POPULAR EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

From the time of Plato to the present the theory of education entertained by a people has been said to reflect their current ideal of life, and the development of schools and of the other means of learning has been accepted as the mirror of a nation's progress. It was this thought which induced me to describe the University of Michigan. The success of the university has indeed been remarkable. Founded on the grant of land for higher education contained in the ordinance of 1787, it seems from the outset to have been guided by a spirit of liberality and confidence in the people which in theory ought to characterize a public institution. Its history and influence and the quickness with which it has responded to the changing needs of the people are accepted as enduring arguments for higher education by the state. It is indeed fitting that on the wall over the platform where eight thousand four hundred and sixteen men and women have, during the past twenty-one years, received from him who still presides over the institution their diplomas of graduation, these words of Thomas Jefferson, quoted from the ordinance of 1787, should be inscribed: "Religion, Morality, and Knowledge being Necessary to Good Government and the Happiness of Mankind, Schools and the Means of Education shall forever be encouraged."

As an idea the history of the university goes back to 1817, although the idea did not assume definite form until some years later. In 1841 the doors of the institution were first opened for instruction, and nine students availed themselves of its advantages; during the academic year just closed, twenty-six hundred and ninety-two students were in attendance on the university. The first class, numbering twelve, was graduated in 1845; on the last commencement day six hundred and ninety names were added to the roll of *alumni*. Thus within the span of an ordinary life the university has grown from nothing to become the largest institution of learning in the United States. It is certainly pertinent to inquire what may be the secret of this phenomenal development. Is it merely the result of good for-

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tune? Is it because the interests of the university have been intrusted to exceptionally wise men? Or is it due to some peculiarity of organization? In the place of a formal history, I will notice what is peculiar to the university or characteristic of its organization, since in this manner the real meaning of its history will be more perfectly appreciated.

The first and most important feature is that the University of Michigan is a State institution, and as such it has been obliged to sit quietly by and see its rivals, resting on private foundations, sweep in the stakes of private benevolence. This has been frequently deplored by the friends of the university, but there are some reasons for believing that it is the secret of its rapid growth and of the marked influence which it has exerted on the development of education. In the transition from the narrow and rigid to the broad and liberal curriculum of studies which every student of the history of pedagogy recognizes to have taken place during the last thirty years, the University of Michigan has been the pioneer. It has constantly offered new features of education in response to the new demands of a progressive civilization.

A considerable portion of the land now occupied by the city of Toledo was once the property of the university. It would doubtless be pressing the argument too far to urge that the loss of this property was a blessing in disguise; but it is true, as attested by the facts in the case, that the dissipation of the Federal grant until all that now remains is a permanent annuity of thirty thousand dollars has compelled the university to rely more and more on the good will of the people of Michigan, and this has necessitated the constant exercise of a keen and discriminating appreciation of the needs of the State. The ideas welcomed in such an institution cannot be the sort which, as Bagehot remarks, "find their home in academies and out of their dignified windows pooh-pooh new things," for it is the idea of new things to which a university resting on popular approval must throw open its doors.

Another fact should be noted in this connection which strengthens the thought thus presented. The governing body of the University of Michigan is elected by popular suffrage and is regarded as an independent branch of the government co-ordinate with the legislature. This is indeed a unique feature. As a form of organization it meets the condemnation of theorists, but it has worked admirably. Certain precautions have been taken to guard the university from the ordinary political influences. Thus the election of regents takes

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place, together with the election of judges of the Supreme Court, in an "off" year, and both parties have for the most part refrained from degrading their offices to political ends. The office of regent is regarded as one of the most honorable in the gift of the people, as is attested by the presence on the existing board of a gentleman who declined a nomination to Congress in a sure district, accepting by preference the place he now holds. It would be impossible to bring the university into closer organic relation with the people than to intrust its government to an elected board, and to oblige this board to come for supplies to an elected legislature. Such an organization evinces a confidence in popular suffrage which gives the institution a truly democratic character and makes it the most perfect educational counterpart of American life. Thus what in theory ought to have resulted in the confusion of the university has proven to be a vital principle of its life, and what, according to Tory ideas, should have obstructed the growth of an institution of learning, has in fact given impulse and direction to its development. This is attested by the history of the university from the beginning to the present.

Not only is the university by virtue of its organization in sympathy with the State—it is an organic part of the general system of public instruction, realizing in this particular also the ideal of education entertained by Thomas Jefferson. The honor of having given definite form to the educational system of Michigan belongs to the Rev. John D. Pierce, the first superintendent of public instruction. Shortly after having come to the Territory, in 1831, a copy of Cousin's famous "Report on Education in Prussia" fell into his hands. His imagination was fired with the thought of the possibility afforded by an application of such a system to the new and undeveloped State; and when he was called upon to frame a law for the organization of education in Michigan, it was not the New England college with its private academies which furnished him the ideal, but the simple, harmonious, and complete system of state education most perfectly realized in Prussia.

It would be impossible to overestimate the far-reaching influence of this law; not only did it give permanent character to education in Michigan, but the entire Northwest has felt its influence; for in matters of education the States of the Northwest have largely followed the lead of Michigan. The ideal of the university which found expression in this law was that of a German university. The first steps were indeed ridiculous when compared with the fulness of

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the model which was accepted, but the ideal has never been lost to view. As expressed by Prof. Calvin Thomas:

> "A university in the German sense is an institution crowning the educational system of a State, treating its students as free adults engaged in a *bona-fide* pursuit of knowledge, offering its advantages at the lowest possible price, sending down its roots into the life of the people, to take thence the sap of its own vitality, and paying back the debt by raising the level of intelligence and adding to the value and dignity of life throughout the entire Commonwealth."

But how, it may be asked, does the University of Michigan "crown the educational system of the State"? What relation has it to the common schools? The relation that exists is a very simple one. The graduates of high-schools and of a few selected private schools are permitted to enter the university without examination, provided the schools from which they come have been examined and approved by a committee of the faculty. In this manner the university exercises a direct influence on the schools: poor teachers are weeded out, improper text-books are excluded, and uniform courses of study are introduced. This arrangement is as familiar now with the universities of the West as it is simple and efficient, but it was seriously criticised when it was first made by the University of Michigan. Much of the efficiency, however, of education in the State is traceable to it.

It is natural that an institution brought into such intimate relations with the common people should feel almost instantly the appearance of new forces tending to intensify or to modify their civilization. The year 1840 marked the beginning of a new era in American life. Ten years of experiment with railways had shown that distance need no longer be a barrier to commerce, and that the best lands, rather than navigable streams, might for the future direct the migrations of the people. A new impulse was given to inventions and a new line of activity opened up to men trained in science and in the commercial arts. The pedagogical question presented by this state of affairs was whether the universities should provide this training or whether it should be obtained in a loose, haphazard, unscientific manner. It is to the enduring honor of the University of Michigan that forty years before most institutions of learning in this country acknowledged the existence of the question, the necessity for scientific training was clearly recognized and a course was laid out leading to the new degree of "Bachelor of Science," which quickly came to be recognized as equal to the time-honored "Bachelor of Arts." The important point, however, is that scientific training was from the beginning cordially

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admitted to full fellowship in the university. That this was the case is due largely to the wisdom and foresight of that truly great educator, Dr. Henry P. Tappan, the first president.

The spirit of liberality evinced in 1852 by the establishment of the scientific course has manifested itself in many ways during the years which followed. It was accepted as a principle that whenever a demand for a peculiar kind of education showed itself the demand should be met, a principle which led to the establishment of the degree of "Bachelor of Philosophy" for those having no opportunity to prepare in Greek, and of the degree of "Bachelor of Letters" for those who preferred modern to ancient languages. The degree of "Bachelor of Science" also has been differentiated to allow of specialization in the various branches of science; so that at present this degree may be taken with specific mention on the diploma showing whether the student has specialized in civil engineering, mining engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, chemistry, or biology. It is by no means certain that the policy which recognizes differentiation in courses of study by different degrees is the correct one; the facts are not here brought to notice for the purpose of calling attention to the pedagogical question involved, but to show how the university, following its avowed policy of intrusting the direction of its development to the choice of the people, has succeeded in providing for the many and varied needs of its constituency. The educational system is complicated because of the complexity of the civilization it serves. The application of the policy just mentioned is further observed if we notice the departments of instruction offered in the university. All the degrees above referred to are conferred by the faculty of the Departments of Literature, Science, and the Arts. But besides these, appropriate courses are offered in the Department of Medicine, which was opened in 1850; in the Department of Law, which was opened in 1859; in the Department of Pharmacy, which was established in 1868; in the Homœopathic Department, which was established in 1875; and in the Department of Dental Surgery, which also was established in 1875. These several departments taken together make up the University of Michigan.

All departments of the university are domiciled on the same campus; thus the university exists in reality, and not merely in a catalogue or in an announcement. This being the case, it is gratifying to the friends of liberal education to notice the steady growth of the Literary Department, for it shows, contrary to the fears of the

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timid, that the presence of professional schools is not detrimental to academic training; on the contrary, a close examination of the question discloses the fact that the proximity of the various departments is mutually advantageous. The old lines which separated culture from science and professional learning from them both are fast being effaced. Instruction in liberal arts conforms more and more to scientific requirements; instruction in the sciences cannot disregard the claims either of true culture or of professional needs; while instruction in the professional schools is brought to an unusually high standard by its contact with the arts and sciences. And all this is accomplished through the unconscious coercion of the student body, whose members mingle freely with each other. It is the natural consequence of *the organization of the university rather than the result of foresight* on the part of those who have administered it. There is not yet, perhaps, that complete formal interchange of courtesies between the various departments which the ideal university demands, but the necessity for this is becoming more and more apparent to the governing body, and its accomplishment will doubtless be the next important step in the development of the institution. The university spirit exists, and it cannot be long before that spirit finds adequate formal expression.

The general principle underlying the elective system was recognized by the university in 1852, when scientific studies were accorded equal rank with classical studies; but the policy was not formally promulgated until 1878, when the requirement of four years' residence for graduation was abolished, and in its place was substituted the requirement that a certain number of courses should be completed, each student being free to elect such courses as seemed to him most profitable. The adoption of the elective system marks the beginning of a new era for the university, since by means of it specialization on the part of both instructor and student has been encouraged, and a wonderfully rich and varied course of instruction has been the result. In the Departments of Literature, Science, and the Arts there were in 1878 one hundred and forty-three courses offered, as against four hundred and eighty courses in 1892. It is not a matter of accident that the number of students in the Literary Department increased during this period from four hundred and forty-one to thirteen hundred and thirty, nor in the university as a whole from thirteen hundred and seventy-two to twenty-six hundred and ninety-two. The influence of this liberality of elections upon the courses of study may be the most

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vividly shown by indicating its results in a single department of instruction. In 1887 political economy might claim the attention of students for two hours a week throughout the year. The announcement for the next academic year shows four instructors in political economy alone, and a sufficient number of courses to furnish work for a student who should elect them all with five hours a week for two full years. Thus in addition to the purely undergraduate courses, which include the study of elementary principles, of the history of industrial society, and a cursory examination of certain practical problems, intermediate and graduate courses are given covering the whole range of economic, financial, and social discussion. This is but typical of what has occurred in other departments of instruction. It is fair to refer to it as a legitimate result of the elective system and of the spirit of liberality on which the elective system rests.

There are many other features of the university as worthy of mention as those which find place in this article, but they all point in the same direction: they all show the wisdom of education under the direction of the State. It is commonly argued against this system, by those who base their reasoning on the philosophy of individualism, that governmental control must hinder free development in methods of instruction. The history of the University of Michigan does not support this argument. On the contrary, the conclusion at which one must arrive who reads its history is that an organic connection between the state and education is decidedly advantageous to education. One thing at least is certain: an educational system which is part of state machinery, provided the state be democratic in form, can never come to mean the education of a class, nor can a university which appeals to the people for pecuniary support become a centre from which aristocratic ideas or a plutocratic industrial philosophy are disseminated. State education must be democratic in the highest sense of that word, for its continued existence depends upon its being in harmony with the ideal of the people and upon the quickness with which it responds to public needs.

Looking at the past, there is every reason for the indulgence of a confident hope respecting the future of the University of Michigan, and it is perhaps a want of faith not warranted by the past which causes the friends of the university to regard with some solicitude the last step which it has taken in its purpose to become an ideal university. The State has shown perfect willingness to support with liberality a system of instruction which attracts large numbers of

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pupils. Will she be equally willing to support a technical, specialized education of which comparatively few may avail themselves? This is the question which confronts the university. Or, put in another way, will the State encourage research and investigation? If answered affirmatively, there is no assignable limit to the possible development of State universities; if negatively, State universities have had their day. The present situation is nothing less than a crisis in the life of popular education.

The faculty of the University of Michigan, recognizing fully the seriousness of the situation, have decided to put this question to the test by establishing a graduate school. The phrase is perhaps an unfortunate one, and, in my opinion, cannot maintain itself; but the important thing is that the step has been taken, and that technical, special, and high-grade professional studies have been provided for. By this step Michigan again becomes the standard-bearer of popular education, knowing well that if State universities cannot furnish what is best in every particular, their influence as distinctive aggressive forces in American life will be lost.

It is not, therefore, merely a matter of pride which has induced those who control the policy of the university to enter as competitors in the field of the highest education, although, as custodians of a successful part, such a pride might be justified: it is rather because of their belief in the principle of public education, because they feel the spirit which controls a State institution cannot be narrow or unsympathetic, and especially because they know that a graduate school supported by the people will react upon their life and character. This is the explanation of that enthusiasm and loyalty which is so marked a feature of the University of Michigan. It is the ground for confidence that this last step will be as completely successful as all previous steps which mark the course of its growth from an idea to an institution easily recognized as worthy a place among the best of the great institutions of learning which this country supports.

HENRY C. ADAMS.

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WRITERS AND SUBJECTS IN THE SEPTEMBER FORUM.

JOHN J. McCOOK (*The Alarming Proportion of Venal Voters*), born in Ohio in 1843, was graduated at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn. After service as a volunteer in the Civil War he studied law, medicine, and theology, entered the Episcopal ministry, and spent over a year in foreign travel. For ten years he has taught modern languages in Trinity, where he is still a professor. Since 1890 he has given considerable study to the questions of pauperism, drunkenness, and crime in this country and in Europe.

CHAUNCEY F. BLACK (*The Lesson of Homestead: A Remedy for Labor Troubles*), born in Somerset County, Pa., in 1839, was educated at Hiram College, Ohio, and at Jefferson College, Canonsburg, Pa. He was admitted to the bar, but has practised little, devoting most of his time to journalistic and literary work, chiefly of a political character. He was elected lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania in 1882, and was a candidate for the governorship in 1886. In 1888 he was elected president of the "National Association of Democratic Clubs" by the Baltimore Convention, and since that year has been annually elected president of the "Democratic Society of Pennsylvania."

HERBERT WELSH (*Campaign Committees: Publicity as a Cure for Corruption*), born in Philadelphia in 1851, was graduated at the University of Pennsylvania in 1871 and studied art in Paris, but abandoned the pursuit of art to devote himself to the defence of the rights of the Indians. He is secretary of the Indian Rights Association. During the past few years he has been active as an Independent in movements for political reform.

MICHAEL D. HARTER (*Campaign Committees: A Plan for More Effective Management*), born at Canton, Ohio, in 1846, is a resident of Mansfield, Ohio, and a Democratic member of Congress. Mr. Harter has had long experience as a private banker and manufacturer. He is a vigorous opponent of the free coinage of silver and did much to defeat the Bland Bill.

ROBERT H. THURSTON (*The Next Great Problems of Science*) was born in Providence, R. I., in 1839, and was graduated at Brown University in 1859. After two years' experience of practical engineering he entered the United States Navy as engineer, and won rapid promotion for his services during the Civil War. In 1865 he was made assistant professor and lecturer on chemistry in Annapolis. In 1878 he became professor of mechanical engineering at the Stevens Institute of Technology, where he remained for fourteen years, resigning from the navy in 1872. In 1885 he became director of the Sibley College of Cornell University. He has made several inventions and has published more than a dozen books.

DAVID A. WELLS (*"A Tariff for Revenue": What it Really Means*), born in Springfield, Mass., in 1828, was graduated at Williams College in 1847. After a brief experience on the editorial staff of the "Springfield Republican" he took the scientific course at Harvard as a special pupil of Louis Agassiz. He was an assistant at Harvard and a teacher of science at Groton until 1857. During the next few years he compiled several scientific works which won for him a wide reputation. In 1864 he published a political essay entitled "Our Burden and Our Strength," which created much discussion both in America and Europe. In 1867, after investigations in

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Europe as a member of a Governmental commission sent there to study industrial conditions, he became a free-trader. He has since been a member of several Governmental commissions, has assisted as an expert in the management of railroads, and has written voluminously on economic subjects.

DAVID SWING (*The Enlarged Church*), born in Cincinnati in 1830, was graduated at Miami University in 1852. He was professor of languages in this university for twelve years. In 1866 he became pastor of a Presbyterian church in Chicago. He was tried for heresy in 1874, was acquitted, and then withdrew from the Presbyterian Church. He is now independent of denominational relations.

HENRY K. CARROLL (*Religious Progress of the Negro*) was born in Dennisville, N. J., 1848. He was the founder and editor of the "Havre Republican," at Havre-de-Grâce, Md., in 1868; assistant editor of "The Methodist," 1869; assistant editor of "Hearth and Home," 1870; and religious editor of "The Independent" in 1876, of which he is now the religious and political editor. He was appointed special agent of the Eleventh Census in 1889. He received the degree of LL.D. from Syracuse University in 1885.

YUNG KIUNG YEN (*A Chinaman on Our Treatment of China*) is a resident of Shanghai. He was educated in this country and entered the Episcopal ministry. Since his return to China he has devoted himself to the Christianizing of his people and to the study of their social and economic condition. He has not broken from his American affiliations and he has maintained his interest in American affairs. He is one of the few persons who possess a thorough knowledge of both sides of the Chinese question.

E. W. HOWE (*Provincial Peculiarities of Western Life*), born in Wabash County, Ind., was trained as a printer. After his eighteenth year he devoted himself to newspaper work. In 1878 he became proprietor and editor of the "Atchison Globe," which he still conducts. In 1884 he published his first novel, "A Story of a Country Town," which was highly praised. He has since written "The Mystery of the Locks," "A Moonlight Boy," and "A Man Story."

KENDRIC C. BABCOCK (*The Scandinavians in the Northwest*), born in South Brookfield, N. Y., 1864, moved to Minnesota in 1885, and was graduated at the University of Minnesota in 1889. In 1889–90 he was fellow in history, and since 1890 he has been instructor in history, in that university. He has travelled through the Northwest and through Norway and Sweden, and has made a special study of the Scandinavian settlement in this country.

HENRY ROOD (*The Mine Laborers in Pennsylvania*) was born in Philadelphia in 1867. After pursuing a special course at Dartmouth he became news editor of the "New York Mail and Express." Since then he has devoted much time to studying immigrants from the Canadian border through New England and the Middle States. For the past year he has been living with the immigrants in the anthracite regions, and his present paper is the result of his observations there.

HENRY C. ADAMS (*Popular Education at the University of Michigan*) was graduated at Iowa College in 1874, and four years later received the degree of doctor of philosophy from Johns Hopkins University. He was lecturer in Cornell and Johns Hopkins universities in 1880, and also in the University of Michigan in 1881. From 1882 to 1887 he directed the department of political economy in Cornell as well as at the University of Michigan. In 1887 he became professor of political economy and finance at the University of Michigan.

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