the condition of birth.

The extension work of the University of Wisconsin is along various lines. I shall mention only a few of them.

We have a municipal reference bureau, the purpose of which is to give information to any municipality in the state regarding sewage systems, forms of charters, systems of water works, city planning, municipal ownership of public utilities, etc. This bureau serves as an expert adviser to the municipalities in Wisconsin throughout the state.

Another field is that of debating and public discussion. I do not know how it is in Toronto and Ontario, but the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians over in Wisconsin are so cantankerous that in almost every little crossroads community there is a debating society! (Laughter.) In my youth the questions discussed were such as, "Is George Washington or Abraham Lincoln the greater man?" "Is man's intellect equal to woman's, or vice versa?"—perfectly futile questions, which begin nowhere and end nowhere. (Laughter.) It seemed to us, however, that here was an educational opportunity. The burning questions of the day, such as the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, methods of taxation, currency reform, the tariff, all of which were before our people, have been taken up by our extension division and a careful syllabus of the arguments on both sides of each question has been prepared. For of each political and social

question regarding which you differ among yourselves, there are honest arguments on each side. Wise action depends upon the weight of argument between the two.

Upon the same questions covered by the syllabi, little bundles of books and pamphlets are made up containing material upon them. When the crossroads debating society wants to discuss the tariff, the syllabus on the subject and the accompanying bundle of information go to the society. The preparation of the debate with the material involves study; it is educational work. Thus, wherever is a crossroads debating society is a powerful educational force. (Applause.) Besides furnishing material to societies that already exist, the department of debating and public discussion has organized many more. If we are to have in Wisconsin the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, as doubtless we shall in the near future, it is high time to get the people seriously thinking upon the great questions upon which they will be obliged to pass. (Applause.)

Another of the lines of work of the extension division is that of travelling exhibitions and public institutes. To illustrate: An institute on hygiene runs three days in the village of Sauk, and a school of philanthropy continues for three months in Milwaukee. A tuberculosis exhibition goes to any little town which asks for it and furnishes a room in which it may be placed. The physicians in the town co-operate by giving lectures upon the prevention of tuberculosis, the means of elimination of the disease, and the conservation of health. The cost of such an exhibit is small, and this method of work to eliminate the disease from the state is far more efficient than extensive sanitariums costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. (Applause.)

Another line of extension work is that of expert service to the state. Your president raised the question whether the university were subordinate to the legislature or the legislature subordinate to the university. Now this is a tender subject with us—(laughter)—and a tender subject with the legislature. (Laughter.) They scarcely enjoy an intimation that they do not rule. But I am very glad the point has been raised, because with it I can illustrate a principle. At the university we carefully refrain from tendering our advice until we are asked; but it has become the habit of many members of the legislature of Wisconsin to believe that intuition is a poor guide in regard to a complicated measure. Therefore, a legislative reference library was created and placed under the charge of Charles McCarthy, Doctor of

Philosophy of the University of Wisconsin. While Dr. McCarthy's department is the official source of information for the legislature, the professors of the university, when asked, give such assistance as they can. As a matter of fact, professors of the university have had a large part in formulating some of the most important bills. For a number of difficult measures the legislature has appointed expert commissions to report to the succeeding legislature. At the present time more than forty men of the instructional staff of the university are doing regularly expert work of various kinds for the state; and many other men are doing such work incidentally.

When the public utilities commission was established, it was believed by the railroads that they would be dealt with unfairly; it was believed that this new commission would take away their property. But United States Senator LaFollette, then Governor of Wisconsin, appointed a scientific commission consisting of an experienced statistician, an able lawyer, and the professor of transportation in the university. The latter was in Germany at the time, but by cable was asked to take the place. Officials of the railroads have told me that they think the Wisconsin commission has been fair to the railroads. Neither side would go back to the old plan; on one side hold-up bills to be defeated by questionable methods; on the other side deep-seated suspicion of the railroads and resentment concerning their methods. We now have peace, because we have the rule of reason applying to both parties.

In Wisconsin, in addition to a public utilities commission, we have a tax commission and an industrial commission. The bill creating the latter commission was largely the work of Professor John R. Commons, of the university. After the bill became law, the Governor asked Professor Commons to take the chairmanship of the commission. The industrial bill laid down the broad principles that there should be reasonable conditions of safety and sanitation, leaving to the commission the working out of the detailed regulations under these broad principles of law. It is sometimes said that professors are not practical; but the commissioners did not evolve these regulations from their own heads, they sat at various places to hear the points of view of both manufacturers and laborers. The result was that both sides agreed upon many of the requirements to be enforced; and there is general satisfaction on the part of both workingmen and employers. After the commission had been in operation two years, vari-

ous amendments were suggested to the legislature by the commission, practically all of which were adopted. And now Professor Commons, having done his constructive work with the industrial commission, has decided that a professor cannot possibly spend \$5,000 a year and has returned to the university, at a salary of \$3,500, to carry on his work of instruction and research.

Returning to the extension work of the university we estimate that we reached last year, directly and indirectly, some two hundred thousand of the Wisconsin people. But President Falconer knows that this was not done without money. When our extension movement began, some seven or eight years ago, our ideas were but a rainbow vision in the sky. For the first year the regents granted the sum of \$7,500 for this work. The next year we asked the legislature for \$20,000 a year for the following two years, and they voted it. The next session we asked \$50,000 for the first year of the biennium, and \$75,000 for the second; and they gave it. The next biennium we told the legislature we could not do all the extension work from Madison as a centre; that we ought to establish district centres; we, therefore, asked for \$100,000 and \$125,000 for the two years; and they granted it. Last year we asked the usual increment of \$25,000 per annum for this year and next; and the legislature voted it. The above amounts, you will understand, are in addition to the appropriations for agricultural extension, for which work the legislature gave \$60,000 per annum more. Of course, in the province of Ontario the agricultural extension work is carried on by Guelph.

In voting large sums of money for extension the legislature has not crippled the university, or failed to provide for its growth in other directions; indeed, our support for other lines is larger than it would have been had we not undertaken the extension work; for if a university does for the people what they want done, they will have confidence that there are sound reasons for spending increased sums in other directions. In addition to the appropriations for this extension work, the last legislature gave for general university purposes about \$1,200,000 a year, and have voted for buildings and land, during this year and next together, \$1,400,000.

While the university extension movement was actuated at the inception by no other purpose than to perform a larger service to the state of Wisconsin, we have found that it was wise simply from our own point of view. Of course, a university nowhere exists for itself; its existence is justified

only as it performs service to the people. By liberal support of its university a state will increase its material wealth and at the same time add to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth of the commonwealth; which after all must ever remain the chief purpose of a university. We produce things for men and women; and if in creating things we forget the highest development of human beings we make a fundamental mistake.

This principle of carrying knowledge to the people, this principle of finding a way for the boy and girl of parts, is fully developed in Ward's "Applied Sociology," a book of some two hundred pages. Ward shows that the greatest loss of a nation or a province is its loss of talent. You know that not all the ability of Toronto is born in the handsome residential sections of the city. You know that talent is quite as likely to be found among the children in manufacturing districts adjacent to your docks.

It has been sometimes proposed to take all property and distribute it equally. That proposal has never met with the approval of the majority of an Anglo-Saxon people anywhere; and I doubt if it ever will. But equal distribution of wealth is not fundamental to a democracy. So long as you have a system of education, such that the boy or girl of parts can find a way, so long you maintain the essentials of democracy; and if ever your institutions develop in such a way that this is not possible, then; whatever your forms of government, a real democracy has ceased to exist.

When elementary education was democratized in the states, it was regarded as a great achievement—as far as they could possibly go. But later, in the Middle West, the people were not satisfied, and secondary schools were developed at public expense. The East regarded this as a great innovation, an unwarranted waste of public money. But the movement extended from the Middle West to the far West, to the South, and to the East. Still later came the idea of democratizing university education. This was deemed highly socialistic. Men said: "That is a proposal to take *my* property to give a university education to some other man's boy!" But there were no funds in the Middle West from private sources to build universities; and yet there came ever stronger pressure from the boys and girls for a university education. The state university system is the result, and this system has extended from the United States into Canada, from the province of Ontario to the Pacific Ocean.

In short, it has become the North American ideal not only to democratize primary and secondary education, but to democratize higher education; and if this be accomplished, it will be a new thing in the world. We know that German universities, while state institutions, are available only to the well-to-do classes. This same is true to a large extent of the ancient and honorable universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which have done so much to make Britain a great world power. Only recently has England, by the development of her municipal universities, realized public responsibility for higher education.

If in Ontario you develop good elementary schools, secondary schools equal to any, a system of continuation schools where boys and girls who are obliged to go into the shops at an early age may proceed with their education, and a university with the broader ideal to-day advocated, the province of Ontario will move forward, materially, intellectually, and spiritually, with a speed vastly greater than even the amazing acceleration of the past.
