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Publisher: Routledge
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Scottish Geographical Magazine

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsgj19>

Note on draft plan For institute of geography

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Published online: 27 Feb 2008.

To cite this article: Professor Patrick Geddes (1902) Note on draft plan For institute of geography, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 18:3, 142-144, DOI: [10.1080/00369220208733331](https://doi.org/10.1080/00369220208733331)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00369220208733331>

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The great interior is known, but by no means fully known. In the north of South Australia and in West Australia are tens of thousands of miles just touched here and there by the tracks of Eyre, Gregory, Warburton, Giles, and Forrést. One asks, What is to be the future of the interior of Australia? The extension of artesian boring may be counted on for much. Water for sheep and cattle can be thus permanently secured. But the problem for a great part of Australia is the by no means impossible one of water conservation. The rainfall over a large part of the continent is ample, if only it could be utilised. At present the bulk of it escapes as flood waters. Let these be retained, and hundreds of square miles of barren land can be transformed by irrigation into fruitful fields and gardens. Nature has provided Australia with a wonderful compensation in the way of unequalled provisions ready to hand for water conservation. Natural reservoirs that are dry for years in many cases can be cheaply utilised in flood-time, chains of lagoons lie alongside the rivers, gullies that need only to be dammed across to imprison whole lakes, depressions and channels that lend themselves to easy adaptation, are a feature of Australia. Australia, as she may become, and will become, is, if not wholly (and probably that is too much to look for), yet largely capable of bearing a vast population. There are areas in other countries as arid as the driest of the Australian interior which have been transformed by irrigation into astounding productiveness. Any one who has been, like the writer of this paper, an eye-witness of the magical effect of rainfall upon apparently hopelessly barren country in Australia may be pardoned an exaggerated enthusiasm as to the capacity of such areas under sufficient irrigation. And when it is remembered that the total basin of the Murray is 414,000 square miles, greater than that of the Ganges or Indus, those who have seen it in flood may well look upon it as of enormous possibilities in the way of conservation and irrigation. Nor is the Murray the only water asset on a large scale in Australia. The task of dealing with the dry areas of the great south land is no greater than, indeed not so great as, the task already completed in historic lands of old, and in our own time in such areas as California and Arizona and elsewhere. There can be no doubt that Australia is destined to be inhabited even where thousands of miles lie as yet useless.

NOTE ON DRAFT PLAN FOR INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY.

By Professor PATRICK GEDDES.

THE genesis of this draft plan may be briefly indicated, since it represents the latest of not a few attempts to unite and harmonise many lines of geographical activity and educational endeavour.

The accumulation and arrangement of maps, reliefs, and illustrations, the presentment of descriptive and general geography is primarily centred around the Great Relief Globe of M. Elisée Reclus, which was

considered and approved by a Committee of the Royal Geographical Society in 1898, and all but realised in the imposing architectural design of M. Bonnier for the Paris Exposition of 1900.

With this is associated as its complement the Celestial Globe already partly realised by M. Galeron. Around this should be placed astronomical collections, together with photographs, star maps, models, and so on. Rooms are provided for the concrete, and, as far as may be, the experimental illustration of the physical phenomena of the universe, as already attempted in the "Urania Museum" of Berlin, and in some measure also at South Kensington, and in the "Palais de l'Optique."

The connection of scenery with geology and geography, which requires for its full realisation not only the photograph or even the relief, but the picture, the panorama, is recognised by providing space beside the terrestrial globe. Here would be displayed such a panorama as that of Mont Blanc by M. Schrader, as yet the highest union of geographic science with artistic power reached by a single individual; and around this a minor panoramic series if possible no less carefully selected and executed, and representing typical regions and landscapes of the world, such as those of the National Pavilion of Sweden in the Exposition of 1900.

But this cosmic presentment of Universal Geography, which sets out from the World as a whole, involves as its complement the converse or human method. This is presented in the Tower, proceeding from the visible and immediate prospect, and its study by help of all the sciences of observation. Thence we descend, storey by storey, through City and Province and Region or State to Nation and Empire, and thence again to the larger Occidental Civilisation, of which these form a part, and finally to the Oriental and Primitive sources—the facts of geography and history, the problems and possibilities of useful activity being also represented, as far as may be, upon each level. Various elements of this arrangement have been already in intermittent progress in the Outlook Tower at Edinburgh.

Returning to the adjacent storeys of the main block, its lower ranges of rooms are associated with the corresponding storeys of the Tower, and supply fuller space for anthropological, historical, and economic geography—for the schools of Ritter, Roscher, and Le Play, their representatives and their rivals.

Finally, in the uppermost range of galleries (not shown in elevation, since lighted from the roof, but broadly corresponding to those of the ground floor, with the addition of their corridors), would be lodged the most complex collaboration of all, broadly corresponding to that of the series of type collections upon a geographical basis so widely discussed at the close of the Paris Exposition, and embodied in the attempt of the International Association to preserve the main buildings of the "Rue des Nations." First of all, of course, should be allotted such space as local conditions may require or allow for an adaptation upon some workable scale, however reduced, of the representative exhibits, and the Information Bureau of the Commercial Museum of Philadelphia, for help and suggestion from which are due special thanks to its eminent director, Professor Wilson.

These galleries of Industry and Commerce naturally lead on one side to that of Education, for which the Bureau of Comparative Education, lately established in connection with the French Ministry of Education, furnishes precedent; and on the other, and no less naturally, to space for a Peace Museum, of which the draft design incorporates and continues that of the late M. Jean de Bloch. Engineering, of course, primarily related to geography, in railways, canals, and so on, "geotechnics" as a whole, afforestation, irrigation, agriculture, and hygiene, tropical and temperate, would all be represented. These collections would find their practical application in the Gallery of Comparative Civics, in which the development, character, and progress of representative cities would be indicated, presumably not without stimulus to our own.

In detailed arrangement, as in the architectural style and ornament in which M. Galeron has expressed it, the present plan is, of course, still open to modification. It is, indeed, under continual improvement, and criticism and suggestion will be welcomed and fully considered. Already no arbitrary scheme, but a product of many independent ideas and efforts, it should thus become increasingly worthy of realisation, upon a sufficient scale of scientific and educational completeness.

A PLEA FOR A NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY.

By J. G. BARTHOLOMEW, F.R.S.E., F.R.G.S., ETC.

THE love of knowledge can hardly be said to be with us a national ambition. Our having achieved so much material success without study may perhaps account for this defect; we have had more belief in action. In the opening up of the world to civilisation and commerce we have been first in the field, and we have had the enterprise to take advantage of exceptional opportunities. As a nation we have unquestionably made remarkable progress: we have extended our dominions abroad, we have accumulated great wealth. But has our success ennobled our ideals, or has it mainly developed pride, luxury, and self-complacency? Is there not more enthusiasm shown over a yacht race or a football match than over the discovery of a new continent? Our good fortune in the past cannot be expected to continue in the future without effort. In this twentieth century we have to face changed conditions. Even if in spite of luxury we still retain our old hard-working energy, yet energy alone will not suffice. Now more than ever knowledge is power, and the dominating race of the future will require efficiency all round. In the commercial struggle foreign countries, in many respects better equipped for competition, are entering the field to contest the monopolies we have so long enjoyed. In the past the energies of nations and individuals have been mainly limited to their own countries; now their field of action extends over the world. An ever-widening field, a great and complex one, it requires special study, and that study is Geography in its widest sense.