

Address before
Press Association

[Feb. 1905]

It is a great pleasure upon behalf of the University to welcome the representatives of its owners, the members of the legislature, and the press. The University of Wisconsin is a state, not a local institution. In many states the funds which are devoted to higher education are distributed among two or more foundations. In such states the various divisions of the university, such as the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Agriculture, the College of Law, the College of Mines, and the College of Medicine, are local institutions, at least in part. But the builders of the state of Wisconsin at a time when subdivision in higher education was rife so clearly recognized the ^{future} importance of its university, so clearly saw that this university must be a state institution, that they placed in the framework of the state, the constitution, a provision for the founding of one university at the capital city; thus forever providing against subdivision and localization of the state's higher education. The only other state which ~~has so clearly recognized~~ ^{has so clearly determined} that the university work should be done at a unified state institution, located at the capital, is Nebraska. All other states, even those ^{that} ~~who~~ had the wisdom to concentrate their higher educational efforts, have to some extent recognized local interests by locating the university at some other point than the capital city.

It seems as if the framers of the constitution besides ^{appreciating} ~~recognizing~~ the advantages of concentration in university education must have ^{understood} ~~recognized~~ how mutually helpful may be the university and the government of the state. The university is an institution devoted to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge. The government of the state is devoted to formulating into written law and putting into prac-

tice this knowledge.

W.A. In Germany the relations of the university and the government are most intimate. Each great scholar has some recognized official duty as adviser of the state upon the subject in which he is an expert. *9* The advantageous relation between the university and government may be illustrated by ~~the~~ *College of Law and by the Law* departments of *in the College of Letters and Sciences* history, political economy, political science, and sociology. *Lang* The old unsolved economic problems and the *Art Social* new problems arising because of changing conditions are investigated by these departments, - without partisanship, without bias, with no personal end, but with the sole idea of finding the truth, the path which leads to peace and prosperity for the people. Thus these departments are in the service of the state. In a similar way it can be demonstrated that every other department is working effectively for the people. This is easy to show for the College of Agriculture, which by its discoveries has returned to the state many-fold in wealth the entire cost of the university. In all other departments the relation of service is as certain, although not so easy to explain in a sentence. So profoundly does the faculty believe in the university as an institution in the service of the state that it had placed upon the medal struck for the Jubilee the words, "The University of Wisconsin commemorates fifty years of service to the commonwealth."

Knowing the frequent tendency of many men to enlarge the importance of their own occupations I have sometimes wondered if the professors of the university unduly magnify their calling, - that of investigators and disseminators of knowledge.

Each person that comes into the world is born wholly lacking in knowledge save of a few simple instinctive actions necessary to maintain life. The knowledge and wisdom of mankind are the slow accumulations

acquired through the ages by the expenditure of uncounted sums, inestimable labor, and infinite pain. He who hopes to do any large thing in the world must spend from one-fourth to one-third of his life in hard labor, acquiring the knowledge of the past.ⁿ And for many a large fraction of this time is spent in the university. It is therefore imperative that the university be of the highest grade in order that the time there spent shall be most fruitful. The greater the efficiency of the university the more thorough will be the preparation for life work. Failure on the part of the university to afford opportunities the equal of the best handicaps each individual. Hence a state which fails to keep pace in its university development with surrounding states places its sons and daughters at a disadvantage.

When at the time of the Napoleonic Wars Germany found herself overrun by France the statesmen of the nation saw that the future of Germany depended upon the development of higher grade training than that of her enemy. This idea was the foundation of the German state university and the German believes that institution to have been a powerful instrument in the rise of the empire.

Perhaps the true position of the university may be brought home by the recent history of Japan. A half century since the accumulated wealth of knowledge of the western civilization was unknown to that country. Hearn says that her civilization was that of twenty-seven hundred years ago. In 1854 Commodore Perry appeared in the eastern waters and Japan found herself at the mercy of his guns. As soon as the marvelous statesmen of the nation appreciated that they were helpless before the applied science of the west they determined to acquire this knowledge in order to protect themselves. Like Germany they decided the remedy consisted in education. The great universities of

Tokio and Kioto were founded, and professors were asked to come to Japan from America, from England, from Germany, and from other countries. Also the young men of Japan were sent to the western nations to study in their universities. A number of them have been here. During the past thirty years, less than a generation, Japan has established manufacturies, built railroads, constructed modern armies and navies, and most marvelous of all, she has not only acquired the arts and sciences, of the west, but she has become a leader in them. Many of the foreign professors have been found unnecessary, they have been dismissed, and the universities manned by the sons of Japan. Were it not for these universities Japan would be as impotent before Russia as is China.

From one point of view the acquiring of the accumulated knowledge of more than two thousand years in one generation ~~seems~~^{is} amazing, but from another point of view ^{is} not so strange. For each generation that lives must do the same thing. The children of Wisconsin born to-day must before they begin their life work go through exactly the same training as have the people of Japan during the past thirty years. "

For Wisconsin to have a university less efficient than those of Japan and Germany will as certainly handicap her sons as were the sons of Japan when their system of education was inferior to that of the west. It is plain therefore that if the state of Wisconsin is to take and hold a leading position among the states its university must not be inferior to those of its competitors.

If at the outset it was not clear, I hope it is now plain that the university is a state institution not supported in the interest of or for the professors. They are merely tools in the service of

the state. It is not even ^{mainly} supported for the direct benefit of the students who take advantage of its opportunities. It is supported that they may become better fitted to serve the state and the nation. It is supported that the ~~and~~ ^{as well as the achievements of today} knowledge and wisdom of the generations ^{of the past} may reach all parts of the state, thus securing larger returns from the soil, the scientific development of mineral resources, the expansion of manufacturies, the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the masses, and the enjoyment by the people of the great intellectual and ^{moral} ~~spiritual~~ experiences of the race.

I shall never be content until the beneficent influence of the University reaches every family of the state. This is my ideal of a state university. If our beloved institution reaches this ideal it will be the first perfect state university.