

SCIENCE

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THE INFLUENCE OF CHEMISTRY ON
CIVILIZATION¹

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THE future of a country depends on the education of its youth, and the education of its youth must be in competent hands. Whoever first spoke these truisms knew his subject, for we have only to look at those countries where education is not enforced, or even easily attained, to find a country so backward that its relations with the rest of the world are stunted. In many of the countries of Europe illiteracy is universal. In Hungary, for example, we still find that the signs in front of a shop are painted pictures of the wares offered for sale, because many intending purchasers can not read, but they know that the graphic portrayal of a hammer and a saw indicates that tools are sold within. What have those countries like Roumania, Bulgaria, Bohemia, Hungary, Russia, and dozens of others, ever amounted to, and what are their commercial relations with the rest of the world, compared with Germany, France, England or the United States?

The law in the United States and England recognizes only three professions—law, medicine and theology—and long before law and medicine became professions, theology was the only profession, because only the priests and the scribes could read and write. The theologians of ancient times were the early teachers, and one of the first institutions of learning which was carried on systematically (excepting the teachings of Gotama and Confucius) was the Sanhedrin where the Mosaic and

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¹ Address by the chairman of the Society of Chemical Industry.