

**FROM A MODERN
UNIVERSITY: SOME
AIMS AND
ASPIRATIONS OF SCIENCE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649511631

From a Modern University: Some Aims and Aspirations of Science by Arthur Smithells

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ARTHUR SMITHELLS

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SOME AIMS AND ASPIRATIONS
OF SCIENCE

BY

ARTHUR SMITHELLS

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW NEW YORK
TORONTO MELBOURNE CAPE TOWN BOMBAY
HUMPHREY MILFORD

1921

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TO THE
MEMBERS

TO
ARTHUR GREENHOW LUPTON
FIRST PRO-CHANCELLOR
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

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P R E F A C E

THE essays included in this volume are a selection of occasional addresses which have been given during the last fifteen years on some of the topics that confront a man of science engaged in a modern university. They may be of interest in showing one aspect of the educational campaign that is being carried on in these newer centres of learning. Like any collection of addresses, this one may weary by its repetitions and reiterations; but on consideration it seemed better, and it has certainly been easier, to reprint the essays individually without alteration, than to attempt to combine them into a more systematic treatise on science and education. The concern of the author, it will be seen, has been to raise his voice equally against pedantry and Philistinism, the 'Scylla and Charybdis through which our Universities need to-day such careful steering.

A. S.

LEEDS, *Jan.* 1921.

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*The Modern University Movement*¹

IT has been said that the future historians of England will record the foundation of its five new universities as the most noteworthy incident that has marked the opening of the twentieth century. The movement has been spoken of, in a picturesque way, as the Northern Renaissance. I think that we who have lived through this period may be inclined rather to date the genesis of the universities in the nineteenth century, and to reckon it among the great movements for emancipation of people and liberalization of institutions, which will make that century and the Victorian age for ever memorable.

The university colleges, out of which these new universities have grown, seem to me to owe their origin not to anything that can be properly called a Renaissance. University College, London, and the Owens College, Manchester, were the first, and I think there is the clearest evidence that their success was determined, at the outset, by two factors; firstly, by their providing higher education for those who were unable to subscribe to the religious tests imposed by Oxford and Cambridge, and secondly, by the liberal recognition which they gave to natural science. At a later stage, they became distinguished as the academic resorts of the poor in purse, and as the nurseries of applied science.

What has happened at the beginning of the twentieth century, has been the conferment on single colleges of the power to grant those greatly overesteemed certificates of knowledge known as degrees, which previously had to be

¹ An address to the Leeds Arts Club, delivered November 10, 1906.