

## **THE ACADEMY AND OKLAHOMA'S FUTURE**

**Bradford Knapp, President**

**Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College**

Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen:

It requires a good deal of mental effort to change from the excitement of yesterday's brilliant game to the serious consideration of today. It is quite a mental reaction. In what I shall have to say to you today I hope that you will understand that some things are meant in a large way, for the consideration of the entire state in its future development. It is fortunate that an association like this has been organized for the reason that it furnishes a common meeting ground and an opportunity for an open forum of discussion of all those lines of science which relate to the lives of the people in this state. Such a healthy, open, and candid discussion serves the purpose of stimulating our endeavors and keeping us all posted regarding the progress that is being made along all lines of scientific achievement.

I count it to be true that all of us believe that educational institutions are necessary to the development of a state. We have the habit of saying that a democracy cannot endure except by the education of all its people. I want to suggest to you this thought: that knowledge advances under the influence of inquiry. Education that is contented with the mere routine of passing on that which has been known for years past to the on-coming generation, has no advancing program, and therefore must fail of its purpose. Science is a great question mark. It is constantly asking "Why?" and then eternally changing the why into how. The why of things is equally as important as the how, but educational institutions must turn out men and women who inquire and then act.

The future of the state of Oklahoma, in common with the future of others, depends upon both its material and its social and political advancement. The state consists of its resources, which I might call its endowment by nature, and its people with their natural endowment plus their power to advance through education and research or extending the field of their knowledge. Research is the widening of the scope of what we know and understand. It adds to the sum total of our knowledge. Science is not content with things that we already know, but

seeks to discover and interpret the laws of nature so that we may add to our knowledge along every line.

The state then may consist of the following four items: Its mineral wealth, which is material in its nature; its agricultural wealth, which is both a matter of material development and of social and economic development as well; its industrial development; and its social and political advancement, in which must be included the development of the human race, the family ties, community life, and state and national citizenship.

Research along these lines is extremely important, and institutions of this state ought to be devoted in part to the task of extending our knowledge of these subjects. In the olden days, science included only a few broad lines, such as chemistry, physics, biology, and other so-called natural sciences. Today it is extended to include the great problems of the human race itself, in its social, economic, and political development. The agricultural wealth of the state, its industrial, manufacturing and engineering development and the development of its home life, constitute a group of sciences in which the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College is naturally interested. The larger field of social and political science, of history and government, of public health and medical advancement, and of the older sciences in their broader applications, constitute the great field of the University of Oklahoma. But every institution, besides having a field of endeavor, must stimulate the spirit of inquiry to some degree in the minds of those who teach, and the Academy of Science forms the common ground for meeting, conferring, unifying and developing this spirit of inquiry, and out of this spirit of inquiry the growth of the state.

I want to point out that the old science of so-called political economy has today developed into the larger group of social, economic, and political sciences. The new state in the new day will mean a state where there are educated people, with family ties developed to the highest degree, with knowledge necessary to meet the tasks of everyday life. It will mean the development of industries in Oklahoma, so that the forty per cent of the consumer's dollar which comes from manufacturing, may remain here with industrial development, rather than go elsewhere, with our raw materials shipped out and our finished products shipped in.

A really efficient state must likewise govern efficiently, and that means not only good service must be given, but economy in the service. Nine tenths of the laws passed by the average Legislature, not in Oklahoma alone but in most states, are passed

without much inquiry or consideration of underlying facts. Some day it will be the responsibility of a dispassionate organization of men whose lives are devoted in part to scientific research, to give consideration to important pieces of legislation before they are put upon the statute books. Thus may we develop a state devoted to the task of economic public service, after careful consideration and mature knowledge of the results to be obtained.

In conclusion let me say that I regard the Academy as a matter of very great importance to the state, in its relationship to the educational institutions of higher learning, for the reason that research, as well as education, must be the foundation of an intelligent democracy.