EDUCATION FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDENT

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When the Roman Republic passed its apogee near the beginning of our era, one symptom of its condition was the decline of learning. The sciences were marked out by formal boundaries, but, as Macaulay notes, there was little cultivation within the walls and no flowers and no fruit. In our times the social sciences are similarly set off from one another, and one looks nearly in vain for flowers and fruit in spite of a rather assiduous cultivation. Political science is a realm by itself, unconnected with economics and history. History has its own domain, independent of economics, political science and geography. Economics, anthropology and psychology, which should contribute to one another, pursue their separate ways, without interrelations, without mutual understanding and without purpose.

The failure of the social sciences has been a part of the failure of our whole scheme of education, and what I have to say about them might be said of other studies with only a few changes. Failure to improve the social sciences now may mean that they will sink to that level of utter futility which characterized the world of learning in Roman days. Two related troubles may be separated out for discussion. Each social science has developed a jargon of its own to so high a degree that mutual understanding is impossible. Jargon should be eradicated. If this were done, the social sciences might be able to take the next step, which is union in a common purpose.

Though the students of one science ought to be able to understand those of another, economists write an...