

SCIENCE

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1919

THE UNIVERSITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH¹

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“THE end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.” In these words Francis Bacon in “The New Atalantis” summed up the aims of what he called “Salomon’s House” or the “College of the Six Days’ Works.” Plato dreamed of a society dominated by guardian philosophers; Sir Thomas More pictured a happy people practising an economic communism; Bacon imagined a sage civilization obedient to science; he had faith in social progress by research and education. He foreshadowed with astonishing vision the essential features of the modern university.

Salomon’s House was lavishly equipped with buildings’ apparatus and other facilities which would fill one of our faculties with joy, and a board of trustees or a legislature with consternation. There were caves, mines, lofty towers, lakes, hydraulic works, laboratories, orchards, gardens, kitchens, sound-houses, perspective houses, furnaces, mechanical shops, “dispensatories with shops of medicine,” parks for animals “not only for view or rareness, but likewise for dissections and trials that thereby may take light what may be wrought upon the body of man.” All this reads like the prospectus of a Western State University with a department of Agriculture and a standardized Medical School. The University of New Atalantis

¹ Abstract of an address delivered at the anniversary exercises of Johns Hopkins University, Saturday, February 22, 1919, by George E. Vincent, president of the Rockefeller Foundation.

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to The Editor of Science, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

Science

49 (1263)

Science **49** (1263), 245-268.

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Science (print ISSN 0036-8075; online ISSN 1095-9203) is published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005. The title *Science* is a registered trademark of AAAS.

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