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RESEARCH IN COLLEGES AND PRO-
  FESSIONAL SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It was planned to introduce this program with a
paper by Dr. John C. Merriam upon "Research as
revealing an Attitude of Mind," but illness in his
family prevented his being present or sending his
paper.

A few college presidents and university professors
have expressed the feeling that men qualified to do
worthy research are rare, and that most college teach-
ers would do well to let research alone and stick
to their teaching. We who have been endeavoring to
promote research in colleges have had a fundamen-
tally different view, and it seems well to outline it
briefly as a background for the discussions to follow.

We believe that every normal individual is born
with some endowment of the research spirit—the in-
quiring mind given to trying to find out by exercise
of its own powers. Normal children are full of natu-
ral curiosity and they have to a fair degree the habit
of experimenting; that is, they are endowed with
something of the research spirit.

We believe that this mental habit of learning by
self-reliant experiment should be conserved and
strengthened from the beginning throughout life.
We believe that all education, from pre-kindergarten
age on through the university, should have this en-
couragement of the spirit and habit of research as a
main object. We believe that no worthwhile job in
life can be done with proper effectiveness in any other
spirit. We believe that, in all education, learning
through self-reliant experiment and exercise of in-
dividual judgment should dominate and that the habit
of stopping with faith in the printed statement in the
text-book should be avoided as leading to fatty de-
genration of the mind and soul. We believe that
such teaching should be conducted only by those who
have the research attitude themselves and have ability
to cultivate it in their pupils.

Men with the research spirit are now available for
the colleges, and from among university graduates are
coming new men who, though wrongly trained in their
earlier school studies, have later come into contact

1 A series of papers arranged by the secretary of the
committee on research in educational institutions, a sub-
committee of the committee of one hundred of the Amer-
ican Association for the Advancement of Science, given
at the Philadelphia meeting on December 28.