THE EXTENSION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING

JAMES CREESE

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BY JAMES CREESE

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STUDIES IN THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

A series of studies issued by the American Association for Adult Education with the aid of funds made available by the Carnegie Corporation of New York

PUBLISHED

1. *Listen and Learn* by Frank Ernest Hill
2. *Why Forums?* by Mary L. Ely
3. *Enlightened Self-Interest* by Dorothy Rowden
4. *The Civic Value of Museums* by T. R. Adam
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15. *Educating for Health* by Frank Ernest Hill
16. *The Church and Adult Education* by Bernard E. Meland
17. *The Agrarian Revival* by Russell Lord

Continued on page 171

Foreword

THE author of this report has visited thirty or more colleges and universities, receiving more kindness and help than can be conveniently acknowledged in a short preface. He remembers with appreciation the advice and encouragement given by Professor Walton S. Bittner of Indiana University, Dean Carl F. Huth of the University of Chicago, Professor W. H. Lighty and Dean Frank O. Holt of the University of Wisconsin, Professor Leon J. Richardson of the University of California, Mr. Russell M. Grumman of the University of North Carolina, Mr. J. O. Keller of Pennsylvania State College, and many other administrative and teaching officers of extension divisions. He has had assistance also from Mr. Frederick A. Woodward, Dr. Leon Brody, and Miss Doris Soibelman in compiling data pertaining to the history of university extension and to the postgraduate education of professional groups.

The extramural responsibilities of colleges and universities have been the subject of several comprehensive reports. Alfred L. Hall-Quest's *The University Afield,* published by The Macmillan Company, was one of the basic surveys made before the establishment of the American Association for Adult Education. A companion study, *University Teaching by Mail,* by W. S. Bittner and H. F. Mallory, gave an admirable and complete

account of the principles and problems of instruction by correspondence. In the *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States* and in many of the studies of the social significance of adult education published since 1937 by the American Association for Adult Education, the scope and special functions of university agencies for adult education are critically described. The present report borrows freely and without specific acknowledgment from those studies. It does not review ground already thoroughly covered in such reports as Russell Lord's *The Agrarian Revival,* T. R. Adam's *The Worker's Road to Learning,* Frank Ernest Hill's *Listen and Learn: Fifteen Years of Adult Education on the Air,* and Mary L. Ely's *Why Forums.*

For their work continueth
And their work continueth
Broad and deep continueth
Great beyond their knowing!

RUDYARD KIPLING
Envoi to *Stalky & Co.*

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18. *Motion Pictures in Adult Education* by T. R. Adam
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26. *Elementary Education of Adults* by Ruth Kotinsky
27. *The Extension of University Teaching* by James Creese

Table of Contents

Foreword v

University Dilemmas 1

The Background of University Extension 21

Its Antecedents in England and America 21

Development under University Management 40

Current Definitions 58

Universities in the National Defense Program 84

Extension for Professional Groups 107

Teachers as Extension Students 107

Continuation Courses in Medicine 117

Continuation Study in Health and Welfare Services . . 128

Education in Government Service 135

Adult Students of Engineering 142

Postgraduate Education for the Clergy and for the Bar . 145

Librarians and Journalists 148

"Scholarly Learning and the World of Action" 153

Index 163

University Dilemmas

TODAY a census of the men and women for whom study is a serious but not a primary occupation, people who are workers by day and students in their free time, runs into the millions. Although no exact figures are available, it has been estimated that nearly two million persons are investing their time and money in correspondence courses conducted by private proprietary schools which are operated for profit; that another million or more are studying in public evening schools, part-time and continuation schools; and that there may be two hundred thousand more in non-academic schools like those meeting in Y.M.C.A.'s. Fifty-two university extension departments composing the membership of the National University Extension Association report an enrollment of 120,000 in extension classes, 50,000 active correspondence students in courses on the college level, 50,000 attendants at short courses and institutes, and audiences of 220,000 for lecture series under university auspices. The totals, already overwhelming, are far from complete for we have not yet named the urban colleges and universities nor the agricultural extension services of the colleges of agriculture, this last being surely the most extensive enterprise of adult education in the world.

It is not to be believed that so widespread an interest in education, involving so great a portion of our population, will not mark permanently the whole scheme of American education.

To impart motion to any one part of a related system, where members are bound one to another, is, obviously, to set up motion in all parts and in every member; the resultant motion may at one place be different from that at another, it may have a different period, or even a contrary direction; but no serious movement—neither the wholesale popularization of higher education nor the spontaneous action of adult education—can occur without some compensating turn in the rest of the closely related system. Grammar schools are bound to secondary schools, they to the colleges, and so to the universities and postgraduate or professional schools. What touches one part, touches all.

The emergency of war, not a distant war but one perilously close, makes clear the necessity for unity and for the prompt training of men for war duty, both physical and intellectual. The unity sought is not that of imposed authority but the natural unity of a people prepared by a complete and generous education "to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war."

It is plain at such times, if it is not always plain, that schools, colleges, and universities enjoy no isolation, or security of remoteness, from great immediate responsibilities and perils. Their response to a national emergency will demonstrate their vitality and will, perhaps, clarify their purposes.

THE PARABLE OF ARCHIMEDES

There is now a parable in the story of Archimedes, the mathematician of Syracuse, who, stooping to draw a geometrical figure on the sand, was struck down and killed, run through the body by a Roman soldier. This was only an absent-minded scholar, himself defenseless, whose inventions had prolonged the siege

of Syracuse three years. His neighbors knew that he was a distinguished scientist; perhaps sometimes they resented his superior wisdom and were amused by his idiosyncrasies. They told stories of his odd ways, none more droll than that of the time when he rushed into the street in broad daylight without his clothes, straight from the bath, crying that he had found a way to test the true value of the king's crown! Practical men downtown in Syracuse knew the value of his inventions and many times tried to get him to publish a full account of these devices, but Archimedes, either reluctant to interrupt his studies or holding it undignified to teach in the market place, had persisted in writing only technical dissertations, learned papers admired by his colleagues and understood only by them, on the dimensions of spheres and cylinders or on measuring the circumference of a circle in terms of its diameter. That was his proper function, to which he would have been untrue if he had neglected it.

But he had been called into consultation by the government during the emergency and had served with his majesty's forces as an expert on the engines of war. His answers to specific questions often opened extremely interesting passages of speculation, as when he said to the king, meaning what he said quite literally and in no merely metaphorical sense, "Give me a place to stand and I will move the world."

The Roman general Marcellus, more enlightened than some conquerors, had given orders that Archimedes was to be spared in the massacre after the fall of Syracuse, but a common soldier with a spear in his hand could scarcely be expected to stop in his work to inquire of every old gentleman crouched on the sand if he was Archimedes of Syracuse.

WHEN UNIVERSITIES ARE SUPPRESSED

Suppression or destruction of universities may be counted among the incidents of violent change of government. Men of learning are no luckier than their countrymen. The schools have some power to preserve the intangibles of civilization, keeping the less destructible defenses and fortifying a new generation for freedom. So scholars and teachers, even mild men and obscure, have been sent to concentration camps or into exile, students have been dispersed, universities closed, libraries burned, and laboratories locked. It is an old story of which we have poignant reminders.

Under the Commonwealth, both Oxford and Cambridge Universities, dulled as they were considered to be by antiquated and ritualistic practices, were in danger of being abolished by act of Parliament because of their adherence to the royal cause; when the French Revolution effaced the privileged establishments of the old regime, it abrogated also the rights of the university corporations; political storms, sweeping over Europe at the turn from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, caused many waning universities in Germany to disappear; and again after the World War, though the republican constitution of Germany left the universities untouched, there were lost or impaired certain essential parts of the system of higher education: among them the corps of *Privatdozenten* who were independent investigators and lecturers, not directly accountable to the state, whose presence protected academic freedom. Now in recent years, by the Soviet revolution in Russia, by the Fascist revolution in Italy, and by the Nazi revolution in Germany, faculties have had their freedom confiscated by the state agencies of propaganda, and the

academies of each of these nations have had their traditions of independence revoked. That a conquest may be even more cruel, Warsaw and Krakow show; and Oslo, too, where university buildings were taken as staff headquarters by an army of occupation.

UNIVERSITIES, EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN

In the darkness of a new time of revolution and conquest, it is impossible to foresee how dire may be the fate of universities in Europe. They are bound to be impoverished, stripped of men as well as means, and, perhaps for a long while, denied their essential freedom.

On this side, it is time to dismiss petty problems and trivial altercations, to cure some of the bitter rivalries that have divided education, and to discover what instruments we have in our schools to serve the special purposes of the times, and what instruments are missing. Partial, merely temporary, narrowly scholastic, or fanatical definitions will not do.

The main tradition in American education is one of opportunity for all and of freedom from oppressive authority. "One praise," James Bryce said, "which has often been given to the universities of Scotland may be given to those of America. While the German universities have been popular but not free [as regards self-government in matters of education], while the English universities have been free but not popular, the American universities are both free and popular." When he revised *The American Commonwealth* in 1910, he supplemented his chapter on higher education in America, confirming his earlier verdict:

> It has been well said by one of the most acute and large-minded of all recent visitors to the United States (Professor Dr. Lamprecht of Leipzig in his *Amerikana*) that nowhere in the world do university

teachers feel more strongly that the first object of their devotion is Truth. . . . To one who looks back on the last twenty years, the universities seem to have grown not only in their resources and the number of their students, but also in dignity and influence. . . . Through the always widening circle of their alumni they are more closely in touch than ever before with all classes in the community. The European observer can express now with even more conviction than he could twenty years ago the opinion that they constitute one of the most powerful and most persuasive forces working for the common good of the country.

AFTER FORTY YEARS

The colleges of the United States are now so numerous, so widely distributed geographically, and so varied in kind as to make possible at last the realization of an American dream of educational opportunity for every qualified student. Not less than a million and a quarter young people are registered for regular winter terms in work of college grade, 13 per cent of all Americans between the ages of nineteen and twenty-two. There are seventeen hundred colleges whose graduates in one year total one hundred and seventy-five thousand. Two or three large metropolitan universities have in senior classes more students than were graduated from all the colleges of the country forty years ago when Mr. Bryce wrote. More than a quarter of a million are enrolled for college studies in university extension classes and for study by correspondence with university departments: and nearly four hundred thousand attend summer sessions on college campuses.

The Chancellor of New York University has remarked that the one central fact in the history of higher education in the past twenty years, during which time he has headed three universities

in three different parts of the country, North Carolina, Illinois, and New York, is the tremendous popularization of higher education throughout the United States. The penetration of higher education by increasing multitudes is, in his words, "a phenomenon without parallel in the social history of the world."

"SEVEN CAMPUSES"

It is almost impossible to picture one of the now mammoth institutions, a modern American university, and to find a single, simple, motivating ideal which will bring into focus its restless, diversified, complex activities.

One way to see it is from the point of view of the alumnus, through whom, as Mr. Bryce said, the universities have direct influence on American life. What news and reports of the university interest the alumnus?

The University of California has among its publications a quarterly alumni news sheet, "Seven Campuses." The name itself is significant. This is a university which expends in one year $13,568,000 on seven campuses, at Berkeley, Los Angeles, Davis, San Francisco, Riverside, La Jolla, and Mt. Hamilton.

The alumni association of this university, according to the alumni president at the close of a Banner Year, had "attained the greatest membership ever attained by this or any other alumni association," having one-third of all living alumni enlisted in a paid membership of 29,000; their alumni magazine had won the seventh consecutive award of merit in competition with leading alumni magazines of the United States; in the year they had subscribed $200,000 to a dormitory fund; they had increased by $100,000 a Life Membership Endowment Fund, passing a half million total; they had offered 80 scholarships of $250 each to

entering freshmen; and they had contributed funds for the maintenance of university radio programs and for the support of a placement or employment bureau. Lectures to alumni groups of one hundred or more were made in seven cities by the President of the university and members of the history and economics faculties; four hundred alumni attended an institute at the University Club in Los Angeles where the President and other members of the faculty spoke on "The Pacific Nations in a World at War"; 8,000 attended a Jamboree and Dance at the Golden Gate International Fair.

Fifteen per cent of the Phi Beta Kappa keys were awarded to boys who had worked their way through college; the National Academy of Science had elected two more members of the university faculty, giving this university a distinguished delegation of twenty-three, "the largest number for any American university, with the exception of Harvard, which has thirty-seven"; the university's radiation laboratory is receiving a million dollars from the Rockefeller Foundation for the construction of a greater cyclotron to be completed in four years: these are the items of news in which the editor of a university bulletin expects the alumni to be interested at the end of an academic year.

A buoyant, competitive spirit, hardly the serene mood of contemplative scholarship, moves from column to column in the news of the university, from the athletic news of a first page (California Bears May Be Contenders for Football Title), through alumni association news, undergraduate news, and even faculty news.

There are fifty-eight California counties; forty-five sent students to the campus at Los Angeles and fifty-six to Berkeley. Are new four-year colleges needed elsewhere in the state? The Presi-