

SCIENCE

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THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE
UNIVERSITY.¹

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS owes its foundation to the initiative of the federal government of the United States.

The celebrated Morrill Land Grant Act of July 2, 1862, provided that each state in the union should be granted thirty thousand acres of land for each senator and representative to which the state was entitled in the federal congress, for the establishment and support 'of at least one college, whose 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, * * * in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life.'

This has turned out to be one of the most magnificent endowments of higher education ever made by any government, church or individual, whether we have regard to its immediate effects in leading to the establishment of the particular institutions contemplated in the act, or to its remoter effects in further increasing and stimulating state benevolence for this same general purpose.

As the result of the said grant, at least one institution corresponding to the above description has been established in each state and territory in the union. There

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¹ Inaugural address of Dr. Edmund Janes James on the occasion of his installation as president of the University of Illinois, October 18, 1905.