

SCIENCE

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THE PURPOSE AND SPIRIT OF THE
UNIVERSITY¹

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MODERN students of human nature have changed the old saying, "Many men, many minds," into the new dictum, "One man, many selves." There is much talk of multiple personality. Our complex modern life reflects itself in a composite person. A man is said to have as many selves as there are social groups of which he feels himself a member. To maintain a business self which can look a moral self straight in the eye, to have a theological self on good terms with a scientific self, to keep the peace between a party self and a patriotic self, to preserve in right relations a church self and a club self—such are the present problems of many a man or woman. One way to escape embarrassment is to invite at a given time only congenial and harmonious selves, and to banish from the company the selves that are discordant and disconcerting. The strong soul is he who can summon all his selves into loyal team play. Personality is the name men give to this unity of the self, and purpose is the organizing principle. Only as many groups of thought and feeling are schooled into cooperation by a well-considered, steadfast aim can a man be master of a single self. To be sure, unity of a sort can be achieved by one who has a meager company of selves. Narrowness, provincialism, bigotry, describe a personality in which unity of purpose is won at a sacrifice of breadth, outlook and sympathy. The highest type of personality grows out of many far-reaching selves which have

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¹ Commencement address of the president at the University of Wisconsin.