

**ESSAYS ON THE  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION**

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Essays on the Higher Education by George Trumbull Ladd

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**GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD**

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ESSAYS  
ON  
UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA  
THE HIGHER EDUCATION

BY  
GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD  
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PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN YALE UNIVERSITY

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## PREFACE

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THE four essays which are now gathered into this volume were originally written for different audiences, and have already been published in different magazines. The paper on "The Development of the American University" was read before the "Round Table" of Boston, and that on "The Place of the Fitting-School in American Education" before the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools. A request from the editors of the "Andover Review" to reply to the presentation, made by a friend and colleague, of another system of higher education than that of which I was the chosen advocate, led to the article on "Education, New and Old." The occasion of its production, therefore, accounts for the more special and polemical character of the third essay. The address on "The Essentials of a Modern Liberal Education" was delivered before the Association of the Alumni of Western Reserve University at the Commencement of 1895. All four of these essays are here published with very few and unimportant verbal changes.

Since the first three of these essays were written at a period of more than ten years ago, they contain many particulars of statement which would need modification if revised in view of later facts, and some particulars of opinion which I should now express in a different way. It is gratifying to find that certain suggestions made in them as to possible remedies for then existing evils and deficiencies have been adopted and more or less successfully carried out. It is also a cause for hope that some of the mists arising from the first thawing of the fields congealed by long continued customs and traditions have begun to clear away; so that a more judicious estimate of the path which lies behind us in educational matters and of the lines of educational progress in the nearer future, can be more easily attained. But he certainly overestimates the assured and thoroughly well proven value of much that is "new" in education, and also underestimates the numerous puzzling problems which remain to be solved, the practical difficulties still to be overcome, who regards the permanent courses of the more popular or of the higher education in this country as by any means clearly marked out.

The enthusiastic advocate of what is new in educational ideas — as to subjects, methods, curricula, organization, etc. — regards it as highly unfortunate that *institutions* are not so plastic, so

easy to change, as are ideas. The man who is wise in practical affairs, and profound in his reflections upon the truths of history, knows that, on the contrary, this abiding and relatively stable character of the institutional expression of ideas is the fortunate thing about educational, as about other forms of progress. Most fortunate of all are those institutions which change just fast and far enough to conserve the priceless lessons of the past, while unfolding constantly to receive the suggestions of the better time coming.

It is not, then, because any of the details of opinion expressed in these essays are regarded as a finality that I have thought it possibly worth while to publish them. As respects these very details I should still be unwilling to commit myself unalterably to any of the current conflicting opinions. And I have already indicated that the events of the last decade have modified, in ways which need not at present be discussed or even noted, what was said upon various points before the original hearers of these essays. But if they possess any value sufficient to justify calling attention to them again, collectively and in this unobtrusive way, it is because they all intend to emphasize the three following truths: First, there are *some* settled and permanent principles which belong to all educational systems, in all times; and we may know what these principles are. But,