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### The importance of geography in education

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# THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHY IN EDUCATION.<sup>1</sup>

By the Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

WHEN my friend the Chairman asked me to give you an address, I felt some diffidence in doing so, because I know that members of the Geographical Association are themselves persons for the most part possessing a practical acquaintance with the subject much greater than I could lay claim to, and I always feel that it is dangerous for an amateur to give an address to specialists. I consented, however, chiefly because the occasion gave me an opportunity of expressing the very warm interest which I feel in the work of your association, and my hearty sympathy with it. Nothing has been more wanted for a long time than that an association of this kind should exist for pressing upon the public a knowledge of what its real interests in geographical teaching are, and for that reason I very gladly consented to say what I had to say to you. I cannot hope to say anything novel to those who are familiar with the subject, but I may perhaps attempt to lay before you a few considerations which bear upon its wider aspects, and which are chiefly suggested by observations that have occurred to me in the course of travel in different parts of the world.

The place of geography in education may be considered under three aspects, and I will distinguish those three aspects by the shortest phrases I can find. Geography in one aspect or sense is the gateway to the physical sciences; in the second aspect it is the key to history; and in the third it is the basis of commerce. These three aspects in which it may be regarded correspond to the different parts of school, college, and university work, and they have to be carried out and conducted to a con-

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<sup>1</sup> Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Geographical Association, 15th January 1902, with Mr. Douglas Freshfield, President, in the Chair.—Printed by permission of the Association.

siderable extent by a different part of the educational staff of a school, college, or university, and yet each of the three has very important relations to all the others. Though this is especially true with regard to the first two, the third is also in intimate relation with the others. He who wishes to understand geography in any one of these three aspects, ought to know something about it in the other two aspects; and he will find what he knows about it in any one of the aspects, of which the first is after all the most fundamental, will help him to comprehend and to apply his knowledge in the other two.

Let me begin with geography as what I have called the gateway of science. We may say that man touches nature, the external world of nature, in two points. First of all he touches it through the constitution of his own physical body. As possessing a body he is himself part of nature, and he comes into relations with it through that body. The study of these relations belong to the sciences which we call physiology and biology. Then he also touches it through the external world, the phenomena of which he learns through his senses, and in which he is placed to do his work. Geography may be described as being the general science of the Earth, perhaps I ought to say, of the Earth as a part of and affected by other parts of the material universe, but in the first instance, and for our more immediate purpose, of the Earth which we inhabit. Geography is the science which takes for its province the describing to us everything that relates to the Earth.

All branches of knowledge which have anything to tell us about the Earth more or less hinge into or are connected with geography, or you may, if you like, say they diverge from it as specialised departments of that general knowledge which it presents in its connection with the whole. For instance, geography takes account of the solid crust of the Earth. The solid crust of the Earth is the special subject of three sciences—geology, mineralogy, and palæontology—which therefore diverge from geography as being specialised branches of the science which it presents in a general way. Then you have a second divergent branch in meteorology and oceanology, dealing with the phenomena of the air and vapour, and the closely cognate phenomena of the great masses of condensed vapour which exist on the surface of the Earth in the form of oceans. A third branch is that represented by the sciences of botany and zoology, describing the living creatures which find their home and their sustenance on the Earth. A fourth, a little more remote, consists of the sciences of physics and chemistry, which again deal with the constituents of the globe and of the forces which move them—the forces which you see in operation through the Earth which belong to physics, and the study of the constituent elements of the Earth, the methods by which they are analysed, and the combinations which they form, which constitute the science we call chemistry. Even astronomy, although it carries us beyond the limits of our terrestrial globe, is really closely connected with the science of the Earth, inasmuch as many terrestrial phenomena are sensibly affected by phenomena which lie beyond the globe, and cannot be understood without a comprehension of astronomy also.

The whole of this great group of physical sciences, each of them re-divided and specialised into numerous branches and departments, springs from geography as the centre of the group. Physical geography, in particular, shows the relation which each of these branches of science bears to the others, and the way in which, all taken together, they have their influence upon the life and development of man. One may figure the thing by saying that geography is a sort of great central hall from which there open out numerous doors leading into apartments, each of these being dedicated to some particular one of the sciences which are connected with the Earth and its phenomena. All the apartments find their meeting-point, their point of convergence, the place through which the student must pass from the one to the other, in the science of geography which stands in relation to them all alike (or almost alike). Therefore, in this sense, you may say that geography constitutes the approach to all the physical sciences. It is the science which brings them all into correlation with one another; it is the science through which you can best observe the action of each of them upon the life of man. Thus it holds a highly significant place in education. Students who are going to devote their attention mainly to the physical sciences find geography a starting-point; it indicates the relations of the sciences to one another, for all are connected with the external nature in the midst of which we stand.

Students who are not going to devote their attention to the natural sciences, but to what are called the human subjects—literature, history, philology, economics, and so forth—again find in geography the point in which these subjects have their contact with the physical sciences. If such students are given, at the starting of their career, a due comprehension of the numerous bearings and relations which geography has to all the other sciences that deal with physical phenomena, they are better able to go off into those special human branches of study which they intend to pursue, having gathered the relation which they all, through geography, bear to physical science.

That is the first point in which I venture to think you may claim for your science an exceedingly important part in the general scheme of education. It gives the student a proper conception of the relation of the sciences of nature to the sciences of man, and it shows how the different sciences of nature are related to one another.

Further, geography, and more particularly physical geography upon its practical side, becomes of the greatest value as a training in the art of observation. Physical geography, like other kinds of geography, used to be taught mainly out of books, and the pupil was allowed to have very slight contact with facts which he can see for himself. Happily all that has been changed, and I am glad to know that now in this country, as has for some time past been the case in Germany, it is thoroughly realised by all progressive teachers that geography must be made as much as possible an experimental science—experimental in this sense, that the pupils' minds must be brought into contact with facts and not words, that they must be taught to connect what they read and what they hear from their teachers with the actual facts they are trained to observe for

themselves. All competent teachers of geography have now begun to feel that they ought to start out by giving the scholar a direct personal knowledge, and not a mere book knowledge of the meaning of geographical terms and the elementary data of physical geography; that he ought to be taken round the place in which he lives; that he ought to be shown hills, or mountains, if he is fortunate enough to have mountains in his neighbourhood, and notice the rocks they are made of; that he ought to be taught to observe the course of rivers and brooks; that he ought to be led to study the inclinations of hills and the structure and features of an undulating country, or of plateaus or of riverine plains; that he ought to be taught to observe the trees and the vegetation generally which appertain to particular kinds of soil, or to particular exposures; and to keep his eyes open and his memory alert to watch the winds and the rainfall, and to acquire a knowledge of the climate of the region in which he lives. All these things about which he reads in his text-books of physical geography, ought to be made real and vital and full of meaning to himself, by being connected with the actual facts which he can note and remember when they are shown him, but will probably not notice unless they are pointed out to him. He lives among them, but he may never observe them (unless he is an exceptional boy), until his attention is called to them. Physical geography, communicated in that way by an active-minded and intelligent teacher, becomes one of the best possible of trainings in the art of observation, an art which might appear easy and natural, but which in reality requires a good deal of training, because no one knows, until some incident calls his attention to it, how many of the phenomena among which he moves he has failed to observe.

Thirdly, from observation the study of geography passes into the stage of reflection and combination, that is to say, these phenomena which have been made real to the pupil by his being taught to observe them, have to be suggested to him as subjects for inquiry and brought into a casual relation with one another in order that he may ask himself, What has been the source of these facts I see in external nature, and how are they connected with one another? He must be taught whenever he is shown a fact in physical geography to inquire into the cause, and whenever there are two facts, to ask what relation, if any, there is between them. What connection, for instance, is there between the inclination of the hills, whether gentle or steep, in a mountainous district and the character of the rocks and amount of rainfall in that district? What connection is there between the growth of trees and the rainfall and the prevalent winds? In that way physical geography will teach the pupil to acquire the habit of looking at a region as a whole, so that when there is any district which he has got to know by his own observation he will begin to reflect and seek to discover what have been the physical causes which have gone to make this district what it is, and what relation exists between those various causes.

It is extraordinary how little most of us will observe of these matters if we are left to ourselves. Ask yourselves how many people among your acquaintance there are who have any intelligent knowledge

of the weather, that is to say, who are in the habit of observing the direction from which winds come, and the phenomena of the sky which indicate fair weather or dull weather or rain respectively? You will find, I think, they are extremely few. It is a rare thing to meet even a man living in the country who has made an intelligent study of the weather and who constantly observes the winds, who knows from what kind of wind and from what aspects of the sky certain weather may or may not be expected. Of course we all know that the predictions of the best weather prophets, even aided by barometers and reports from outlying signal stations, are uncertain. But, at the same time, there is a great difference between the man who can make a tolerable forecast of what sort of weather may be looked for on an afternoon fixed for a picnic, and the man who has no data at all for an opinion, but thinks, as so many people do, that it is going to be fine at 3 P.M. because the sun is shining at 9 o'clock in the morning. In the same way, it is odd how very few people there are who notice the vegetation of the district in which they dwell. One is often surprised to find how few persons among those who are in a general way observant and intelligent have observed that particular trees and particular plants and flowers grow upon particular kinds of soil, or under particular physical conditions. If you were to ask, for instance, one of your ordinary intelligent friends who live in the country if he could tell what plants are characteristic of chalk soils, or what kind of soil it is that any particular tree, let us say a fir or a beech, prefers, you would be surprised to find how few there are who could give you an intelligent and correct answer to such a question. Yet observation of this kind does not require any special botanical knowledge. There are persons who do not possess that special botanical knowledge, but could give those answers, but they are comparatively few. This is the third advantage which I claim for the study of geography as a gateway to science, that it may be made an admirable training not only in observation but also in reflection upon the phenomena lying all round us in external nature, which we know from an observation that is within most people's reach.

Fourthly, the study of geography in this way adds immeasurably to the pleasure of travel. We all of us enjoy in increasing measure at the present time opportunities of travel by land and sea, and for one person who crossed the Atlantic from the continent of Europe to the continent of America fifty years ago, I suppose there are at least twenty or thirty who cross now, while for one person who crossed the channel to France fifty years ago there are a hundred now. How few people use adequately the opportunities for the observation of physical phenomena, or indeed for observation of any kind which travel gives, or who possess the amount of knowledge required to enable them to observe properly and to get the full enjoyment which travel is capable of yielding. There is no greater pleasure to be derived from travel than that of learning something about the country one is visiting. You cannot properly understand a country, unless you have a knowledge of the fundamental facts of its physical geography, and have formed the habit of observing them. Without this you cannot form a true

conception of a country as a whole. Sometimes I have fancied it would be worth while to try and provide at one of our Universities some systematic instruction in the kinds of knowledge and skill in observation which come chiefly into play in travel. There was a book written some thirty or forty years ago by a distinguished friend of yours and mine, Mr. Chairman, I mean Francis Galton, called *The Art of Travel in Wild Countries*, which describes a great number of devices which the traveller will find useful in dealing with savage men and overcoming difficulties of wild nature. There is also another and very useful book of a similar kind called *Hints to Travellers*, which has appeared since and gone through several editions. But perhaps there is still room for a book more comprehensive than either of these, and less scientific than the latter, more on the level of the unscientific mind, taking in some matters which do not belong to physical science at all. Such a book might suggest to travellers or tourists how to observe the relation of the rocks to the scenery, what the relation of the rocks is to the vegetation, what the relation of the climate to the vegetation, and how to estimate the productive capacity of a country, how to learn something about its races, about its antiquities, about its economic conditions, and about its languages or dialects. When one takes a long ocean voyage, one is surprised to find how small a number of persons there are on board who know anything of trade winds or monsoons or ocean currents, other than the now familiar yet often not very well understood Gulf Stream. Yet how much such a knowledge adds to the pleasure of travel. Such a book might be elementary enough to be fit for persons possessing no special mastery either of science or of history. It would not replace either of the books I have referred to, but it might be useful to a somewhat wider public.

I now come to the second of the three aspects of geographical science, that is to say, to geography regarded as the key to history. The conception of that relation has now become so familiar an idea that it is not necessary to go into it in any detail. Everybody has come to realise the important part which physical environment plays in the development of mankind—not only of mankind as a whole, but of every particular race of mankind, of every nation, and of every state. And you have books, like the new *Universal History* of Dr. Helmolt, which devote themselves to treating history from this point of view, and showing how it may be regarded as being the outcome of the physical environment in which man as a whole, and the different races and communities of man, have found themselves placed. This way of looking at history has only recently become common, and the fact is remarkable when one considers that the influence of nature upon man must have been present to the minds of reflective men from remote times. One finds isolated remarks on the subject even in the ancient philosophers and historians, so it is a little surprising that it is only quite recently, to the best of my recollection, that historians have begun to treat the physical phenomena of a country seriously and systematically as a very important element in the development of that country. Now, speaking from recollection, I think that Gibbon, for instance, makes few and scanty references to the physical



phenomena of the regions over which his splendid survey of the passage from the Old World to the New led him; so if one takes a still more brilliant ornament of the eighteenth century, Montesquieu, one of the most fertile and ingenious minds that ever approached historical inquiries, makes comparatively slight use of the relations of nature to man. You will, of course, in these and other great writers, find occasional remarks which show that the relation was not absent from their minds, but they do not seem to have grasped it as a whole, or presented it with anything like the completeness with which a modern philosopher or historian would think it necessary to explain the influence on man of his physical environment. One younger contemporary of Gibbon occurs to me who had ideas on the subject. I mean the traveller Volney. In his book about America, which he visited shortly after the revolutionary war, he has made several rather striking remarks which showed that ideas of this kind were beginning to make their way. No doubt there are many other thinkers in whose works you would find indications of this way of looking at history; but it has been reserved for our own time to realise the extreme importance which environment possesses as an historical factor. And yet, after all, there was Herodotus. Herodotus, more than twenty-three centuries ago, was equally an historian and a geographer, although he did not bring the two things into regular scientific connection, but any one can see that he was equally interested in both, and he was just as anxious to describe the physical conditions of the country as to give an account of the history and people. However, we are now all agreed that geography is the foundation of history, and that the historian must know geography. It is perhaps not equally necessary that the geographer should know history. At the same time, a geographer may gain a great deal by knowing something of history, and some branches of his subject will remain incomplete unless he possesses that knowledge. Without pursuing the subject in detail, it may serve to illustrate the proposition that geography is the key to history if I mention some branches of history upon which geography pours a direct and illuminating light. One of these, for instance, is ethnography. The whole study of the races of mankind, and their connections with one another, and their mingling and blending with one another, and their passage from one part of the Earth's surface to another, evidently depends upon a knowledge of geography, and in particular of physical geography, because it is these physical conditions that have influenced the movements and blendings. So linguistic history, which is almost a branch of ethnography, is another subject on which the geographer can throw light. Or take the case of military history, itself a branch of political history, and consider how much physical geography has to tell the student of wars and campaigns, about the importance of lines of communication, the significance of mountain ranges and rivers, the places available for fortification, whether by seas or rivers, or on hills. You will see at once that a knowledge of the physical geography of a country is essential to the man who studies military history in a scientific spirit. Then if you come to that large branch of history for which we have no satisfactory English name—what the Germans call *Kulturgeschichte*, the

history of the social and economical progress of man, the history of the kind of culture which expresses itself in social life and artistic life and the development of letters and learning and science—that branch, again, is of course intimately connected on many sides with the physical environments of the countries in which a civilisation has been developed. And you may find in such a book, for instance, as Mr. Payne's recently published *History of the New World called America*, how the whole history of the aboriginal American peoples, and especially of those who early attained to a certain measure of civilisation, can be treated most profitably in connection with the physical conditions under which they lived, and under which the latter outstripped their fellows. A particular branch of this subject illustrates very well what I mean, and that is the history of architecture. This history, which might seem to be comparatively far removed from physical geography, is intimately connected with it. One of the points in which it is connected is in the rocks which furnish building-stones, and in the different character impressed upon the buildings in any district by the materials which are at the builder's disposal. Another side is climate. Climate has had an influence on architecture in determining the shape and covering of buildings, and also in determining the nature of the carving and exterior ornaments that it was worth while to put upon the buildings, because in some climates decorations soon perish, while in others they remain fresh and clear during many centuries. And further, of course, a very interesting side of the history of architecture is the history of the relation of the architecture of one people or political community to the architecture of another, and the influence which the architecture of one community has exercised upon that of another. I remember, for instance, how often the late Mr. Freeman used to insist on the importance of what he called the Burgundian type of architecture. It is one of the types which, until he made it familiar to us, had almost passed out of our minds, and yet it is perfectly true that you do find in certain districts on both sides of the Alps interesting traces of a common type which become explicable when one remembers what the former political conditions of these countries were. And when one begins to consider the former political conditions, one is naturally led to ask what were the physical causes under which they arose. Notice, further, that there is an extremely interesting aspect under which geography ought always to be studied in relation to history, and that is the change in the relation of man to his environment in earlier and later times. This is a special point which I will do no more than indicate, but you will see in what an interesting way it might be worked out. While man is still in his primitive stage, not yet civilised, he is in entirely different relation to natural conditions from that which he bears when he has invented arts and sciences, and when he has become master of the forces of nature. In his primitive state, defence against wild creatures and ease in procuring food were his primary necessities, but in his more advanced stage it is the facility wherewith he can obtain a supply of those forces of nature which he can bend and use for his own purposes that becomes the most active agent in advancing his further progress.

There is also one aspect of the relations of geography and history which is of great importance, and that is the history of geographical discovery. We do not always, in our teaching of history, give quite enough importance to making the pupil realise the quantity of geographical knowledge which was possessed at different periods of the Earth's history, by the various peoples who inhabited it. Many a young man may go through the university course, having realised very imperfectly what was the amount of geographical knowledge that was possessed by the ancient world at different epochs, or the steps by which geographical discovery since the days of the Portuguese, in the middle of the 15th century, has been advanced. It adds much to the interest of study, and explains many of the phenomena of history, to make the pupil at every stage of his progress have a picture of the world as then known before his mind, and to realise where it was that darkness lay, and on what points light had from time to time fallen, during the long progress from the days of Homer to our own, in the discovery of the various continents and oceans of the world. For that purpose we want a greater number of historical maps in our atlases than we generally possess, and I am sure nothing could be more serviceable than to have these constantly displayed before the pupil on the walls of a college lecture-room. It may be that in the best historical schools this is now done, but it was not so twenty or thirty years ago.

Lastly, the third aspect in which geography comes into education, or rather the third of the aspects that I am asking you to consider, for there are doubtless other aspects, is that in which it is regarded as the basis of commerce. Commerce reduced to its simplest terms is an exchange of products, and both the maker of any article and the exporter of that article ought to know where each article can best be produced, whence the raw materials used in manufacture come, which are the places best adapted for manufacture, and where are the best markets. To use the words of Virgil, the merchant ought to know *quid quaeque ferat regis et quid quaeque recuset*, what each country bears and what each country refuses to bear. He ought to know what are the conditions under which the product can be obtained, what are the conditions of labour that determine the getting it and transporting it, what are the markets, whether near or distant, in which it may best be disposed of, what requirements affect its production, and what are the lines of communication and transport along which it can best (most swiftly and profitably) be carried, whether by sea or land.

This commercial side of geography has two aspects. It may be considered in regard to the direct and immediate utility which it has for the manufacturer or the exporting merchant, or it may be considered as tending to aid in the general expansion of his views and his comprehension of the financial and commercial conditions of the World. Of course it is true that a manufacturer or an exporter will primarily rely upon the direct reports which he receives from his agents abroad. Every considerable manufacturer or exporter will probably have an agent, or at any rate some adequate source of information, although no doubt our merchants have not yet done all they ought to do in providing themselves with such

means of information concerning the different markets of the world, so that they may know whence they can best obtain their materials, and whither best send their manufactured products. But while it is chiefly upon these direct reports by trained observers on the spot that the merchant must rely, he will comprehend the whole subject a great deal better if he has acquired a general mastery of the commercial geography of the World, if he knows the producing areas and the markets and the lines of transport as a whole. A great commercial man, whether he be a great manufacturer or a great exporter, can develop for himself certain lines of commercial action, can frame a large policy upon which to conduct his operations. In the same way as a general would determine where to distribute his forces, so he will consider where he can best get the materials he wants and to what markets he ought to send them. His wider knowledge of the World as a whole will enable him to take not only a more intelligent but a more practical and serviceable view of what ought in each particular case to be attempted. His policy will of course frequently need to be varied. It will never do for a man holding so important a position to rely upon what he has learnt years before, because the conditions are constantly changing. What is needed is that he should have a due conception of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and of the proper methods that must be brought to their study. In this way geography may be said to become a branch of, or a sister science with, economic science.

I have felt for many years, and indeed have taken many occasions of urging, that modern commerce, whether it be regarded as an exchange of commodities, or be studied from the side of production, or the side of finance, has now become a subject which ought to receive full university recognition. It is a subject which is quite worthy of being treated in a philosophical and scientific way and of having a place in the curricula of our universities. That was recognised some little time ago at Liverpool. The University College there started some classes on a small scale, but still with the due appreciation of the principle I have been endeavouring to set forth. Those classes are giving young commercial men an education in what might be called commercial science. I believe the same thing is being done or going to be done at Birmingham and probably elsewhere. It is most satisfactory to know that geography in its relation to economics is receiving great attention at the London School of Economics, which has now become one of the schools of the new Teaching University of London. I learn from the Director of the school that these classes are well attended, and that recognition is being given by the University authorities to geography not only in connection with physical science, but also in connection with economics and history.

The aspects in which I have been endeavouring to regard the teaching of geography are perhaps rather fitter for a university or for advanced scholars than they are for a school. At the same time much may be done even in school for pupils between the ages of 14 and 16. There is all the difference in the world between being 'elementary' and being 'superficial.' I would not suggest that schools should deal with the subject if only a superficial treatment could be given to it, but I believe that

even elementary knowledge may be made profitable, provided that it is always given in close connection with facts which the pupil can be taught to observe and reflect on for himself, and not as a mere string of data to be carried in the memory. Let us, however, remember in all these discussions about commercial teaching, that neither it nor any other professional subject must be suffered to interfere with the giving of a generally stimulative liberal education to boys in school. Of course the more you can teach in school, so long as pupils thoroughly understand it, the better; but you cannot specialise to any great extent with boys who are going to leave school at the age of 15 or 16. It is necessary to lift up one's voice against that. But when you deal with young men who are going to remain at a higher secondary school till they are 17 or 18, or are studying at the university, you are dealing with a class from whom will be drawn the upper officers and what may be called the general staff of the army of industry, and you cannot give too much pains and thought to enlarging their views of professional branches of instruction, and giving them an intelligent conception of the phenomena with which they will be concerned in their business life. A large part of those deficiencies in the scientific commercial aptitudes of business men which we hear commented on, springs from the want of regard that has been had to the needs of those who are going to step into the position of heads of leading firms. You can hardly overrate the importance in the conduct of any large business, be it a manufacturing or be it a mercantile house, of the possession of a wide and intelligent knowledge of the financial and economic phenomena of the modern world. If you have at the head of the great businesses, of which there are so many in this country, men who have been thoroughly trained to observe these things and to look at them in a scientific way, you will have done a great deal towards helping us to maintain our place among the commercial nations of the world.

I had thought over a number of hints that might be given about methods useful in geographical teaching, but I have come to the conclusion, especially since reading your excellent organ, the *Geographical Teacher*, that it is not likely I should be able to say anything that has not already occurred to the minds of some of you. I am glad to see there is a movement for the education of our examiners. They are by no means abreast of the day in the kind of questions they often put, and it would be a great stimulus to the teachers of geography if they were to find that examinations turned more frequently upon the intelligence of the pupil, and upon his mastery of the relations of facts to one another, rather than upon the answering of questions for which he must trust to his memory alone. The best teachers have now realised the importance of endeavouring to familiarise pupils with natural objects, and I hope you will not omit any opportunity of pressing even cycling excursions into your service and of taking boys, as they do in Germany, upon tours by which they can learn more of the physical aspects of the country than they can learn from books. Perhaps you might do more than is generally done to encourage the reading of books of travel. Noting the absorbing devotion which boys now show to journals which contain

reports of cricket and football matches, one is disposed to fear that the private reading of boys, which largely used to consist in reading books of history and books of travel, is perhaps not quite so general as it was some thirty or forty years ago. I am quite sure that nothing helps a boy more to take an interest in geography than if he forms a taste for books of travel, and if his teacher encourages him to do so and talks to him about what he has read. I am glad to think your Association has begun to receive so much support and now sees such a useful field opening before it. May I, in conclusion, express to the meeting, and in particular to you, Mr. Freshfield, who have done so much for geographical science as a traveller, and have so frequently and forcibly dwelt upon the value of geography in education, my hearty sympathy with your efforts, and my hopes that they may be crowned with success?

## GEOGRAPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY.

By A. J. HERBERTSON, Ph.D., F.R.S.E., F.R.S.G.S.,

Lecturer in Regional Geography in the University of Oxford, and  
Curator of the School of Geography.

### I. THE UNIVERSITY IN RELATION TO MODERN LIFE.

UNIVERSITIES, in addition to their other functions, have always aimed at training the men who are to shape the destinies of their country and of their time. There has never been a time in the world's history when trained leaders were more needed. The modern world has become, at least in its material details, much larger and more complex than the world of the middle ages, when soldier and priest, doctor and lawyer, were the only professional men. Never were so many careers open to young men as at the present day. This fact is reacting on our universities, which are gradually enlarging their scope and their staff to meet modern requirements. It is not, as some suppose, a deplorable concession to commercial materialism that the Universities of Birmingham, London, and other cities should form faculties of engineering, economics, or commerce, or that the ancient University of Oxford should possess a School of Geography. A generation hence it will be considered as serious and honourable a duty to train administrators, financiers, and merchants as it is to-day to prepare clergymen, lawyers, and doctors for their work in life. This is not to belittle the universities into schools for teaching bread-and-butter subjects, but rather to prevent the otherwise inevitable divorce between the man of action and the man of ideas. The task of the universities is to fit young men to play their part worthily in the fierce struggle for distinguished existence in a world-wide arena. It will be a crime as well as a disaster if the men who are to shape the destinies of the next half century are out of touch with the wider culture which a university can and should supply, and