

SCIENCE:

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF ALL THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

PUBLISHED BY

N. D. C. HODGES,

47 LAFAYETTE PLACE, NEW YORK.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.—United States and Canada.....\$3.50 a year.
Great Britain and Europe..... 4.50 a year.

Communications will be welcomed from any quarter. Abstracts of scientific papers are solicited, and twenty copies of the issue containing such will be mailed the author on request in advance. Rejected manuscripts will be returned to the authors only when the requisite amount of postage accompanies the manuscript. Whatever is intended for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer; not necessarily for publication, but as a guaranty of good faith. We do not hold ourselves responsible for any view or opinions expressed in the communications of our correspondents.

Attention is called to the "Wants" column. All are invited to use it in soliciting information or seeking new positions. The name and address of applicants should be given in full, so that answers will go direct to them. The "Exchange" column is likewise open.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE.¹

I AM requested to furnish information with reference to the university extension movement in England. It will be desirable that side by side with the facts I should put the ideas of the movement, for, in matters like these, the ideas are the inspiration of the work; the ideas, moreover, are the same for all, whereas the detailed methods must vary with different localities. The idea of the movement is its soul: the practical working is no more than the body. But body and soul alike are subject to growth, and so it has been in the present case. The English university extension movement was in no sense a carefully planned scheme, put forward as a feat of institutional symmetry: it was the product of a simple purpose, pursued through many years, amid varying external conditions, in which each modification was suggested by circumstances, and tested by experience. And with the complexity of our operations our animating ideas have been striking deeper and growing bolder. Speaking, then, up to date, I would define the root idea of "university extension" in the following simple formula: university education for the whole nation organized on a basis of itinerant teachers.

But every clause in this defining formula will need explanation and defence.

The term "university extension" has no doubt grown up from the circumstance that the movement in England was started and directed by the universities, which have controlled its operations by precisely the same machinery by which they manage every other department of university business. I do not know that this is an essential feature of the movement. The London branch presents an example of a flourishing organization directed by a committee formed for the purpose, though this committee at present acts in concert with three universities. I can conceive the new type of education managed apart from any university superintendence, only I should look upon such severance as a far more serious evil for the universities than for the popular movement.

¹ The substances of addresses delivered before the Johns Hopkins and other university audiences, by Richard G. Moulton, A.M., of Cambridge University, England.

But I use the term "university education" for the further purpose of defining the type of instruction offered. It is thus distinguished from school education, being moulded to meet the wants of adults. It is distinguished from the technical training necessary for the higher handicrafts or for the learned professions. It is no doubt to the busy classes that the movement addresses itself; but we make no secret of the fact that our education will not help them in their business, except that, the mind not being built in water-tight compartments, it is impossible to stimulate one set of faculties without the stimulus re-acting upon all the rest. The education that is properly associated with universities is not to be regarded as leading up to any thing beyond, but is an end in itself, and applies to life as a whole. And the foundation for university extension is a change, subtle but clear, that may be seen to be coming over the attitude of the public mind to higher education, varying in intensity in different localities, but capable of being encouraged where it is least perceptible,—a change by which education is ceasing to be regarded as a thing proper to particular classes of society or particular periods of life, and is coming to be recognized as one of the permanent interests of life, side by side with such universal interests as religion and politics. For persons of leisure and means, such growing demand can be met by increased activity of the universities. University extension is to be the university of the busy.

My definition puts the hope of extending university education in this sense to the whole nation without exception. I am aware that to some minds such indiscriminate extension will seem like an educational communism, on a par with benevolent schemes for redistributing the wealth of society so as to give everybody a comfortable income all round; but it surely ought not to be necessary to explain that in proposing a universal system of education we are not meaning that what each individual draws from the system will be the same in all cases. In this, as in every other public benefit, that which each person draws from it must depend upon that which he brings to it. University extension may be conceived as a stream flowing from the high ground of universities through the length and breadth of the country. From this stream each individual helps himself according to his means and his needs: one takes but a cupful, another uses a bucket, a third claims to have a cistern to himself. Every one suits his own capacity, while our duty is to see that the stream is pure, and that it is kept running.

The truth is, that the wide-reaching purpose of university extension will seem visionary or practicable according to the conception formed of education, as to what in education is essential and what accidental. If I am asked whether I think of shop-assistants, porters, factory-hands, miners, dock or agricultural laborers, women with families and constant home duties, as classes of people who can be turned into economists, physicists, literary critics, art connoisseurs, I admit that I have no such idea; but I do believe, or rather, from my experience in England I know, that all such classes can be interested in economic, scientific, literary, and artistic questions; and I say boldly that to interest in intellectual pursuits is the essential of education, in comparison with which all other educational purposes must be called secondary. I do not consider that a child has been taught to read unless he has been made to like reading. I find it difficult to think of a man as having received a classical education if the man, however scholarly, leaves college with no interest in classical literature such as will lead him to go on reading for himself. In education the interest is the life.