A Rhetorical Biography of Walter Hines Page With Reference to His Ceremonial Speaking on Southern Education, 1891-1913.

Keith Howard Griffin
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/3112

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
GRiffin, Keith Howard, 1949-  
A RHETORICAL BIOGRAPHY OF WALTER HINES PAGE  
WITH REFERENCE TO HIS CEREMONIAL SPEAKING ON  
SOUTHERN EDUCATION, 1891-1913.  
The Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College,  
Ph.D., 1977  
Speech  

Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
A RHETORICAL BIOGRAPHY OF WALTER HINES PAGE
WITH REFERENCE TO HIS CEREMONIAL SPEAKING
ON SOUTHERN EDUCATION, 1891-1913

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The Department of Speech

by

Keith Howard Griffin
M.A., Wake Forest University, 1974
August, 1977
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the following people for their contribution to the development of this study:

Dr. Waldo W. Braden, scholar and friend, for his unwavering confidence and enthusiasm in guiding the project . . .

Dr. Darwin Shrell, Dr. Harold Mixon, Dr. Bill Harbin, and
Dr. Donald Ragsdale for their assistance in assembling the manuscript . . .

the staff of the Houghton Library of Harvard University for their help when the writer was in Cambridge to examine the Page manuscript collection . . .

Dr. John Milton Cooper, Jr. of the University of Wisconsin for furnishing a copy of his unpublished biographical study of Page . . .

Mrs. Golda Walker and Paula Henderson for their work in typing and proof-reading the manuscript . . .

and Mr. and Mrs. G. Howard Griffin.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE SPEAKER: WALTER HINES PAGE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. PAGE AND THE NEW SOUTH</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE CAMPAIGN IN NORTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SOUTHERN EDUCATION SPOKESMAN</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. BUILDING UP COUNTRY LIFE</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines eleven ceremonial speeches delivered by Walter Hines Page on Southern education between 1891 and 1913. Attention is directed toward a consideration of his strategy in employing various forms of support to amplify his message and to heighten the effect of his speeches. Analysis reveals that through his rhetoric Page made a significant contribution to the public education movement in North Carolina and across the South.

At the close of the nineteenth century, universal education was an unacceptable concept to most Southerners who accepted the notion that schools existed to serve the wealthy and well-born. In advocating public education, Page espoused a philosophy opposed to the attitudes of class and privilege characteristic of the Old South. Refusing either to accommodate to or to exploit the myths of the Old South and the Lost Cause, Page pursued what may be called a rhetoric of aspiration, because he developed themes embodying optimism, promise and assurance. Examination of his speeches as a rhetoric of aspiration reveals that the North Carolinian followed four strategies to promote public education.

First, Page used a strategy of avoidance or in his words "pass over" not to attack the powerful myths of the Old South and the Lost Cause. Refraining from any discussion of the myths, he did not risk the possibility of alienating public opinion.

Second, Page lauded the contributions of those Southerners who took leading roles in founding the nation. Appealing to patriotism and
the right to equal educational and economic opportunities, he identified the democratic myth with the traditional South.

Third, the expatriate-orator turned to the agrarian myth to commend rural life as the root of American character, ideals and values. He contended that ultimately the nation's greatness was based on the maintenance and growth of the agrarian South.

Finally, Page utilized the myth of the New South to promise prosperity as the reward for a society committed to "the right training of its people."
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1919 Ellwood Cubberley rated Walter Hines Page\(^1\) "one of the ten or fifteen most influential men who provided leadership to America for the first two decades of the present century."\(^2\) His observation was based upon the Southerner's career as ambassador to Great Britain, as a journalist and publisher and for his philanthropic service. Interested in any liberal effort to aid the South, Page "was a pioneer in popularizing the new science of agriculture; he heralded the emancipation of a vast region from the hookworm; most of all he blazed the way for the educational and industrial redemption of the South."\(^3\)

\(^1\)Page was born August 15, 1855 in Wake County, North Carolina. He attended Trinity College, now Duke University, Randolph-Macon College, and won one of the first fellowships offered at Johns Hopkins University. He was married to Willia Alice Wilson in 1880. The young couple moved to Missouri where he served for two years as editor of the St. Joseph Gazette. Following a brief tour of the South as a correspondent for newspapers in Chicago, New York and Boston, he returned to North Carolina and purchased the Raleigh State Chronicle. Unable to make the paper a financial success, he sold his interests and traveled north to pursue his career. He served on the staff of the New York Evening Post, 1883-88, as manager and later editor of the Forum, 1887-95, and as editor of the Atlantic Monthly, 1896-00, the first Southerner to hold that post. The North Carolinian left the Monthly to create a publishing house in partnership with Frank Doubleday. Soon after its formation, Doubleday, Page & Company launched World's Work, a magazine which Page edited from 1900 to 1913. In 1913 Woodrow Wilson appointed him ambassador to Great Britain. Page served in this post until ill-health forced him to resign in 1918. He died December 21, 1918 in Aberdeen, North Carolina.


\(^3\)"New York and the World's Work," Page Manuscript Collection, Harvard University. Subsequent references to material from this Collection shall be acknowledged Page MSS.
As a journalist and an orator, Page promoted the crusade for education in the southern states. Referring to his addresses on behalf of this cause, Edwin Mims, formerly chairman of the Department of English at Vanderbilt University, suggested that "a more limited study in a more limited field might better set forth the spirit of the man and suggest many ideas and plans that were characteristic of his mind and heart."\(^4\)

Statement of the Problem

Entitled "A Rhetorical Biography of Walter Hines Page with Reference to his Ceremonial Speaking on Southern Education, 1891-1913," this dissertation examines all aspects of the speaker's life and career which influenced his role as a spokesman in the campaign for education in the South at the turn of the century. His addresses provide the opportunity to study the rhetorical strategy of an uncommon Southerner. Born, raised and educated in the South, Page was driven from North Carolina for his liberalism and lived the remainder of his adult life in Boston and New York. As an influential friend of the Rockefellers, Woodrow Wilson and other leaders, and as one who frequently traveled around the country, the North Carolinian could view his native region from a perspective denied many Southerners.

As a spokesman who considered public instruction the key to a return to southern prosperity and political influence, Page found himself confronting the legacies of the Old South. Ante-bellum attitudes toward education reflected the aristocratic nature of southern society. Private schools were intended to serve only the small and privileged class that was to furnish social, political, economic, and military leaders. Thus, the sons and daughters of the wealthy and the elite were to attend academies, colleges and universities which functioned to preserve the class structure. Schools operated by the various denominations reached a few more students. As they limited their enrollments to members of their particular sects, the church schools, too, represented a class education.

Universal education was an alien concept to most Southerners. After generations of ignorance, the common people accepted the notion that schools existed to serve the wealthy and well-born, and, thus had nothing to offer them. Politicians considered public schools an unnecessary tax burden, and religious leaders, protecting their own institutions, opposed the popular support of schools.

Additionally, after the Civil War educational missionaries from the North, with the aid of Reconstruction governments, had imposed a system of public schools upon the South based on northern models and open to black children. Following the return of home rule, these schools were denied funds by the legislatures. Thus, the concept of universal education carried the stigma of Yankee interference and the threat of a return to black rule.
Therefore, educators and exponents of universal education like Page confronted the traditional southern attitude which regarded education as a privilege limited to those who could afford it and as an intrusion of northern culture. This dissertation attempts to answer the questions: What was Page trying to accomplish in his speeches on behalf of southern education? How did he attempt to achieve his goals?

Ceremonial Oratory and the Rhetorical Study

Opportunities for Page to speak in the South on education came from invitations by colleges and universities, civic clubs, literary societies, and conventions. On these occasions the North Carolinian assumed the role of a ceremonial orator.

Aristotle referred to ceremonial or epideictic oratory as speeches of "display" whose support is the topic of degree, that is, magnifying or minifying. Hence, epideictic speeches are often referred to as speeches of praise or blame. In the Rhetoric Aristotle advised the ceremonial orator to develop his case "by arguing that what has been done is, e.g., noble and useful. The facts themselves are to be taken as trust; proof of them is only submitted on those rare occasions when they are not easily credible or when they have been set down to some one else." The ceremonial orator is concerned with the present "since all men praise or blame in view of the state of things existing at the time, though they often find it useful also to recall the past


6Aristotle, p. 211.
and to make guesses at the future."^7

As defined in the Rhetoric, the Noble is "that which is both desirable for its own sake and also worthy of praise; or that which is both good and also pleasant because good," and virtue is explained as "a faculty of providing and preserving good things; or a faculty of conferring many great benefits."^8 Aristotle offered no discussion of the ignoble, observing that if the noble and the virtuous are understood, "we know their contraries; and it is out of these that speeches of censure are made."^9

Concerned with reinforcing existing attitudes or behavior, the ceremonial orator seeks to embellish the basic perceptions of value already accepted by his auditors. With no need to establish proof, the speaker aims to achieve impressiveness or to heighten "the effect."^10 In order to attain these goals, he utilizes various devices of amplification intended to make his ideas "more illuminating or convincing to an audience."^11 James Winans thought that the means of amplification—examples, comparisons, illustrations, statistics, definitions, testimony, "stylistic embellishment and emotional

7Aristotle, p. 32.
8Aristotle, p. 56.
9Aristotle, p. 63.
10Aristotle, p. 62.
coloration" were not intended to dilute thought by "making a little go a long way," but it was a means of enrichment, clarity and impressiveness.

This dissertation presents a rhetorical study of the ceremonial speaking of Walter Hines Page in order to determine and assess the manner in which he made "words work in discourse." For each address the relationship of occasion, audience and speaker is examined. There follows an analysis of the speaker's line of reasoning to determine what he intended to praise or blame, and identification of the proposition he developed, the pattern of organization he followed and the basic premises which he shared in common with his audience upon which he based his ideas. Subsequent attention is directed toward a consideration of his strategy in employing various forms of support to amplify his message and to heighten the effect of his speeches.

Justification

Previously, only one study discussed the speaking of Walter Page. In his thesis Louis Jeter Campbell analyzed five ceremonial speeches by Page on behalf of southern education.


14Winans, p. 152.

But he made minimal reference to historical context, neglecting the dynamic relationship of the speaker, his audience and the occasion. Speaking before the Southern Speech Communication Association Convention in Tallahassee, Florida, Waldo W. Braden suggested the importance of the rhetorical critic examining this relationship as follows:

A speech, of course, may be regarded as a means of influencing behavior, but it may also be thought of as a mirror that reflects the forces that influenced the speaking. It is a reflection of the creator, the speaker--his aspirations, his thought processes, his abilities to organize, his command of pertinent material, and his attempts to adjust to changing elements of the whole speaking situation. . . . Again a speech is a reflection of its occasion--the complete milieu of long-term and immediate forces and circumstances that shaped and limited the presentation. . . . Finally, a speech is a reflection of the listeners for which it was prepared--their attitudes, sentiments, aspirations and receptivity.16

To better understand Page's role as a southern orator, a need exists for a rhetorical biography which considers the relationship of the speaker, his audience and the occasion for each of his ceremonial speeches in the South.

The following addresses are studied in this dissertation:

"Address at the Inauguration of President Winston," delivered October 14, 1891, at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

"The Forgotten Man," commencement address delivered May 19, 1897, at the State Normal and Industrial School in Greensboro, North Carolina.

"The School That Built a Town," commencement address delivered December 11, 1901, at the State Normal School in Athens, Georgia.

"Address of Dedication, Trinity College Library," delivered February 23, 1903, at Trinity College in Durham, North Carolina.

"The Man Behind the Plow," commencement address delivered May 26, 1903, at the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts in Raleigh, North Carolina.

"The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," delivered April 27, 1904, at the Seventh Conference for Education in the South held in Birmingham, Alabama.

"A Layman's Notion of a University," delivered January 12, 1911, at the state capital, Columbia, South Carolina.

"The Farmer's Credit," delivered April 4, 1912, at the Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South held in Nashville, Tennessee.

"Message to the Country Man," delivered December 3, 1912, to the State Literary and Historical Association in Raleigh, North Carolina.

"Opening Remarks" and "Summary by the Chairman," delivered April 16 and 18, 1913, at the Sixteenth Conference for Education in the South held in Richmond, Virginia.
Also discussed is the newspaper account of Page's address "Country Life," delivered to the Charleston, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce on January 27, 1913.

Sources and Contributory Studies

Following Page's death, his sons Arthur and Ralph set about the task of gathering and arranging their father's papers. This collection was presented to the Houghton Library of Harvard University, Arthur's alma mater and near the homes in which they resided in Cambridge when Page was editor of the Atlantic Monthly. The ninety-four boxes of the collection constitute the primary source of information on all phases of the North Carolinian's life and career.

Supplementing this material are Page's autobiographical novel The Southerner: An Autobiography of Nicholas Worth, The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths and, to a lesser degree, A Publisher's Confession. His journal articles and editorials, particularly those in World's Work, which he edited for thirteen years, provide additional helpful information.


Burton J. Hendrick's Pulitzer-Prize-winning biographies

The Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page and The Training of an American: The Earlier Life and Letters of Walter Page, 1855-1913 are excellent sources. Ross Gregory's Walter Hines Page: Ambassador to the Court of St. James focuses on the Southerner's diplomatic career. The definitive biographical study of Page written by John Milton Cooper, Jr. is soon to be published by the University of North Carolina Press. This writer is indebted to Dr. Cooper for his willingness to share a copy of the manuscript with him.

While several theses and one dissertation have studied varied aspects of Page's career, only one, Frederick Weaver's dissertation "Walter H. Page and the Progressive Mood" made extensive use of the Page Manuscript Collection at Harvard. Although only Campbell's effort dealt with Page as an orator, the studies by Boswell, Cox, Minor


and Weaver add to the evolving picture of the versatile Carolinian.

Of these, the thesis by George Worley Boswell, "Walter Hines Page as a Southerner," is of especial interest. Directed by Donald Davidson, one of the Nashville agrarians, this study examines Page's career from an unflattering point of view, thus balancing the more favorable perceptions evidenced in the other works.

Doctoral studies by Edward Jennings Carter27 and Barbara Hulbert Walsh28 supply beneficial information on the revival of educational interest in the South and the work of the Conference for Education in the South. Additional information is available in the numerous articles and books by and about Page's contemporaries.


CHAPTER II

THE SPEAKER: WALTER HINES PAGE

Walter Hines Page ranked among the most influential Americans of the first two decades of this century. He became a prominent journalist, a companion of the leaders of industry, an advisor to philanthropic leaders, and President Wilson's ambassador to Great Britain through a combination of his captivating personality, his energy and enthusiasm, and his talents of intellect and expression.

This chapter presents an analysis of the factors which influenced the development of Page as a speaker. Divided into three sections the chapter focuses on his speech training, the range of his speaking experience, and a delineation of his concept of rhetoric.

Speech Training

Page received his early education from his mother Catherine Robeteau Page, who taught her oldest son to write, cipher, and introduced him to the works of Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens. On the strength of his mother's tutoring and what knowledge he obtained at an improvised local school, young "Wat" was admitted to Bingham Academy, a military-oriented school where the boys drilled in uniforms styled after those worn by the confederates. Here Page studied under Colonel William Bingham, well-known for his series of Latin texts and his "remarkable" powers as an orator.1 From this background he "obtained a better-than-average education. And when the proper time

1Walter P. Williamson, "The Bingham School." Our Living and Our Dead, III (May, 1875), 381-82.

12
came, the family expected Walter to go to college."²

Trinity College, now Duke University, was a Methodist institution of which the Page elders approved. While there only a year, Page "led his associates in a miniature parliament--the Franklin Debating Society,"³ and won the honor of representing the group in the college oratorical contest. Dissatisfied with Trinity, he transferred to Randolph-Macon College in Virginia after hearing a speech on Christian education by its president Reverend James A. Duncan.⁴

While at Randolph-Macon Page visited the birthplace of Henry Clay and the Hanover Court House where Patrick Henry argued the "Parson's Case."⁵ The young North Carolinian also met Thomas Randolph Price, professor of English Literature and Greek, who taught him to love the best literature and whose daily prayer was "O Great Apollo, send down the reviving rain upon our fields; preserve our flocks; ward off our enemies and build up our speech!"⁶

The Randolph-Macon College Catalogue for 1872-73 describes the Sutherlin Prize for Oratory, established by Major W. T. Sutherlin of Danville, Virginia, as a medal to "be presented at each annual


⁴Hendrick, pp. 49-50.


⁶Walter Hines Page, "The Right Use of Speech in a Democracy," Page MSS.
commencement to the best orator who shall contend for the same, to be
decided by three competent judges, who have no official connection
with the college." Such contests were not taken lightly. An
aspirant at a similar event at the University of North Carolina
observed that "the winners of these medals became historical figures
in no small way. Their speeches, their looks, manners, and personal-
ities were handed down to those who followed to be talked about round
open fires. This was in keeping with the old Southern tradition, skill
in public speaking gave great power." Page indicated his enthusiasm
for the contest by a note that he scribbled in his college catalogue:
"in April, after I was elected to the orator's place for Commencement,
I was so taken up with my speech that I stopped Latin. By this, I
lost a year in that school. Well, we learn by our losses, I suppose." While a student at Randolph-Macon Page studied Cicero's
oration in Latin and the orations of Demosthenes in Greek. His
appreciation for the study of these addresses and other great speeches
is reflected in a note written years later:

Read for yourself the great speeches of Athens, then read
Burke and Broughton and Erskine. Then read Calhoun and
Old Henry. It is the same fire they all have, the same
thrilling greatness on which our very thought may . . .
 wax strong. Calhoun and Henry are as immortal as
Demosthenes himself!

7*Randolph-Macon College Catalogue, 1872-73* (Richmond:
Ferguson & Rady, 1873), p. 32.

8Augustus Long White, Son of Carolina (Durham: Duke Univer-

9*Randolph-Macon College Catalogue*, p. 5.
It is a shame, by the way, that we of this generation are so ignorant of our great Southern orators. They made a literature for us which is among the richest treasures... whether you or I believe in their especial political tenets or not is a little question indeed. They are worth your study, ... who ever thinks of putting a boy to reading our own orators? I have! I have! I have! 10

Page developed a keen appreciation for the written and spoken word through the study of classical and modern models and participation in debating societies and oratorical contests.

Speaking Experience

Page often was invited to deliver addresses and lectures across the country. He also sought additional opportunities to speak by offering his services to George E. Vincent at Chautauqua, New York, and J. M. Coldwell of the Southern Lyceum Bureau of Louisville, Kentucky, whose organization represented John B. Gordon, Russell Conwell, George Washington Cable, and T. DeWitt Talmage. Apparently Page was a success on the lecture circuit and at the Chautauqua Assembly for he received invitations to return from both Vincent and Coldwell. 11

Page sometimes found himself in situations where he felt compelled to deliver impromptu addresses. O. M. Gilmer of the St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette recalled one such incident:

In the summer of 1881, Mr. Page accepted an appointment to cover the Atlanta Exposition for the New York World. While on the way to Atlanta Page was delayed at a station in Mississippi to await railway connections. While he was there came the news of the assassination of President Garfield. ... There was much excitement and various comments. Mr. Page expressed his abhorrence of the act

10 Page notebook, Page MSS.

11 Southern Lyceum Bureau to WHP, April 24, 1899, and George E. Vincent to WHP, December 12, 1909, Page MSS.
plainly, and soon found himself hoisted on a dry good box with demands for a speech. It did not take the people long to show their appreciation for his ability and patriotism.12

On another occasion a San Francisco journalist recalled hearing Page please an audience with his off-the-cuff remarks at the old Reform Club in New York:

The big dining room was packed with men. A distinguished writer who happened to be present was called upon to speak. He rose and stood in silence. The room became quiet. We all expected to hear a remarkable address. The silence continued. We began to feel uneasy. There was some coughing and twisting in seats. Still the silence continued. What was happening? Had the speaker lost his nerve? We heard the words 'I - I - am not used to speaking! I am used to writing. I'm afraid I can't go on.' The distinguished literary man sat down. Now the silence was painful. Presently it was broken by faint applause that, somehow, increased the embarrassment. Then the chairman rose and in a quick brief speech called upon another speaker. At one end of the table stood a tall striking man, with piercing black eyes and a black moustache. Without hesitating he began. Swiftly he went on to a masterly address, with a beginning and a middle and an end, reaching a superb climax. It was plain that he had not expected to be called upon and that he felt the need of exerting himself to save the evening. If the speech had been taken down in shorthand it might have been published without the change of a word. It was a beautiful piece of work--like a gem. When he finished and dropped into his seat, there was a tumultous applause. On all sides people were saying 'Who is he?' He was Walter Hines Page, then editor of the Forum.13

Again under different circumstances, this time the funeral of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, Page responded with an impromptu address. He was completely dissatisfied with the efforts of the clergymen and James Wilson, the Secretary of Agriculture, who handled the service and

12*St. Louis Gazette*, nd., Page MSS.

13*San Francisco Bulletin*, 1913, Page MSS.
commended Knapp's life in "an altogether commonplace fashion.""14

When Page spoke:

. . . his appraisement took on a certain indignation . . . no record of it was ever made, but those who heard it still carry the memory of an eloquent and fiery outburst that placed Knapp's work in the proper relation to American history and gave men an unforgettable picture of a patient, idealistic, achieving man whose name will loom large in the future.15

Edward Alderman, a long-time friend and associate, first heard Page speak at a summer session of the University of North Carolina. He was impressed by the young instructor's delivery, so unlike the conventional oratory of the day:

I happened to be passing the lecture hall one evening. The doors and windows were open. I peered in, and there I saw a young man--about twenty-two or three--spare and tall, with brown hair and eyes, standing on the platform. I was especially struck because he was not wearing the uniform of an orator and had no speechifying manner. In those days in the South a public speaker dressed the part: he usually wore a frock coat, a white necktie--and in his oratorical progress certain conventional attitudes were expected. This young chap, however, wore a business suit; he was standing at the edge of the table, one hand resting on it, and leaning forward, not orating, but merely talking rapidly and with the utmost ease. I was so struck with his unpretentious appearance that I went in and took a seat. It was a wonderful picture of earnest and persuasive youth.16

George Taylor Winston, a colleague on the faculty that summer, noted that Page "displayed a remarkable originality of thought; fine critical ability, and rare felicity of expression. He made a very decided impression on all who heard him."17 Winston praised Page's

14 Hendrick, Life and Letters, p. 97.
15 Ibid.
16 Hendrick, The Training of an American, p. 120.
17 George T. Winston to J. L. Jones, March 5, 1881, Page MSS.
ability not only to please and instruct but also, and "in a high degree, to set his auditors to thinking."\textsuperscript{18}

In addressing an audience Page was "honest, energetic, confident almost to the point of dogmatism."\textsuperscript{19} In an editorial in 1907, Alexander Harvey wrote "Walter H. Page was himself when he addressed us last Monday, which is much to say that he was impressive, to the point and convincing."\textsuperscript{20}

The speaker whom Harvey considered impressive while simply being "himself" was likewise often described as impressive in appearance. In describing the North Carolinian, a reporter for the Boston Transcript observed that:

Sidney Smith's description of Daniel Webster, a 'steam-engine in trousers,' would not fit him ill. Above six feet tall, broad shoulders and big of limb, with a head rather round than long, the forehead somewhat blunt, chin broad and solid--almost massive--he is generously equipped for large undertakings.\textsuperscript{21}

Once complimented as "almost Lincoln-like in his rugged, honest face,"\textsuperscript{22} Page was not considered handsome because of his big nose.

When Page arrived in Great Britain many Americans were having their portraits painted by P. A. Laslo, who was reluctant to do the new ambassador. The reason eventually surfaced, it was "Page's nose . . .

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{19}Gregory, Walter Hines Page, pp. 10-11.

\textsuperscript{20}Unidentified newspaper article, December 9, 1907, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{21}Boston Transcript, April 20, 1902.

\textsuperscript{22}"New York and the World's Work," Page MSS.
He did not want to put that nose on canvas."23 Page, however, was able to refer to the most prominent feature of his face with good humor. In The Southerner, his autobiographical novel, he had a lovely girl tell Nicholas Worth that "Aunt Phoebe bequeathed to every one of you her big nose and her Methodist religion. You've got the nose."24

Observers described Page's voice in delivering a speech as "rich and eloquent,"25 and as the "voice of a southern man."26 In preparation for a series of lectures on "The Writer and the University" to be delivered at the University of Cincinnati, Page scribbled the following notation:

Now in the beginning I must ask you to pardon me for not reading these lectures, as academic habit is--Your pardon also for not speaking them as the habit of the world's
I am not enough of a university lecturer to conform to university methods--not enough of a worldling to do as worldlings do.
I shall therefore compromise between these two methods by both reading and speaking.27

As one might surmise from the University Weekly News' account of his address, the students noticed Page's conversational delivery. The reporter for the campus paper observed that after the lecture he had:


26"Annual Address Before the University," University of Tennessee Record, #17 (June 18, 1900), 25.

27Page notebook, Page MSS.
... heard one member of the audience express his views of the evening, by the paradox: 'I was disappointed and I was not disappointed.' This was answered: 'Perhaps you expected a learned address.' These words express the lecture exactly. Mr. Page did not speak as though he were talking to a faculty of learned professors. His talk was plain, very plain. Many things were, I thought, worthy to be kept in mind, especially by professors. 28

Perhaps one of the most interesting and complete pictures of Page as a man and a speaker was recorded by Edward Gillian of Charlotte, North Carolina. As a result of "a lot of carping dispraise and maudlin and fulsome laudation" he had expected to see "a spare, pale, anemic appearing sort of man, possibly a little effeminate," however:

The real Walter H. Page . . . was a disclosure, a revelation--an apocalypse. He struck at once a bold, clear note. There is a remarkable uplift about his tone. He is an ablebodied, sinewy man of great stamina and aplomb. His brilliant intellectuality is rooted in a most anthropoid virility.

He is a man of resolute, earnest and harnessed energy. His every gesture and accent suggests power--applied and reserved. He is not a mere phrase-monger or verbalist, whose specialty lies in smooth and sonorous periods. He is without rhetorical tricks or elocutionary mannerisms. He strikes higher words. He compels attention and sympathy by a persistent and sovereign character. You acknowledge a magnetism in which the elements are mixed and which compose all the attributes of manhood. 29

An overview of Page's ability as a speaker indicates that throughout his career he was a ready and able orator in a variety of situations. Page impressed audiences with his willingness to speak, his voice and appearance, and the earnestness with which he shared his

28 University Weekly News (Cincinnati), December 14, 1910.
Concept of Rhetoric

A reverence for the English language serves as the basis for Page's rhetorical philosophy. In a speech "The Making of Literature," delivered at the State Normal and Industrial School in Greensboro, March 10, 1899, he praised the English language declaring "we are the inheritors of the richest treasures that any man ever had." Page made no distinction between the spoken and written word choosing to consider "any book or speech that has worthy thought artistically expressed . . . literature." Elaborating on this belief he observed "anything said well enough about any subject of universal interest is literature." To select a subject worthy of the time and attention of a speaker and his audience, Page believed the orator should respond to the problems and aspirations of his audience. Speaking to the students at Chapel Hill, he advised them to show themselves "interested in those things in which the people are themselves interested." Page placed the greatest emphasis on content when evaluating an oration. One of the speakers in a collegiate oratorical contest judged by Page recalled the careful preparation of his own speech:


31 Page notebook, Page MSS.


33 Walter Hines Page, "Address at the Inauguration of President Winston," Page MSS.
"I ran my mind over successful speeches at other commencements. . . . I decided I wanted a Southern theme and the band to play 'Dixie' after I had finished. It was a safe subject and one sure to please my audience."34 Page was not pleased with the effort, and his opinion of the speech and the others was clear. The speeches "smelled too much of the past. . . . the themes chosen were worn and threadbare and there was no real oratory."35

Page himself "was no orator in the sense of weaving fine periods but he had a humorous ironical capacity for stating facts which were abashing to those in contest with him."36 His friend Charles Dabney, president of the universities of Tennessee and Cincinnati, recalled Page as "a ready and forceful speaker, clear, direct, and virile. His addresses showed earnest thinking and deep conviction."37 Page spoke bluntly about the South and her problems. As a result numerous southerners called him a "traitor," "yellow dog," and a "modern Judas" for "betraying publicly the shame and ignominy of the South, its poverty and backwardness."38 Despite this hostility he received frequent invitations to speak in his native section.

34Long, Son of Carolina, p. 112.
35Long, p. 131.
In presenting his ideas Page characteristically would carefully examine a problem and suggest one or several constructive alternatives. He never "pointed out a public evil without at the same time indicating the remedy." In this way his opponents acknowledged that while "his own views are not the best . . . he opens a channel (for testing thought) on the most interesting subjects." Page considered his approach to his opponent's position carefully, studying "public opinion with reference to the places for attack of the least resistance," and "observing that no matter what a man's purpose or intentions be, a mistake in gauging public opinion, or a mistake in tactics in attacking it, outweighs all good intentions."

Page's concept of style reflects his belief in the right use of language, whether written or spoken, as an art and as essential in a democracy. In 1900 he delivered "The Study of Literature in Its Making" to the students at the University of Tennessee. A report of that occasion recorded that "his words were naturally considered as coming from one who spoke with authority. His style was easy and eloquent." Page advocated a clear and simple style. He objected to "literary" speech and writing, and once urged C. Alphonso Smith to "teach by hard, long, continuous practice in idiomatic speech and writing." In her thesis dealing with Page as editor of the

40 News and Observer (Raleigh), November 11, 1893.
41 WHP to Edgar Murphy, April 15, 1900, Page MSS.
42 "Annual Address Before the University," 25.
43 WHP to C. Alphonso Smith, May 5, 1909, Page MSS.
Atlantic Monthly, Olive Minor concluded that the North Carolinian believed it possible to reach the people in a style "which, while clothed in dignity and even in good literary fashion, would still be coherent to them; but in which at the same time would not sacrifice qualities of the vital, the picturesque, or the human."44 As an editor he was insistent that his staff respect his attitude on word usage, "terseness, directness, simplicity:"

'I want the magazine intelligible,' Page would say, to the Kansas farmer's hired man's thirteen-year-old daughter.' He loved one or two syllabled Anglo-Saxon words: no piece of his own writing, his staff insisted, was complete that did not contain the words 'large,' 'task,' 'job,' 'forward.' There were almost only two words of classic derivation in which he indulged freely, and these were constantly on his lips and pen---'constructive,' and 'democracy.' Feeble, generic adjectives, that merely conveyed emphasis, he despised.45

He followed his own rules. Although well-educated and a Greek scholar at Johns Hopkins, he never flaunted his knowledge and rarely used a classical illusion.

One particular talent possessed by Page was his ability to recognize the strength of a well-turned phrase. Emma Page, Walter's sister, wrote that 'Wilson, as well as other contributors, frequently used Page's phraseology not only while he was an editor but later as well. For instance, the expression of 'war of democracy' was written by Page six months before the President used it.'46 Once Page spoke


up at a meeting of the Massachusetts Reform Club prior to the declaration of war with Spain. Opposing any peace resolutions and referring to the sinking of the "Maine," he "said in a voice and manner that carried all before him, 'Nations are influenced not by theories, but by events.' The effect of this axiomatic statement, with the power with which it was uttered, was tremendous."47

While Page said little about delivery it is evident that he was aware of its importance. In an address delivered at the presentation of diplomas at the Dwight School he indicated that cultivated people might be identified by the "graceful precision" with which they wrote and spoke. In a commencement address at Randolph-Macon Women's College he asked "Who are the stupid in every group? They who can neither speak or write with grace."49

Page had little use for traditional "orating," preferring instead a more conversational style. This observation seems borne out when considered in light of the account of Nicholas Worth's experience in the speech contest chronicled in The Southerner:

When emotions are at their tensest, as a man plunges onward into the making of a speech, every sense is quickened. He can see a hundred faces at once and recall his relations to each of these people. He can, at the same time, think over long past events connected in his mind with them. The orator, the young orator, surely, has two consciousnesses. One is fixed on his oration. The other runs along beside it, or makes excursions ahead of it, or wanders over the argument, or fixes itself on an important phase that is yet

47Daily Observer (Charlotte), March 8, 1903

48Walter Hines Page, "Presentation of Diplomas at the Dwight School," Page MSS.

49Walter Hines Page, "Commencement Address at Randolph-Macon's Women's College," Page MSS.
to come, or roams around the audience, or comes to his support if he lags and says, 'Rouse you now!' Poor is the man who has not felt this deep pulsation of high effort to win an audience.50

Here delivery is considered the natural product of sound preparation and the speaker's desire to communicate his message to his audience.

Page defined literature as "any book or any speech expressed 'with curious care.'"51 In his study of five epideictic speeches by Page, Louis Campbell found that each speech included an introduction, body, and conclusion of varying lengths,52 and the account of the impromptu effort before the New York City Reform Club reported that his address had a "beginning and a middle and an end, reaching a superb climax." Perhaps the most concise exposition of Page's views on the importance of organization is found in his analysis of Lincoln's Cooper Union address.

It is the closely-knit style of Lincoln--but mainly the architecture which made what he said simply irrefutable. It is doubtful whether he used a single argument that had not been many times heard before; . . . But he massed his facts artistically--convincingly--irrefutably. He fortified them with history . . .

He fortified it with earnestness, too. But the charm of the speech, its convincing quality and its permanent quality is sort of a prophetic tone that runs through it--which is really an imaginative quality. The language is severely plain--unrelieved in its earnestness and seriousness; but all through it and round about it is the play of a great political imagination. The speech has a plan--an artistic form--as artistic as the plan of a great cathedral or of a symphony; it has a background and an approach; it is massive, colossal in fact, but it has

50Page, The Southerner, pp. 73-4.
beautiful proportions.  

Page was well aware of the power of oratory. While he had little respect for the political acumen of William Jennings Bryan, he did not hesitate to cite the Nebraskan's "Cross of Gold" speech as an example of the ability of a speaker to move his audience:

Hardly a day passes in our democratic life but some marvelous effect of good writing or of good speaking may be observed. It would be hard to find in our whole political annals a better example of quickly and profoundly effective oratory than Mr. Bryan's passionate address to the National Democratic Convention. You may hold the opinion that it was a mere trick--no matter for my present purpose, it was at least an effective use of language. There sat the great mass of men--a flabby mass of excitable indecision; yet they were of American citizens of the same flesh and brain and emotions as the rest of us; and there arose a man who, by sheer force of words, artistically aimed and grouped and shared, swept them along to an instantaneous decision that they had not anticipated. The decision may have been wise or it may have been foolish. But it is surely foolish to talk about the passing away of all opportunities for effective oratory in the face of such an example as that.

Page's use of this example clearly reveals the fact that he laid great stress upon the importance of speech in a democracy. In "The Right Use of Speech in a Democracy," delivered before the National Education Association in Chicago, February 27, 1900, he approached his subject for a "workaday, universal point of view." He emphasized the necessity of the constructive use of speech in a democracy as the

54 Page, "The Right Use of Speech in a Democracy."
55 Ibid.
56 Page, "Commencement Address at Randolph-Macon's College."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
only means to guide it; and at the same time as the only basis of that
effective individual culture which is the safeguard of democracy."

The starting point is that the people must grasp, at least
the dominant part of the people, every individual for him-
self, the primary fact that the use of language is an art.
Without this we cannot budge an inch toward a cultivated
democracy. It is not a question of mere accomplishment;
it is a fundamental question of sound existence. The
effectiveness of right speech, the ineffectiveness of bad
speech; and even the immorality of bad speech in a democ-
rapy--this the very cornerstone of popular education. This,
then, gentlemen is yet as I analyze our life and work, the
supreme need in our democracy; and till this lack is sup-
plied the complete triumph and highest vindication of
democracy must wait. Whenever we can have running through
the whole mass of popular culture the instinctive feeling
that language is a sacred thing, and that for his use of
it every human being will be held accountable by society--
then we shall reach a higher level of true civilization
than any other people in history has reached.

In developing this concept Page was not, as he declared before
the National Education Association, "a philologian," but a pragmatist.
He admitted that he had "confidence only in a general movement for the
betterment of our speech, . . . nevertheless, that the direct teaching
of a more effective use of it is practicable." At Randolph-Macon's
Women's College he reaffirmed his belief in public address in a democ-
rapy. He is reported to have said, "There is only one aristocracy that
can last and that is an aristocracy based on speech. With the power
of speech every social barrier can be overcome and it can overcome
power, wealth and blood."56

Page looked upon rhetoric as a pragmatist. He considered it
vital for every citizen to realize the importance of the spoken and
written word. As such, he stressed the essential role of the right

56Page, "Commencement Address at Randolph-Macon's College."
use of speech in maintaining and improving the American democracy.

Summary

The speech training of Walter Hines Page was limited to the encouragement he received to appreciate the best in English literature, the study of Greek and Latin models and his participation in debating societies and oratorical contests. Recognized as a capable speaker, Page was often invited to address audiences across the country, was successful as a lecturer, and showed great ability in impromptu situations. The basis for his concept of rhetoric, in which he made no distinction between the written or spoken word, was a reverence for the English language. Cognizant of the power of oratory, he urged the speaker to look to the future and respond to the needs of his audience, employ a plain, intelligible style, a conversational manner of delivery, and thoughtful organization.
CHAPTER III
PAGE AND THE NEW SOUTH

New South advocates envisioned a return to a position of prosperity and influence for their section, but often differed in their perception of the direction or emphasis to follow in achieving the goal. The focus in Chapter III is placed upon comprehending Page's image of the New South.

This chapter is divided into four sections. Section one provides an overview of Page's vision of the New South. Section two discusses the role of education as key to the New South. Sections three and four consider the resulting social and economic progress for which he hoped. Examination of Page's concept of the New South reveals the basis for the premises he utilized in his speeches in support of southern educational reform.

The New South

One of the striking contradictions found in the oratory and attitudes of New South advocates was their allegiance to the Old South. "To compound the irony," most of these men "accepted the mythic view of the past, rarely failing to preface a New South pronouncement with warm praise and nostalgic sighs for the golden age that had passed."1

C. Vann Woodward reasoned that "such strained rationalizations did not embarrass the oratory of Henry Grady, of the young Woodrow

Wilson or even of Walter Hines Page, all of whom paid reverent homage to ancestral shrines."² In advancing this assertion, Woodward makes strange bedfellows of Grady and Page. The disparity between these two famous southern journalists arises from the difference in their perception of the Old South. Grady's speeches in North and South recall with reverence his father's death in the war, the gallantry of the Confederate soldier, and the "close and cordial" relationship with the faithful darkey who followed his master to the battlefield and protected the mistress at home. Page recognized the limitations of the old order of the South and continually sought "to shatter the false illusions that gathered about his native section."⁴ In his private papers he described the workings of the southern mind and labeled its product the creation of a mythology.

The popular notion of life 'before the war' is strangely erroneous. There were no poor people of good families then! Ancestral portraits, broad plantations and private coachmen were the property of all! The truth is, however, that not a few of the great families of the old aristocracy were rich only in slaves and not a few of them paid the expenses of keeping a number of slaves always property that was readily convertible into cash. This fact and other facts about the old life have been forgotten in the popular notion and the ante-bellum aristocracy is now regarded as ten fold more aristocratic than it really was. The myth has magnified its subject.⁵


⁵Page notebook, Page MSS.
In "A Study of an Old Southern Borough" Page described the stagnation of a once energetic community which chose to live in the past. As he was wont to do, he analyzed the problem and then offered a solution:

The new South cannot build up its possible civilization merely by looking backward and sighing, nor yet by simply pressing blindly forward in new paths that are now open. With a reverential respect for the past, which unhappily certain communities are too rapidly losing, and by a vigorous work for the future, which many more communities neglect, it has through poverty a chance for greatness that is almost unparalleled in history. The growth of a civilization is always slow. But with a proper fusion of old and new, greatness can here be achieved.

Although "never bitter against the ideals of the Old South," Page plunged ahead in his efforts to urge southerners to cease looking backward and to channel their creative powers toward the future.

The influence of Page's family in fostering such an attitude is significant, and one is wise to follow Page's advice that "if you wish to get the key to my story . . . it begins with a grandfather." His grandfather Anderson Page was born in 1790, grew up and did his "formative thinking in the period of Washington, Jefferson, John Marshall, and Henry Clay." "In Anderson's mind, the events from 1830 to 1865 were merely a bad dream--the perversion of a great Southern

ideal; true Southern progress consisted in setting back the clock and reestablishing the principles that ruled it in his youth and manhood. The "little grandfather" felt no bitterness toward the North following the war and admonished Walter to "serve (his) country," meaning the entire country. This gentleman symbolized the true values of the Old South to Page.

Walter's father Frank Page was also a "union man." Prior to the war his home was an "open forum, in which anti-slavery sentiment and loyalty to the Federal government were the watchwords. These discussions became the earliest of Page's memories." Frank Page declined to serve in the army but offered his lumber mill in service to the Confederacy. Young "Wat" had to have been aware of the nature and magnitude of his father's decision for following the war, as a schoolboy, he was held accountable for it. As he recalled, "my father was a Methodist--that was bad enough; but he had no military rank at all. If it had become known among the boys that he had been a 'Union' man--I used to shudder at the suspicion in which I should be held."

Page was ten years old when the last Confederate army surrendered near Durham, North Carolina, fifteen miles from his home. His memory of the war years was limited to discussions about the mysterious

---

10 Hendrick, p. 30.
11 Hendrick, p. 34.
12 Hendrick, p. 10.
"front" with his black companion Sam, of soldiers drilling at the state capital, of neighbors sending cakes and cookies to their boys on the battlefield, of sad gatherings at the depot to meet the train when one was carried home, of endless lines of Yankees in pursuit of Joe Wheeler's cavalry, and of the officers who commandeered the Page home.14

As a Southerner who grew to manhood during Reconstruction Page was aware that the war was the "experience by which all other experiences could be evaluated,"15 and referred to the encampments of the United Confederate Veterans as illustrating the fact that "the minds of most Southern soldiers had been stopped by the war as a clock is stopped by an earthquake."16 While he "opposed the confederate mind . . . he understood it, and that means he knew the process by which it had come to be."17 Although he disagreed with the principles for which the Confederates had fought, he admired their courage and thought the poetry of Henry Timrod portrayed "their spirit in wartime more truly than elaborate histories . . . and all the songs the war inspired."18 However, he believed that real progress could only be made when the people would come to regard "the four dreadful years of

15Weaver, The Southern Tradition at Bay, p. 369.
16Weaver, p. 350.
17Weaver, p. 372.
the Civil War as a closed chapter of an unhappy and mistaken history and in hastening the day when the South should resume its place as a living part of the great American democracy."19

As a speaker and "through his own articles in the Atlantic Monthly and the World's Work and through the contributions he inspired from others, Page conducted a strenuous and brilliant agitation for the liberal cause."20 An additional channel through which he hoped to communicate was his books The Southerner and The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths.

From his interpretation of Jefferson, Page developed "his conception of the American experiment and especially the part played in it by the Southern states."21 In The Southerner: An Autobiography of Nicholas Worth, with its futile attempt at anonymity by the author, he sought to demonstrate "the continuity of history, with the war as a mere interlude, a nightmare--and the linking of the present and of the future to the antebellum past."22 The novel is frank in telling the story of Worth and his attempts to convince the people of the benefits of good public schools and the proper training of all men and women, black and white. Page was frustrated by the thought that too few Southerners would read his novel and understand what he had hoped to accomplish. If read, he was certain the book would be a good dose of

22WHP to Robert Ogden, June 26, 1910, Page MSS.
of medicine for "any hookwormed mind."23

Virginius Dabney applauded The Southerner as a "contribution to the development of liberal thinking below Mason and Dixon's line."24

Richard Weaver considered the volume "a complete course in the sociology of the South."25

Donald Davidson, however, labeled the work a "propaganda novel" in which the author tried to show the backwardness of the South in cruel contrast to the North.26 In his thesis directed by Davidson, George Boswell made the understatement that The Southerner brought "considerable justifiable denunciation upon its author,"27 and one southern reviewer wrote that "while the author claims it is a novel it is really an indictment of a whole people."28

The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths provided the more direct comment on the New South. Composed of an essay entitled "The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths" and the texts of two speeches "The Forgotten Man" and "The School That Built a Town," the work was published at the author's expense "to give away to anybody who will read it."29

23 Ibid.


29 WHP to Wallace Buttrick, April 11, 1902, Page MSS.
The theme of the volume is Page's confidence in industry and education to bring about a new order. Robert Ogden, impressed with the book, ordered fifty copies to be sent to friends. He praised Page for his "wide-reaching power and usefulness in the Southern Education cause," and for "furnishing a large proportion of the brain power for the campaign."\textsuperscript{30} Richard Weaver judged \textit{The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths} "a piece of crusading journalism . . . almost beyond praise."\textsuperscript{31}

Critical response to \textit{The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths} in the South was generally positive. The Baltimore \textit{Sun} likened the book to nasty medicine "taken under compulsion for our health's sake," but declared itself to be in accord with the theses of the author.\textsuperscript{32} The Charlotte \textit{Daily Observer} printed that few would deny that the work was "characterized by a love for our people with the one purpose to aid us in the upbuilding of the South."\textsuperscript{33} The Raleigh \textit{ Chronicle} simply declared that "Beyond question he (Page) is right."\textsuperscript{34}

Southern criticism of these two books is indicative of the general criticism of Page as a liberal. In his effort to help the South enter a new age Page startled and offended many. As Walter Savage observed, "Any criticism, even any factual derogation of those enshrined concepts came to be regarded as blasphemy. Even such gentle and constructive critics as Walter Hines Page, despite his obvious

\textsuperscript{30}Robert Ogden to WHP, May 7, 1902, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{31}Weaver, \textit{The Southern Tradition at Bay}, p. 370.

\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Baltimore Sun}, August 21, 1902.

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Daily Observer} (Charlotte), March 8, 1903.

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{State Chronicle} (Raleigh), nd., Page MSS.
life-long devotion to his native section, were widely regarded as blasphemers and apostates and all but driven from the field."

Page held a sincere pride in his southern heritage. While making no claims of superiority for the people, he believed southerners were unique among their countrymen. Speaking before the Southern Club at Harvard University, Page "said that one notable characteristic of the Southern man was his store of strength." Praising the Southerner's pride in his home state which "being now forever made harmless against the Union," as "a fine old virtue," the North Carolinian lauded his patriotic heritage as an American. Considering the "time of Washington, of Jefferson, of Marshall" and their southern contemporaries as the age best representing the values of the Old South, he insisted the southern people had not lost their "ambition for these States . . . as part of the Union." Prophesying that a time was coming when "new problems" that "no government has met yet" would press upon "our national life," he insisted that the leadership of the "men of the South" was needed.

Page adhered to the opinion that the South should be left to solve its own problems and bristled when outsiders announced their considered solutions to the race problem. Likewise he believed that progress was being made where the "fanatical educational missionaries


37Unidentified newspaper article, May 5, 1883, Page MSS.

from the North had failed because Southern educators understood "the problem better than anyone else."39

Page urged Southerners to draw upon the best virtues of their heritage to meet the challenge of each day in building the New South.

Education and the New South

In his philosophy of education and ultimate perception of the New South Page was essentially Jeffersonian. From his reading and contemplation of Randall's Life of Jefferson (Derby and Jackson, 1858) he embraced Jefferson's belief in the dignity of the individual. As he interpreted it, "The whole purpose of Jefferson's career and teachings . . . was to free the average man and woman from the trammels the centuries had laid upon them."40 To achieve this goal Jefferson stressed the necessity of public education, and the preamble of his proposed education of the children of the 'greater number' too indigent to so educate themselves."41 Page regarded the failure of the South to adopt these ideals "as one of the most disastrous apostasies of history."42

Education in the antebellum South reflected an aristocratic conceptualization which carried over into the years following the war. "The dominant idea of education was that it was a luxury for the rich, or a privilege of the well-born--if a necessity at all, a necessity


40 Hendrick, The Training of an American, p. 113.


42 Page notebook, Page MSS.
only for the ruling class."

Implied was the notion that "it is of no use to train any but those who are likely to be leaders." Educational opportunities for the masses were thus limited and considered a burden by those who believed "God made some men useful and that He made others worthless and that we can't do much to change the Almighty's handiwork." This elitist concept of education reinforced the class structure of the society. The common man accepted the idea that education was not meant for him or his children. Such acquiescence lead to an indifference which perpetuated ignorance. Page considered this tragic for "the ignorance of one generation causes a more stolid ignorance in the next; and when improper methods acquire an hereditary sanction, a change means a revolution." many southern universities personified the aristocratic concept of education. "These schools were often institutions of a so purely social character that gentlemen usually selected that school for his son which seemed to afford the most aristocratic associations." The University of Virginia represented the epitome of this philosophy. When Edward Alderman agreed to become president of the University he asked Page to deliver an address at his inauguration. Injured in a streetcar accident, Page was unable to be present at the ceremonies in Charlottesville. Perhaps this was fortunate for Alderman, for the

43 Walter Hines Page, "The Forgotten Man," Page MSS.
44 Walter Hines Page, "Democratic Education for the Masses," Page MSS.
45 Walter Hines Page, "The Man Behind the Plow," Page MSS.
46 Page, "The Southern Educational Problem," 309.
North Carolinian brutally appraised the University's failure to carry out the "great plan laid down by Jefferson when he founded it." State funding of the institution was inadequate, and Page noted that "there was many a little one-horse college in the West that has a larger endowment and a more liberal equipment." He concluded that "while good academic work has always been done, and in some departments unusually good academic work, the result has been chaotic rather than concentrated. Measured by any proper standard, the University is not really the great school that Southern people think that it is." He also discouraged attempts to evaluate the University of Virginia by listing the accomplishments of its graduates. The school had failed to produce any scholars of significant merit, and "the alumni are naturally among the most distinguished men in all the Southern States. But many of them would have been distinguished if they had never seen the University, for they are the picked men of the Southern families."

Despite its failure to achieve the academic excellence that Jefferson had envisioned, Page stressed the University's powerful influence on southern life. He offered no praise for the school's achievements in this capacity, labeling the University "the most startling anachronism ever in Southern life . . . it produces a state of mind: it has much to do, to put it plainly, with the stagnation of Southern intellectual life."

48 Walter Hines Page, "Address at the Inauguration of President Alderman," Page MSS.
Page was equally displeased with ecclesiastical efforts to promote education. North Carolina Baptists, for example, never opposed the concept of universal education, but "in their efforts to make the schoolhouse identical with the church-house, they opposed public schools in favor of the voluntary principle in education."49 Although he acknowledged their contribution and their place in society, Page argued that such schools were still "class institutions" designed to serve the particular sect and failed to make a significant impact upon the people.

Page was critical of the church's propensity for narrow theological and denominational arguments and the resultant lack of both social concern and academic freedom. He was disappointed in the church, which, like other institutions, preferred to "accept tradition and to repeat respected formulas."50 Expressing his dismay in a letter to Robert Ogden, he wrote: "I doubt if there has been a week in twenty years but some Southern man has told me or written to me of his suffocation--his longing for fresh air; and their troubles have come oftener from church parties than political parties."51 In his private papers he noted:


50Page, The Southerner, p. 17.

51WHP to Robert Ogden, December 17, 1903, Page MSS.
The churches are become the reservoirs of a narrow generation that suppresses the sunny cheerfulness of a light-hearted people and sets a limit to their development. There is a member of the faculty of a State University in one of the Southern States who keeps such (an) . . . intellectual tonic as Matthew Arnold under lock and key lest he be accused of intellectual debauchery that would discredit him with the ecclesiastical influence—which has something to do with his tenure.52

As a key figure on the Southern Education Board, Page insisted that Board members should not have strong ties to any religious organization or political party. His sentiments along this line were expressed in his objection to the election to the Board the president of a Methodist university:

(Edgar Gardner) Murphy, I am sorry to say, calls this view 'the first case of religious intolerance that has shown itself in our Board.' But it has (as I see it) nothing to do with religion, nor with tolerance. I am talking about parties in the South--the Democratic party, the Republican party, the Methodist party, the Daughters-of-the-Confederacy party, the Baptist party, etc. Nor am I talking about tolerance, except that they will not tolerate us if we put our heads in their official noose. Some bishop will someday pull the rope—sure. They have taken bread out of men's children's mouths for opinion's sake: and I, for one, am unwilling to put the Board in their power.53

With reference to Baptists in particular, he continued to support his position by pointing out:

No negro is welcome in one of their white churches. Now this is a religion that cannot stand up before God and man. Hence these church parties are (in necessary defense of their position) hesitant and apologetic even when not hostile in dealing with the negro and negro education.54

52Page notebook, Page MSS.

53WHP to Robert Ogden, December 11, 1903, Page MSS.

54Ibid.
The Boston Transcript observed that Page's "regard for religion is genuine and respectful, but it is imperfect in its sympathy." Not surprisingly, he incurred the wrath of many clergymen. Page was philosophical in his response. He ignored their remarks choosing to "live and work for things nobler than the poor mission of any sect" with "a patient pity for they that think they serve God by abusing their fellow man."56

Page saw inherent in a democracy the opportunity for each individual to develop and enjoy the fruits of his own ability. As such, he said, "to talk about education in a democratic country as meaning anything else than free public education for every child, is a mockery."57 "You may train at the top to the very highest point you can, but training must go on also from the bottom; and, so long as any human being is left out of the scheme of perfect training, all will suffer some loss. You cannot know that the one left out might not be the greatest leader you have ever had."58 Page reasoned further that if the democratic principle was successful when applied to the formation of the government, westward expansion, and industry, it should be extended to other areas of American society, particularly the right training of men.

55Boston Transcript, April 20, 1902.
57Walter Hines Page, "The School That Built a Town" Page MSS.
58Walter Hines Page, "Dedication of the Trinity College Library," Page MSS.
As did other New South spokesmen, Page lauded the natural resources of his section. Yet he declared the South's most valuable resource was its man-power. States in other sections generated greater profit from less attractive land for no other reason than the efficient training of their people. He concluded the wealth of a society in the end was not determined by its land but by its men, "a better thing than the bounty of Nature itself."  

The right training of all people, Page stressed, "would come pretty near to ending all our troubles--to removing our difficulties, economic, political and ethnological."  

Public education would not be considered a burden by people who come to realize "all wealth is the creation of man, and he creates it only in proportion to the trained uses of the community; and, the more men we train, the more wealth everyone may create."  

A society committed to this ideal, Page believed, would bring the greatest happiness and welfare to the people.  

Social Progress in the New South  

George Winston, who served as president at the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina State A&M College, observed that Page's "belief in the possibilities of human achievement, the steady elevation of the human soul and its final perfection, is deeply rooted

59Page, "The School That Built a Town,"

60Walter Hines Page, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South."

61Page, "The School That Built a Town,"
in his whole nature." Charles Dabney noted that Page understood the American democracy to be "that order in which every man everywhere, of every race or land, rich or poor, black or white, was to have an opportunity to make the most of himself; and the great interest of his life was to give all men a chance to complete their lives." Although endorsing the principle that each man should have equal opportunity to discover and develop his own aptitudes, Page believed all men were not equal in ability. Public education, as Jefferson had reasoned, could achieve the greatest good by culling the natural aristocracy of talent from the people and educating the "many in a fashion adapted 'to their condition." Page referred to this concept as "right training," with primary emphasis on the industrial and agricultural training of the common man. He viewed this as a practical approach designed to help the great majority who were incapable of profiting from higher education.

Page's attitude toward the negro seems inconsistent with his belief in providing all men with equal opportunities to develop their talents. As a person who grew up among the sons and daughters of former slaves, he considered negroes limited in both physical and intellectual skills. Thus opportunities for black men and women need not exceed their limited aptitudes.

62George T. Winston to J. L. Jones, March 5, 1881, Page MSS.
As a Southerner, Page understood the attitudes on race held by the white population, and their fear of a return of negro domination similar to the Reconstruction period. He labeled this fear a "ghost" impeding southern progress. In The Southerner he defined a negro as follows:

A person of African blood (much or little) about whom men of English descent tell only half the truth and because of whom they do not act with frankness and sanity either toward the Negro or to one another—in a word, about whom they easily lose their common sense, their usual good judgement, and even their powers of accurate observation. The Negro-in-America, therefore, is a form of insanity that overtakes white men.65

Although Page declared that "every man who has the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship is equal to every other man," he never assumed or advocated that the races would ever be social equals. He expressed this opinion in a speech by Nicholas Worth to a group of negroes:

I tell you these truths, then. The white man is not going to have what is called 'social equality' with the Negro. The white man is not going to eat with the Negro; the white man is not going to invite the Negro into his parlor; the white man is not going to marry the Negro woman. The two races must live socially apart, yet side by side, and they must work together.66

The pathos of the negro's fixed role in southern life was illustrated for Page at a social affair in New Orleans. He reported:

We had ice cream etc etc—this is the least satisfying evening of all. But there was one amusing incident—a poem by Paul Dunbar, the nigger you know, had been set

65Page, The Southerner, p. 104.

to music by another nigger—a New Orleans composer—and this song was the hit of the evening—in a company of people who declare that the negro has no capacity.

You know, it has all come over me that we are dealing with a case of caste, pure and simple—67

Page's insight concerning the negro in New Orleans is remarkable considering his background, the pervasive nature of which probably prohibited him from extending the logical implications of "caste" and ability. The Page family had owned a few slaves and usually referred to black men and women as "niggers." When editor of the Atlantic Monthly Page shocked Wendell Phillips Garrison by announcing, "one of your niggers is waiting outside," whereupon Garrison rebuked him saying, 'Mr. Page, I very regret that you should insist on spelling 'Negro' with two g's.'68 Writing optimistically from her hospital bed Page's sister Emma assured everyone, "I have a real nigger-like propensity for getting 'rored up' quick."69 In notifying his brother that all was in readiness for a three week camping trip in the mountains of western North Carolina Henry Page wrote, "I have four mules, two covered wagons and a hotel nigger cook."70 On that trip Henry entertained with his reading of Uncle Remus stories, and they all sang "nigger songs" around the campfire.71

While he did not foresee social equality between the races, Page was opposed to a "color line"72 in industry and objected to discrimina-

67WHP to Alice Page, March 2, 1899, Page MSS.


69Emma Page to WHP, June 26, 1906, Page MSS.

70Henry Page to WHP, June 13, 1901, Page MSS.

71WHP to Alice Page, September 18, 1901, Page MSS.

72Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
tion in restaurants, hotels, and public transportation. He "chided Alderman and McIver for refusing to have lunch with Booker T. Washington and another negro," he said, and he was always amused when he recalled how he astonished a colored man who was helping him move into a house by inviting him to dine at the same table. Mrs. Page was apparently not present at the time, for she never invited negroes into their home.

Page did not hesitate to say that he regarded the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment "as a grave mistake, I consider it a much graver mistake to repeal it now, even if it were possible to repeal it." Like his associates Edgar Gardner Murphy, Albert Shaw, and Robert Ogden, he opposed negro enfranchisement until blacks were literate and had acquired higher moral and cultural standards. He questioned the assumption of many Northerners "that a rudimentary education would at once lift the negro from a semi-barbarous state into intelligent citizenship," believing instead that "a generation or two of freedom is necessary for him to learn that practical management of affairs which will make him prudent." Page thought "Southern States where the franchise had been taken away from the negro . . . were justified in limiting the franchise along property and education

74 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
75 WHP to Edgar Gardner Murphy, April 15, 1900, Page MSS.
77 Page, "The Southern Educational Problem," 315.
lines, but said the line should not be drawn where it would strike one race and not the other."78 He hoped with the threat of negro domination eliminated that "the whites would ultimately be divided and vote and think as they should."79 In 1899 he discussed the idea with two Mississippians, a white lawyer and a negro. These men agreed that legal disenfranchisement was good insofar as "it removed the necessity of intimidation and counting out."80

With respect to education, Page concluded the question in the South was no longer whether negroes should be educated, but how? He believed that the negro could be educated, "but fitted as he is mainly for manual labor, he will rarely need or desire higher training than can be got in the most elementary public schools."81 Following a visit to Atlanta, he observed that there was a great demand for white servants and workers because of the general dissatisfaction with "the slovenly and untrustworthy ways of negroes."82 He reasoned the improved training of the negro would result in economic benefit to both blacks and white and hoped an ease in racial tension would naturally follow.

78Sunday Herald (Boston), March 15, 1903.
80WHP to Alice Page, February 26, 1899, Page MSS.
81Page, "The Southern Educational Problem," 315.
82WHP to Alice Page, February 2, 1907, Page MSS.
In speaking of the negro's education, Page tried "not to antagonize influential Southerners." The ultimate goal of generating a welcome climate for educational progress in the South was too great to jeopardize by tying it too closely with the negro. His approach paralleled that of his friend Charles D. McIver who wrote: "We want to develop the educational sentiment of the piedmont and western section of North Carolina, and we would like to do it without the negro prejudice being thrown into the argument at the same time."

Page placed his confidence in the ability of the "statesmen-schoolmasters of the South" to build up the character and tap the potential of the "inefficient and ignorant." One of the most prominent of these men was Booker T. Washington. Page championed his efforts at Tuskegee and persuaded the black educator to write his autobiography _Up From Slavery_ for Doubleday, Page & Company. Washington appealed to Page as a man who not only could think but also had the ability and courage to put his thoughts into action. Page observed that while some men "would prance and caper and construct a system of economic and social philosophy . . . He (Washington) simply goes on working it out."

---


On his southern tour of 1899 Page visited Tuskegee Institute and recorded his impressions in a letter to his wife:

(Washington) held resolutely that the race has not yet reached a place where the usual kind of education was the thing that he needed or could profit by, 'The whole business went on for fifteen or twenty years on a radically wrong basis--miseducating the negro for the life that awaited him as soon as he left school. He caught the usual white man's error--that an educated man ought not to work, certainly not with his hands. This misconception has been bad enough for the white man; but when the negro once got it into his head, it worked havoc with him indeed.'

Washington, therefore, went to work to train both his brains and his hands and (to a great degree) his brains through his hands.

The result is you have a carpenter, a tailor, a brickmason, etc. who is (to a degree) an educated man.87

Page never minimized the significant role of the black man in redeveloping the South. He declared, "I have no sentimental stuff in me about the Negro, but I have a lot of economic stuff in me about the necessity of training him."88 Adamant in his belief that the right training of the negro would benefit the South in both an economic and social sense, he insisted well-trained white and black men would have little difficulty in getting along, but "one untrained worthless white man or one untrained worthless negro may cause trouble throughout a whole country."89

However, Page realized it was necessary first to educate the "sorry white man":

87WHP to Alice Page, March 7, 1899, Page MSS.
88WHP to Wickliffe Rose, February 24, 1910, Page MSS.
89Page, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South."
he is the fellow for whom Southern civilization sacrifices itself. He must be protected against the Negro--hence race-friction and the caste feeling . . . the whole civilization takes its cue from him and his habits. He insists that he shall not be disenfranchised because he is a white man; hence he is at once the worst and most persistent product of slavery--the sorry Southern White man. The nonsense of the negro prevents him from being frankly put at the bottom as he is put elsewhere.90

At the Fourth Annual Conference for Education in the South at Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Page answered a reporter who asked if there was not a "nigger in the woodpile:"

You will find when the woodpile is turned over not a 'nigger,' but an uneducated white boy. He is the fellow we are after. We want to train both the white boy and the black boy, but we must train the white boy first, because we cannot do anything for the Negro boy until his white friend is convinced of his responsibility to him.91

In 1899 Page set out on a fact-finding tour of the southern states in order to gain a fresh insight on the negro. His experiences on the trip evoked the realization "that there is no other problem so important for these eight States or more, and it impressed me afresh with . . . the sadness of it all."92

As a North Carolinian, Page adhered to the argument that Southerners should be left to solve their own affairs. In reference to the race problem he said "one thing is certain . . . the men who undertake to solve it from a distance or by theories must fail."93 In his private notes he developed this idea:

90 WHP to Alice Page, March 2, 1899, Page MSS.
91 The State (Columbia, South Carolina), April 24, 1903.
92 WHP to Alice Page, February 15, 1899, Page MSS.
93 Boston Post, April 29, 1898.
There is one problem in our government that is peculiarly our own. To it, history has no exact parallel--I mean the question of black and white. What will be the final result of it. An English prelate and historical student has said miscegenation! An Ohio gentleman has said miscegenation! Miscegenation indeed! What do they know about it? We ourselves are bound to solve that.94

Page took a pragmatic approach to the race question in the South. He shared the opinion held by most Southerners that education should be segregated, and that the white boy should be educated first. Despite his belief that right training would benefit the negro both morally and economically, he did not anticipate rapid change in their status. In 1899, he gloomily labeled the negro in the South a "goner" who "might forever remain only a dead weight,"95 and eight years later his outlook had not changed.

They will not train him fast enough, and no longer tolerate him untrained. He will disappear faster and faster. I don't know where he'll go; but he will never be given a fair chance and he'll get the worst of the economic pressure.96

Economic Progress and the New South

Edward Mims considered the keynote of The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths to be Page's trust that "industry and education . . . would bring about a new order."97 However, Edd Winfield Parks criticized Page declaring "he measured progress with the yardstick of industrialism: more money, more factories, bigger business, constant activity,"98 and Donald Davidson lambasted his enthusiasm for "the

94Page notebook, Page MSS.
95WHP to Alice Page, March 2, 1899, Page MSS.
96WHP to Alice Page, February 10, 1907, Page MSS.
97Mims, The Advancing South, p. 46.
98Parks, Segments of Southern Thought, p. 277.
importation of industrialism." Yet examination of the North Carolinian's speeches indicates that Page emphasized the necessity of building up country life to balance the influence of industrialism. While industrial growth was vital and inevitable to the return of Southern prominence in the affairs of the nation, he argued that it was imperative to maintain the strength and values of an agrarian society.

Page reminded a North Carolina audience that "our people are country people. We have no great cities yet and are not likely to have the great evils of great cities for many a year to come. In this, also, God is very good to us." While speaking at Tuskegee Institute he told the students, "Civilization is nearer the soil here than in some parts of the country, so that it is pre-eminently important that a large number of you, at least, fit yourselves to be good farmers." Page often referred to the love of their homeland as inherent in every Southerner:

We love the land that we were born to--literally the land--this ground, the soil, the earth. Our fathers were land-hungry and land-loving, and our impulses answer to their habits. Those of us that do not till the earth still keep a love of it. Even those of us whose trades have buried us in great cities feel exiled if we do not come at short intervals and touch the soil. The call of the earth compels us. This is always our old home. And the odors of a Southern springtime stir deep emotions in us.


100 Walter Hines Page, "Message to the Country Man," Page MSS.

101 The Student (Tuskegee Institute), March 9, 1899.

102 Page, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South."
In answering his own question of "what is a North Carolinian?," he said, "The one stable thing—the one lasting thing that we know in all God's universe is the soil that we stand on. That is North Carolina."

The land is great, Page concluded, and men must be worthy of the land. In the "Cross of Gold" speech William Jennings Bryan declared, "Burn down your cities and leave out farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow up on the streets of every city in the country." In similar fashion, Page gave voice to the agrarian myth, proclaiming that "cities and all else, civilization itself, depend in the last analysis, on the quality of the man who cultivates the land he owns himself." On other occasions he argued that "the character and vision of American life will come from the soil," and that "the great men of all ages, from Abraham to Thomas Jefferson, have stood directly on the soil."

Page was disturbed by the number of men who had chosen to leave the farms and move to the cities because factory work was more profitable. One result of this rush to the cities was the notion of the farmer as "a left-over man, a man who could not succeed at some-

103Page, "The Man Behind the Plow."


105Walter Hines Page, "Country Life," Page MSS.

106Walter Hines Page, "Summary by the Chairman" (General Education Board MSS, Rockefeller Archive Center).

107Page, "The Man Behind the Plow."
thing else."108 He wished to make farming more profitable, thus keeping good men on the land and encouraging others to join them. An equilibrium or balance of power between the farm community and the city, he observed, was "not only the most important thing that men now living can do, but it is the most interesting thing."109

Page advised educating the farmer as the first step in getting and keeping good men on the land. Through the government's farm demonstration program, the universities, public schools, and various community organizations, he believed that the farmer could be taught the use of modern machinery and farming methods, and that he had to know how to get better crop yields.

The second step in aiding the farm industry, Page believed, was to provide the farmer with as ready an access to capital as that of his counterpart in the city. However, he did not wish just to give a farmer money, "for he would not use it wisely."110 Therefore, he endorsed the concept of a credit society for farm communities where:

Every member of a local society binds himself for all the debts of all the other members to the society. There is unlimited liability. Every society is strictly local so that every member will and must know every other member and can have a friendly and neighborly knowledge of his methods of doing business; and it is directly to the interest of every member to help every other member to make his loan profitable.111

108 Ibid.
109 Page, "Message to the Country Man."
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid.
Such a society would provide a constant source of capital and teach the farmer sound financial management as well. The end result would be more prosperous rural life. The nation as a whole would benefit, and a balance in borrowing power would be established between the agricultural and urban communities.

Page lived in New York and Boston at a time when the United States was just discovering its muscles as a leader in world commerce. He saw industrial growth as vital to the southern states if they wanted to share in the economic and political leadership of the country. Remaining true to his agrarian heritage, he defended the place of the farmer in society. Speaking in Raleigh, he claimed there was "no field of work which offers a greater reward in human progress than agriculture as it is today."112 Echoing the poet Sidney Lanier, Page believed the difference between poverty and prosperity in the South lay "not in the soil," but "in the man."113

That Page was concerned and knowledgeable about the rural affairs of the South and the nation is evidenced by the speculation that he would be named Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of Agriculture. In a letter to Wilson urging the appointment, James Y. Joyner wrote that Page could "establish the closest relation with the schools for the educational side of this agricultural work," and that he "already has, through his writings and speeches, the ear and confidence of the nation on agricultural problems and country life."114

112Page, "The Man Behind the Plow."
113Ibid.
114Letter, James Y. Joyner to Woodrow Wilson, December 12, 1912, Page MSS.
Page did not view industrial and agricultural progress as mutually exclusive. The South was an agrarian society, and his hope was for more and better farmers as well as increased industrialism.

Summary

Walter Hines Page is recognized as a prominent spokesman of the New South. Although criticized by many in his native section for his Yankee ideas, he was a devoted Southerner. He respected the past and wanted to retain and develop what he considered the true character of the South. The catalyst for his concept of the New South was education, and he was convinced that equal educational opportunities for all people in the South would guarantee social and economic progress.

A North Carolinian influenced by his reading of Jefferson, his education, travel and work across the country, Page could look at the South with intimacy and objectivity. Contrary to the assertion of C. Vann Woodward, Page did not pay "reverent homage to ancestral shrines" in his speeches, but developed a rhetorical strategy by which he could promote his concept of a New South. Avoiding a direct confrontation with the power of the mythic Old South, in his ceremonial addresses on southern education he reasoned from premises on which he and his audiences were in harmony. This chapter has identified the basis for these premises:
I. Southerners are the heirs of a proud heritage, for
   A. Southerners are a capable people, and
   B. The Southern people are a patriotic people.

II. The principles of democracy also apply to education, for
   A. Each individual has the right to an education, and
   B. All men have the right to discover and develop
      their talents.

III. The white and black races are not social equals, for
   A. The races can live together when society is committed
      to the right training of all men, but
   B. The white man should be educated first, and
   C. The negro is best suited for manual training.

IV. The greatest economic progress occurs when a society is
    committed to the right training of all men, for
    A. A properly trained work force encourages industrial
       and agricultural growth, and
    B. A balance of power between industrial and rural life
       in the South is essential, and
    C. The South should retain its agrarian values.
CHAPTER IV

THE CAMPAIGN IN NORTH CAROLINA

Walter Hines Page considered education the basis for solving the social and economic problems of the South. As a journalist, he developed this theme in numerous editorials, articles, books, and letters. Recognized as a native son who had risen to national prominence on the staffs of northern newspapers and magazines and known for his ability as an orator, he received numerous invitations to speak in his home state of North Carolina.

Chapter IV presents a rhetorical study of four addresses Page delivered to enhance the public education movement in North Carolina. The education problems in the state, Page's career as a Raleigh editor, and the reform movement in North Carolina are discussed in the first three sections. Page's role as an orator and the four ceremonial addresses he delivered between 1891 and 1903 in the state are examined in the final sections. These speeches include his address at the inauguration of George T. Winston as president of the University of North Carolina (1891), a commencement address at the State Normal and Industrial School at Greensboro (1897), a similar oration at the North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College in Raleigh (1903), and his oration at the dedication of the Trinity College Library (1903).
Post-Bellum Education Problems

In The Southerner the principal character, Nicholas Worth, a North Carolinian, grew to manhood during Reconstruction. As had Page, Worth pursued his graduate studies in a northern university. Upon returning home Worth experienced the sensation of entering another world:

I had forgotten even how sparsely the country was settled through which I was going. I had forgotten the neglected homes visible from the cars, the cabins about which half-naked negro children played and from which ragged men and women, drunk with idleness, stared at the train, the ill-kept railway stations where crowds of loafers stood with their hands in their pockets and spat at cracks in the platform--unkempt countrymen, heavy with dyspepsia and malaria... It occurred to me for the first time that this country is yet a frontier--a new land untouched except by pioneers who had merely lingered until they had thought the land worn out and who thought that the old order of life--now destroyed by time's pressure of which the war was an instrument--had--been the crown of civilization. Here was poverty--a depressed population, the idle squalor of the negro now that slavery was relaxed, and the hopeless inertia of the white man who had been deadened by an old economic error... It was another country... It must be accepted as it is, I reflected, and judged by its own standard... At last I slipped back into my former self... as we came nearer to Raleigh; and I began to feel at home again... I recalled my own impassioned description of the old red hills and the pine barrens. 'They once bred men; they shall breed men again.' And at last a patient pride swelled up in me that I, too, was a part of this land, had roots in it, felt it, understood it, believed in it as men who had come into life elsewhere could not.1

Efforts to establish public schools in North Carolina were undone by the Civil War. Public sentiment to rebuild the schools was negated by depressed economic conditions and by the stigma of their

association with the reconstruction government, fear of negro domination, and ecclesiastical opposition.

When the Democrats regained control of the state government following the Reconstruction period they refused to levy taxes necessary to support the mandatory four month school term established by the carpet-bag administration. In 1880 no schools opened in 29% of the state's school districts. Where schools did meet attendance was low, and the average term was only ten weeks. Twenty-three per cent of white adults were illiterate.

The presence of the negro also impeded support for public education. Fear of a return to negro domination similar to that during Reconstruction led to anti-negro campaigns which sought to disenfranchise the former slaves. Public support of black education was opposed because to 'teach a nigger to read (would) spoil a good plow han', and put the bottom on top and perch a nigger woman on the fence." Thus in 1880, 76.4% of all black men and 84.8% of all black women were illiterate.

Local communities were reluctant to levy property taxes to support their schools. "One town after trying out the public school for a year or two, voted out the tax and, with glee, 'celebrated the


3Ferguson, 131.

4Page, The Southerner, p. 211.

event with bonfires and brass bands. The apathy of North Carolinians and their subsequent unwillingness to tax themselves for education is evident in contrast to the efforts of citizens in Massachusetts who raised 97.2% of school revenues through taxes, while North Carolinians generated only 12.5% in a similar manner.

Denominational opposition was directed against public supported higher education. In 1871 the Raleigh Christian Advocate alleged that "for the last twenty-five years of its existence the University (at Chapel Hill) was a source of positive evil." The general objections to the state university were: state education was not necessary, that it led to infidelity, encouraged corruption, was sectarian in its management, created prejudice against the denominational colleges, and led to low academic standards. President James B. Shearer of Davidson (Presbyterian), editor Josiah W. Bailey (Baptist), and President John Carlisle Kilgo of Trinity College (Methodist) lead the attack against public supported higher education and urged legislators to "investigate teaching, unfair competition, and 'godless' goings-on at the state university."


9Gobbel, p. 67.

10Harlan, Separate and Unequal, p. 53.
Following a summer as a lecturer at Chapel Hill, Page was disappointed when he failed to receive a full-time appointment to the University faculty. "Page was no longer orthodox in his religious views," and such a figure could not be tolerated at the University. This reversal served to turn him toward journalism. In the next five years he served as editor of the St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette and as a correspondent for several northern newspapers. In 1883 he resigned from the staff of the New York World and returned to Raleigh, where he purchased the Chronicle. With enthusiasm he set out to revitalize the paper. Josephus Daniels recalled his efforts as breathing "a new breath of fresh air into North Carolina journalism. Page's emphatic journalism was a bellows with which he hoped to kindle some sparks of progress in a static society." However, he resorted to sarcasm and ridicule in his impatience with those who refused to change old ways. Daniels noted that Page" had many sound ideas, but his methods, naturally enough, made enemies rather than converts. His proposals that the state forget the past as far as possible and concentrate all its energies upon the development of better schools, roads, farms and industries, and that it break away from ecclesiastical domination and seek to realize its destiny as a great commonwealth, would have been far more effective if they had been presented in different language. As it was, his ridicule enraged many members of his audience, who denounced him with vehemence and regularity as a traitor to the South.13


According to Daniels, "Page was no politician, not even a general mixer, and did not win."\(^{14}\) The *Chronicle* was an artistic success, but a financial failure; consequently Page sold the paper to Daniels. One critic observed that if the young Page "had had money enough to run the *Chronicle* five or ten years at a loss he would have come out the victor."\(^{15}\)

In order more profitably to pursue his career Page moved his family to New York City. As he entered into this exile, he received solace and encouragement from Charles Dabney:

> You ought not to forget your trying experience in North Carolina after the damages have been repaired, you made a lasting impression on some of the young men who are now going ahead to reap good things for their state and themselves. A sort of missionary of the gospel of progress, you had to leave it to others to reap as many missionaries do, but your mission is none the less a successful one.\(^{16}\)

Not long after he had departed Raleigh, Page wrote a series of weekly letters for the *Chronicle*. In these letters he labeled those North Carolinians who were enslaved to the past as "mummified." The Mummy letters offended many people, and even those who were in agreement, like the Reverend John R. Brooks of Wilson, cautioned Page to remember that "old fogies do not enjoy being told they are the 'laughing stock' of the world, and that his gibes may have an effect just the reverse of the one desired."\(^{17}\) However, Charles Aycock, the future governor of the state, offered unreserved praise:


\(^{15}\)Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.

\(^{16}\)Charles W. Dabney to WHP, May 20, 1885, Page MSS.

\(^{17}\)State *Chronicle* (Raleigh), February 18, 1886.
I have heard with great pleasure what you have had to say and I feel it a duty in view of the abuse heaped upon you by the various editors of the State to say, what I know to be the truth, that fully three-fourths of the people are with you and wish you God speed in your effort to arouse better work, greater thought and activity, and freer opinions in the State.18

As editor of the Chronicle and author of the Mummy letters, Page appealed to numerous young men like Aycock and encouraged educational, economic, and social progress.

While in Raleigh, Page made additional contributions to the reform spirit as a member of the Watauga Club. In 1884 he helped organize this club, composed of young business and professional leaders whose purpose was "to encourage free discussion and to promote the educational, agricultural, and industrial interests of the state."19 Club members refused to lament the past or Reconstruction evils, choosing instead to work for the future. The Chronicle served as the unofficial mouthpiece for this organization, and club members delivered speeches and wrote letters to influential leaders.

Most significant, the Watauga Club brought together talented young Carolinians: Page, Charles Duncan McIver, Edward Alderman, Charles Dabney, and James Y. Joyner. These gentlemen played significant roles in southern educational reform. Frederick Weaver has noted that when Page lived in Raleigh:


... he earned the respect of a group of men who shared his ideas and at the same time possessed the ability that he lacked for winning acceptance of them by the Southern public and politicians. On the other hand, Page, better than they could interpret to Northern minds and agencies of assistance the peculiar ways, needs, lamentations, and promise of Southern conditions. Herein lay the influence that determined Page's distinctive educational role; but before he became the efficient 'go-between' of Southern needs and Northern means, he functioned as a roving ally of the Wataugans in their manifold educational convictions and of many others, North and South--Negro and white.20

After selling his paper, Page never again made his home in North Carolina or elsewhere in the South. However, he kept in close contact with many who remained in the Old North State.

The Campaign for Public Education

A survey of the public education movement in North Carolina suggests the context of Page's role as a reform spokesman. During the 1880's teacher institutes were conducted at the University of North Carolina in hopes of improving the level of instruction in the public schools. Education leaders soon realized that these institutes benefited only those teachers who lived near Chapel Hill. Thus, four similar institutes were established at various locations around the state. Again state education leaders concluded that these institutes failed to reach the great number of public school teachers in the ninety-two counties. As a result, the decision was made to send educational experts into each county to conduct one-week institutes.

"Therefore on March 11, 1889 the legislature ratified 'an act to abolish the white normal schools of the State, and to provide for hold-

The two gentlemen elected to undertake this responsibility were Edward Alderman and Charles Duncan McIver.

The appointment of Alderman and McIver to head this herculean task represented the beginning of an educational campaign in North Carolina unlike that in any other southern state. In spite of the fact that "pedagogically the assignment was absurd," the two refused to be discouraged. For three years they conducted teacher's institutes and stimulated interest in public supported education. McIver worked primarily in the western portion of the state, while Alderman took the eastern counties. The two men developed a system which permitted them to deal directly with greater numbers of teachers, students, and other interested people than had been thought possible. In his history of public education in North Carolina, M.C.S. Nobles wrote:

During the first year, Alderman and McIver had conducted a one week's institute in more than sixty counties. The first four days of the week they lectured on methods of teaching, school government, and other subjects connected with the successful management of a public school. Friday, the closing day, was 'People's Day' and on this day the conductor of the institute delivered an address to the teachers, the school committeemen, and the general public on the subject of public education. It is estimated that 23,500 people of influence in the various counties attended these meetings and the records show that about 3,000 white teachers attended the institutes.

Years later Page described the efforts of these two young spokesmen.


22Harlan, Separate and Unequal, p. 48.

23Noble, A History of the Public Schools, p. 435.
It was a stump campaign for popular education, the like of which perhaps was never known before and has never been heard since. . . . It was by this work that they trained themselves to public speaking, and they both became, each in his own way, among the most effective speakers of our time.24

Following three years of exhaustive work, McIver was named president, and Alderman appointed a professor at the new State Normal and Industrial School for white women in Greensboro. Using the school as a base, the two educators continued their efforts on behalf of public education.

Burton J. Hendrick has observed that "the real achievement of McIver and Alderman was to make the soil fertile for another member of their own university group."25 Charles B. Aycock, who was to become the "educational governor" of North Carolina. Aycock's interest in popular education was kindled when he witnessed his mother make her mark on a deed because she could not write her name. In recalling the incident, he said that then and there he vowed "that every man and woman in North Carolina should have a chance to read and write."26

As a young man Aycock attended the University of North Carolina, its summer teacher institutes, and taught school in Fremont. These experiences intensified his commitment to educational reform. He wrote newspaper articles and spoke often on behalf of the cause. In 1881, "one month after the successful election for a tax to support a graded school system in Goldsboro, he was chosen to fill the newly

24Walter Hines Page, "McIver, a Leader of the People," Page MSS.
created office of Superintendent of Public Instruction of Wayne County."27

By 1892, Aycock had served a long and thorough apprenticeship in education. He had studied; he had taught; he had superintended county schools; he had headed the board of trustees of an advanced city system; he had served as a director of a normal school for Negroes; and through years of campaigning, he had encountered and learned to stimulate public sentiment regarding education. He propounded no elaborate philosophy of education. As an advocate of public education rather than a professional educator, Aycock concentrated on advancing the simple convictions that human welfare depended on progress, that progress depended upon knowledge, and that knowledge depended upon schools.28

In 1900 Aycock was elected governor of North Carolina. The census for the state that year indicates that 19% of the white voters were illiterate, and 19.5% of the white population over age ten were illiterate, the highest percentage in the Union.29 A constitutional amendment limiting suffrage to literate males upset those who had not registered under the grandfather clause and "posed a real problem for the discerning politician."30 In response to this discontent and the general illiteracy problem, Aycock's administration stressed the need for public education. Governor Aycock called for a unity of action among the educational forces in the state in establishing an organized campaign to promote popular education. Aycock himself delivered fifteen speeches in this effort in 1902.

27Orr, p. 71.

28Orr, pp. 81-2.

29Dabney, Universal Education, p. 336.

As a spokesman for education, he was not alone. Joseph P. Claxton recorded that "the educational orator sought his quarry at schools, camp meetings, churches, church conventions, good roads meetings, farmer's meetings, political rallies, wherever he smelled human flesh. In North Carolina one could hardly get off or on a train without meeting an educational campaign orator." The labors of these advocates bore fruit. "Local tax districts, only seven in number in 1899, rose to 402 in 1906, the year of McIver's death."

The attitude of the various denominations toward public primary education was favorable, but they exerted no real influence in promoting public education. Their opposition to state supported higher education began to weaken following the turn of the century as economic conditions improved and leaders in industry began to show philanthropic interests in private colleges. "Church colleges began to receive means of survival and were therefore not so prone to oppose state aid to state institutions." By 1905 education leaders of the various denominations had ceased their insistence that all men and women attend church-related schools.

Page left Raleigh in 1885. Four years later Alderman and McIver began to preach their education message to thousands of North Carolinians. Six years after Page's departure, George Winston was named president of the University at Chapel Hill, and the following year, McIver was accorded a similar honor at the new school for women.

31 Harlan, Separate and Unequal, p. 90.
32 Harlan, p. 118.
33 Gobbel, Church-State Relationships in Education, p. 205.
in Greensboro. In another eight years Charles Aycock was elected governor. During this time North Carolina experienced more rapid growth in promoting education than any other southern state. The credit for this unparalleled progress cannot be attributed to any one person but was the result of the combined efforts of the McIvers, Aldermans, and Aycocks, and Walter Hines Page who, as an exiled journalist, attained positions of influence as editor of the Forum, Atlantic Monthly, and World's Work, popularized their efforts in the issues of widely read periodicals. He further aided their cause by opening contacts between those at work in the South and northern philanthropists, and he took advantage of opportunities to return to his home state and speak.

Address at the Inauguration of Winston

Page delivered his "address at the Inauguration of President George Winston" in Chapel Hill on October 14, 1891, to an audience composed of faculty members, trustees, students, and friends of the University of North Carolina.

Winston was the second man chosen to lead the University following its reopening in 1876. His predecessor Kemp A. Battle was the first to take up the task of guiding a school closed in 1868 by political controversy, social and economic problems. Attempting to rebuild confidence in the institution, he stressed high academic standards, sound financial management and serving the interests of the state irrespective of denominational or political parties. "A man with no enemies and determined to make none,"34 he worked to appease church


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
leaders, the most vocal opponents of state appropriations for higher public education, by inviting ministers to preach to the students at Chapel Hill and awarding honorary degrees to presidents, professors, friends, and clergymen associated with denominational colleges.35

When Battle retired, George Tayloe Winston, his long-time assistant, was the unanimous selection of the trustees as his successor. Energetic and possessing wide interests, he was a man much like his friend Page. A North Carolinian educated at the Naval Academy and Cornell University, he shared Page's concern for the education needs of his home state, believing the future of the University "rested upon advance of education among the masses."36 Speaking frequently on behalf of public education, attending county teacher institutes and refusing fees for his service at the summer normal school, he was broadminded and unbound by political parties or petty denominationalism. Similar to Page, he chose not to dwell on the past, but looked ahead to the "recrudescence of the South."37 Indicating his intent to move boldly in building a modern university, he invited Page and D. C. Gilman, president of innovative Johns Hopkins University, to speak at his inauguration. In 1887, two years after Page sold his newspaper and left the state, Winston wrote, "You have indeed given an impetus to thought by the Chronicle, but that is all. That impetus will live. Men change slowly."38 Four years later, confident that his election

35Gobbel, Church-State Relationships in Education, p. 128.
36Wagstaff, p. 61.
37Wagstaff, p. 57.
38George T. Winston to WAP, February 28, 1885, Page MSS.
as the new president of the University signaled an opportunity for progress in the Old North State, Winston believed the time was right to invite Page home. The presence of the expatriate journalist at his inauguration was in itself a symbol of progress and commitment to the future.

Page's reputation added to the significance of his appearance as a speaker at the University. As editor of the Forum, a prominent New York journal, he was regarded as a successful man. More important than recognition of his career prestige, North Carolinians regarded him as an outspoken proponent of liberal reform in the state. Although the son of an old and respected Tar Heel family, he was not associated with the Old South but with the New South. Remembered for his crusading efforts as editor of the Chronicle, his association with the Watauga Club and as author of the Mummy letters, he epitomized progressive thinking in education, industry and agriculture.

On the day of Winston's inauguration Colonel Thomas S. Holt, president of the Alumni Association, presided over the ceremonies.

"The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Charles E. Taylor, president of Wake Forest College, after which the University choir sang 'Ode to the Bell!'"39 Preceding Page to the rostrum, Gilman delivered an address which was reported to be "most thoughtful and full of encouragement to the ambitious student."40


40Ibid.
Line of Reasoning

The inauguration of a college or university president is a significant time in the life of the institution. A change in leadership encourages a reassessment of values, goals and direction. In his charge to Winston and the University, Page stated the proposition of his speech:

Renounce forever servitude to ecclesiasticism and party-ism and set out to be the ruling and the shaping force among the energies that stir the people and are making of our old fields a new earth, of our slumbering land a resounding workshop.

Page followed a problem-solution organization in developing his theme. Identifying and analyzing the problem, he contended: (1) North Carolinians were a capable people whose potential was the equal of any other English-speaking people, but that (2) certain forces in the state had handicapped their development as well as that of the University. As a solution he emphasized (3) the need for the University to exert a positive influence on the people as they entered into a more prosperous age and (4) offered a suggestion for arousing their interest in the institution, a study on race relations.

In this address Page based his reasoning on several premises on which he and his audience were in agreement. He contended that North Carolinians were the heirs of a proud heritage and were a capable people with an excellent potential for growth. As such, he argued that every man should be afforded the opportunity to develop his abilities.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Forms of Support

Sharing his perception of the values and directions that Winston should consider as he assumed his post of leadership, Page was not required to defend his opinions. Unhindered by a burden of proof, he channeled his efforts toward amplifying and enhancing his ideas in order to make them more attractive to his audience. To accomplish this task, he employed a variety of examples, comparisons, illustrations, emotional appeals, and connotative language.

In speaking of the University's heritage, Page recalled the memories of J. De B. Hooper and Paul Cameron. Of Cameron he reminisced:

... of all the fine sights of enthusiasm in the world there never was a finer than that we saw here for so many years—until just now—when Mr. Paul Cameron, on commencement day rose from his seat and very slowly, marched upon this rostrum, when the company began to sing the 'Old North State.' 'Give me my hat,' he said, and when some one gave it to him, with a flush on his ruddy countenance as beautiful as the rosy cheeks of childhood and his gray hair flowing, he waved the hat above his head and cried out: 'Hurrah!' 'Hurrah!' You will never see a more spontaneous enthusiasm than that, nor a sight that you will remember longer.

Commending Winston's successor, Kemp A. Battle, Page employed almost biblical language in declaring "it was he that reconstructed the University when the mad revolutionists that desecrated it were driven from it as the money changers were driven from the temple."

In stressing the negative effects of an aristocratic concept of education, the North Carolinian spoke of "how greatly" he had suffered in his childhood when "at our foremost school (it was then just over the hill there) ... the boys rated one another according to the
military prominence of their fathers and my father was unthoughtful as not to be even a colonel."

To magnify the unhappy results of the common man's acquiescence to the attitude that "education is a thing for a particular class," he compared the average North Carolinian to other men of English stock:

On the hills alike of the Catawba and of the Roanoke a hundred years ago men followed plows of Homeric fashion drawn by bullocks to make shallow furrows in little fields of new ground to grow little stores of corn. Today alike on the hills of the Roanoke and the Catawba you may see men following plows of Homeric fashion drawn by bullocks to make shallow furrows in little fields of new ground (now made new for the second time) to grow the same little stores of corn. Meantime their cousins, men of English stock, no whit more capable than they, have brought three continents under their sway and the rise of science has made new the intellectual life of men. Here alone, alike on the banks of the Roanoke and of the Catawba great change has come not and the creeds of a century ago have not flowed into wider channels.

In emphasizing the impact of the constraining influences of an aristocratic society on a University, he compared the school to an "asylum:"

"... where the sons of gentle nature in a rough-time might breathe the air of a preceding era and become the contemporaries of their grandfathers when their grandfathers themselves were youths; where they sat down with their ancestors on the easy terms of comradeship in years, manners, doctrines and ideals, and danced (when the preachers allowed it) with their own grandmothers in their maidenhood.

In accentuating the importance of the University in turning its energies toward serving the people of the state, Page compared North Carolinians to a "slumbering people" now awakening to a new age that was "calling into activity:"
... all the dormant powers of the people. In old fields where time had hardly smoothed the furrows of slave plowmen, we have seen great factories rise; our people are becoming the builders of cities, the leaders of industry, the architects of fortunes. We are even told, on good authority, that within an area that has our mountains for its center and this village on its outskirts, the coming masters of the markets of the world will live and work. So a new force is already come—a force that sets little store by ecclesiastical or social habits and that will soon mold a people of money makers and this change brings your change.

Urging the University to become a dominating force along side the "love of gain," Page utilized the method of residues to insist "it is to you, and to you chiefly, indeed to you only, that we have to look for the proper guidance of this new power;"

To the church we cannot look, for seldom has ecclesiasticism wisely directed wealth towards a broad development. While we are poor we starve the church into mendicancy; when we get rich it is unreasonable to expect it to show independence.

Neither can we look to politics to direct our new industrial energy. Politics too clearly and surely profits by wealth and even by the prostitution of wealth for us to expect the wisest training of it. So, too, of the press.

Thus, Page employed comparisons and contrasts to magnify the disparity between the realized potential of North Carolinians and other Englishmen, and the rapid and dangerous entry of an uneducated people into a modern age.

Advising the students to show themselves interested in those things in which the people are themselves interested," the editor of the Forum presented a detailed description of the approach and importance of a sociological study of race relations in the state:
If a company of twenty-five or thirty energetic young men were to go forth, one in one community and one in another, every one equipped with a set of inquiries upon which they had agreed in advance, and were to gather answers to these inquiries by their own investigation, and then if this whole mass of facts were brought together and properly classified and properly interpreted, I say that you would have a piece of literature on an important subject in social science that would be read and welcomed everywhere that studious men live.

Elaborating upon the benefits of such a study he said:

But the main point is not simply that you would have achieved something worth the doing and that you would be doing good training work also, but more important than these is this: that by such work you would be sure to arouse every man who ever thinks, from one end of the State to the other, in your institution and in your work;

In addition Page assured the students that "by creating a unity of interests and aims with the people" the day would come "when (their) President would not have to wait on the legislature to secure an appropriation large enough to meet your expenses."

In the Winston address Page utilized appeals to motives of self-esteem, self-actualization and self-preservation to dramatize his premises that Southerners are the heirs of proud heritage, that all men are entitled to an opportunity to improve themselves, that the South is an agrarian society, and that the races are not social equals.

An appeal to self-esteem is directed toward an individual's or a people's sense of personal worth or pride. In Chapel Hill, Page treated the past with respect. Cognizant of southern opinion, he realized that while he urged those present to "renounce forever servitude" to hindering tradition, a blanket condemnation of representative individuals and institutions of the antebellum South could have alienated his audience. Instead, he praised his audience as the heirs
of a long line of great men associated with a University "deep-rooted in the past and clothed with our best traditions." Invoking memories of men associated with the school, he pointed to revered figures: J. De B. Hooper, much-loved professor of literature, and Paul Cameron, former governor and trustee of the University, both of whom had died shortly before. In remembering these men, he recalled "an air laden with the perfume of a perfect culture of its kind," and observed that "It would be a pleasure today to assure them that their memory is held dear and their characters shall guide us and their manners shall be our manners in the broader way that opens to us."

Speaking of North Carolinians in general, Page commended the people as descendents of sturdy Anglo-Saxon stock. Lauding the "capacity" of the state's yeomanry, he recalled the people's conduct in the Civil War when they "went forth showing endurance and courage when it was folly to be brave." Continuing to stir the audience's confidence in the potential of the average Tar Heel, he stressed that the people had not lost their capacity for growth despite "hinderin g tradition" which suppressed their initiative. This fact in itself, he emphasized, was a "tribute" to the "fibre of our stock."

An appeal to self-actualization refers to the individual's or a people's need for the freedom to discover and develop his own potential to its full extent. Page utilized his audience's awareness of this motive by depicting how the oppressive nature of a society thwarts the growth of its people.
Page asserted a combination of the influences of slavery, the church, and "the long beards" to whom the "public servant paid the homage of surrender," had forged an aristocratic society and was responsible for the attitude that "education is a thing for a particular class" with the end result of keeping the people "in the crude state of development of a preceding century." He insisted that the University itself had not been "spared" from these stagnating influences. In particular, he spoke of the power of the "pioneer church that hardened its emotional creed into an admantine intolerance which fashioned for docile necks the yoke of petty ecclesiasticism," and "whose halter spared not this institution itself . . ." The former editor of the Chronicle was also critical of the aristocratic attitude that manifested itself at private academies where learning suffered as "boys rated one another according to the military prominence of their fathers" and at the University whose doors were open to only a select few, "the sons of gentle nature."

Page employed an additional motive in his speech at Chapel Hill, that of self-preservation. Appeals to self-preservation, in terms of a society, are directed toward maintaining a sense of security of values. Page utilized this motive in alluding to two potential threats to southern society: the corrupting influence of an industrial society and the fear of negro domination.

Confirming the inevitability of industrial progress and new wealth in the agrarian South, Page asked the rhetorical question, "What is the proper measure of this new awakening?" He answered it was
"not the measure of wealth produced . . . nor ever is the value of
dustrial life the sum total of its concrete product, but only and
always the sum total of its manhood." Magnifying the dangers of
 misguided wealth, he asked his audience to look around and see the
"dulling touch of money getting" blunting man's generosity, and the
"loss of that virile and prodigal nobility of spirit that made the
'old Southern gentleman' before he became grotesque, the most erect man
we have ever bred." Men "smitten by prosperity" and untouched by the
University presented the "spectacle of a gilded and rancid self-
righteousness." He stressed that North Carolinians need not fear
wealth itself, but the "governing habit of mind," already present
among them, "that puts a pecuniary value on all things." In response
to the threat of new prosperity on "the North Carolinian of the
future," he called upon the University to recognize and assume the
responsibility of guiding him, thus preserving the character of
southern society.

In advocating a study to be undertaken by the University on
"the outcome of the living and working together of the two races," Page
alluded to the premise that the negro was not the white man's equal.
Such an inquiry, he predicted, would arouse the interests of the
people in the activities at Chapel Hill. If the school would share the
concerns of those who wonder "whether the negro will always be the
negro that he is," he believed the average man "would have a profound
regard for the University" and it "might occur to him that it might
benefit his son." In making this suggestion Page accepted the goal of
maintaining a white supremacist society as a means of establishing common
ground between the University and the people.

In the Winston address, Page's selection and arrangement of language was indicative of his ability to evoke images through the use of a plain style emphasizing common words and expressions. Thus, the North Carolinian relied upon metaphors and axioms. In addition, examination reveals his concern for oral style.

Page's choice of words reflected the dignity of the inaugural occasion and exuded a sense of optimism in referring to the school's future under Winston's administration. In addressing the president-elect, Page spoke of the "leadership of this venerated institution" as a "high trust" and a "high opportunity." Symbolizing the inauguration as a "christening" and "the intellectual awakening of the people," he applauded "a day of broadening opportunity," "the quickened step of a new era," life swinging "forward into a new day," "old times blossoming into new," and "energy for the future." He envisioned the school at Chapel Hill fulfilling its duty as "the people's institution," functioning as a "ruling" and "shaping force" in making "of our old fields a new earth."

Although he did not stoop to name-calling, Page urged the University to "settle all mortgages" and "renounce servitude forever" to the classes which encouraged inertia. As such, he voiced his displeasure with those attitudes that "chained" the people and "suppressed individual effort." The editor of the Forum employed loaded language in contrasting those who "look forward" with those whose "day is done." Those who "live on hope" stood on the side of "courage," "truth," "victory," and "God." He characterized those that live on
"memories" as representatives of "compromise," "mendicant traditions," "narrow ecclesiastical prejudice," and "colossal inertia."

Page employed epigrams to create attractive, quotable phrases. Referring to a "sacred truth," the orator declared "the race for wealth leaves the runners exhausted; and men get punier as they grow richer." In speaking of the "high traditions" of the University, he noted that "a true independence of character is better than riches."

The address at Winston's inauguration is also indicative of the speaker's concern for an oral style. As such, Page used expressions like "look with me for a moment . . . and we shall see," "I pray you remember," and "Would it seem to you too revolutionary . . ." His awareness of his listeners is further evidenced in his concluding remarks where he both summarized and redefined the main thoughts of his speech:

So that when I said you are happy in having a clear duty before you, I meant that you have not to face the perplexing questions of a complex culture, but a simple and primary task, fundamental, secondary to none, and more useful than mere academic task, and when I said that this clear duty leads to a great opportunity, I meant the opportunity of doing the noblest and highest democratic work, the intellectual awakening of the whole people whose traditions you have perpetuated and whose love you hold—a task that owing to the peculiar state of their development and the peculiar circumstances of hindering, all the world will watch with interest; and that the builders of commonwealths well might envy you.

The North Carolinian's clear and familiar style served to amplify and enhance his reasoning in the Winston address.
Assessment

The impression Page's oration at the inaugural ceremony made on Horace Williams, the University's professor of philosophy, is interesting. Unlike other speeches on similar occasions, Williams was amazed at the "new and strange doctrine, coming from a Southern college chapel. Indeed it was startling! Hitherto such addresses had won popular favor by the propogation of platitudes, by the saying of undisputed things in a solemn way, ... Page's address was a departure."41

Page's speech was unusual because in it the speaker urged the University and her new president to "settle all mortgages today that all classes and sections of society have on you," and sever all ties to restrictive traditions. Contrary to the aristocratic concept of society and education, he declared the school the people's institution existing to serve the needs of all the citizens of the state.

Employing examples, comparisons, an illustration, and focusing on motives of self-esteem, self-actualization and self-preservation expressed in a clear and direct style, Page developed his reasoning from several premises he held in common with his audience. Among these were their confidence in the capability of North Carolinians, their belief in equal opportunity for all men, their recognition of the need to preserve the values of an agrarian society, and their awareness of the inequality of the races.

Page's address was considered "so able that it was sought and obtained for publication."42 The oration had an influence upon the

42 Battle, p. 466.
students, particularly his suggestion of a state-wide study on race relations. The editor of the University Magazine noted "with pleasure, that the Societies have begun to take the matter in hand, having appointed a committee to confer with the faculty in regard to the furtherance of Mr. Page's suggestion." Sharing Page's enthusiasm for the project, the editor claimed that in "no way could the U. of N.C. be better brought before the people of the United States than by this."43

Five years later Edward Alderman was appointed to succeed Winston at the University. Upon assuming his new position, Alderman wrote Page recalling "with sincere pleasure" his thoughtful and inspiring address" at his predecessor's inauguration:

Indeed, it is not too much to say that that short speech with its note of freedom and tolerance and sympathy, and its plea for common sense in dealing with the environment has greatly influenced our own life. I have such faith in your fearlessness and vigor of mind, that I earnestly trust you can find time to drop me a few suggestions as to the aims, ideals, and policies of the University.44

Alderman's speech at his own inauguration echoed Page's address: "The University . . . is the people's school. Her watchword and her graven motto shall be creative energy, enlightened civilization, and untrammeled manhood."45

43 The University of North Carolina Magazine, XI, Page MSS.
44 Edward Alderman to WHP, August 8, 1896, Page MSS.
45 Wagstaff, Impressions of Men and Movements, p. 75.
On May 19, 1897 Page delivered his address "The Forgotten Man" at the annual commencement exercises of the State Normal and Industrial School for white women in Greensboro at the request of its president Charles Duncan McIver. The audience was composed of the four-hundred young ladies of the Normal School "representing nearly every nook and corner of the State," members of their families, the faculty, trustees, and friends of the school. Also present for the occasion were Governor Russell, J.L.M. Curry, agent for the Peabody and the John P. Slater funds, Edward Alderman, Winston's successor as president of the University of North Carolina, and Josephus Daniels, editor of the Raleigh News and Observer.

In addition to his duties as the first president of the State Normal and Industrial School, McIver continued to play an active role in promoting public support of primary schools in North Carolina. In 1897 educators were preparing campaigns in every township where there was no local tax for education in hopes of encouraging these townships to support local school levies scheduled to go before the voters in August. Believing that "no people on the earth could have ever become an educated people without a local tax for school purposes," McIver asked Page to deliver an address emphasizing "what North Carolina has missed because of her illiteracy and lack of training, and what she now has in sight to gain by adopting a liberal education policy recognizing

46 Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, April 27, 1897, Page MSS.

47 Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, April 15, 1897, Page MSS.
the equality of human rights in the matter of intellectual culture." He believed such an address "would do more good to the State ... than any that could be made."\(^48\) Suggesting "The Cost of Ignorance" as the title for the address, he wanted Page to "make the people of this state see that it can never be an educated and prosperous state so long as it refuses to adopt the only method which has ever resulted in general intelligence to any other state; namely the principle of local taxation."\(^49\)

McIver forwarded copies of old Teacher Institute reports and an article of his own to help Page in preparing the speech. He also requested the latest reports from the State Superintendent and the Commission of Labor Statistics be sent to his friend. Page asked Josephus Daniels for any helpful information he might have to offer. Daniels responded by sending "the reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction."\(^50\)

In his analysis of "The Forgotten Man" Louis Campbell noted that the majority of Page's audience were women and for that reason the speaker took "special pain to mention 'the forgotten woman.'"\(^51\) However, in delivering the keynote address in an education campaign, Page spoke to three audiences: those present, those living in areas which would be voting on the school levies, and other spokesmen who would be

\(^48\)Ibid.

\(^49\)Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, April 27, 1897.

\(^50\)Josephus Daniels to WHP, April 21, 1897, Page MSS.

canvassing the state prior to the election. Women could not vote, and to have focused entirely on "the forgotten women" would have limited the speech. If the negro represented the bottom rail in southern society, the white female occupied a position just above him. Yet this is not to say that Page belittled the importance of educating women, for he ascribed to McIver's belief that "when a man is educated it is simply one more taken from the lists if ignorance, but in the education of a woman the whole family is taught, for she will pass on what she has learned to her children."52

In the intervening years since his address in Chapel Hill, Page had left New York and the Forum and moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to assume the editorial responsibilities of the Atlantic Monthly. North Carolinians were justifiably proud of him, as he was the first Southerner to hold this prestigious position.

While Page had visited his old home on several occasions and kept up correspondence with friends, he had not been in the public spotlight in North Carolina since his speech in 1891. After six years, with his having reached what appeared to be the zenith of his journalistic career, the announcement that Walter Hines Page, editor of the Atlantic Monthly, would deliver the commencement address at the State Normal School aroused considerable interest.

Line of Reasoning

Calling for a new day in education, Page developed his address around the proposition that the time had come for the people of North Carolina:

52Page, "McIver: A Leader of the People."
... to accept our own conditions without illusions, to face our own problems like men, and when necessary with all respect for the past to lift dead men's hands from our life.

Similar to his Winston address, Page utilized a problem-solution organization in "The Forgotten Man," examining: (1) the importance of the common man in society, (2) the forces responsible for his arrested development, (3) and the results of their constraining influence on educational progress. Thus he asserted (4) the time had come to look to new leadership favoring the concept of local support for schools.

In Greensboro to open a campaign supporting locally funded public education, Page based his arguments on two premises: that North Carolinians are a capable people and that the principles of democracy apply to educational opportunity. He sought to arouse the citizens from their lethargy by emphasizing the necessity of providing all people with an opportunity to discover and develop their abilities and condemning the restrictive nature of the social forces which "hindered the development of men." As such, he announced his intention to discuss the "one undeveloped resource" in North Carolina more valuable than all others, "the people themselves." The best means of maximizing the potential of people on all levels of society, he believed, was to support the concept of public education.

**Forms of Support**

Page relied on examples, comparisons, appeals to motives of self-esteem and self-actualization, and expressive style to amplify and enhance his message in "The Forgotten Man."
As he had done in Chapel Hill, Page shared an experience at Mebane Academy to accentuate one of the negative consequences of class education. Recalling "a scene more ludicrous than Dickens," he told of how a companion came to his room "shut the door and fell on the bed and wept—wep.t because his father was not a Colonel." When Page offered him the consolation that neither had his father been a Confederate officer, "this information only gave him less respect for me."

Dramatizing the difficulty of changing the attitudes of people who had grown up considering education only for those who could afford the tuition of a private school, Page referred to "a man in Moore County who had two children at school at the expense of somebody else. Although he did not pay their bills, he took them from school... because, he said, the charge for tuition was too high." This man, the speaker observed, was "the frankest and most faithful disciple of our old-time economic creed that I have ever known."

Page commended "the extension of free preparatory schools... leading to the establishment of free high schools" and referred to those already existing in Greensboro and Durham, which tended to "draw to themselves the intellectual interests of the whole community, and make the public school system the chief pride of our people."

Speaking of other towns "where every enlightening interest centers in the high school," he offered the example of his own sons who attended Cambridge Latin School with the "sons and daughters" of Harvard professors, "draymen and hack drivers:"
All have the same privileges and the same opportunities; and no pupil can buy even a book or a pencil; the city supplies all. Every man pays for it on his taxes; and every man profits by it in the increased value of his property, in the higher wages he receives as a higher and higher degree of skill in all work is developed, and a higher and higher level of trained life is reached.

Citing several North Carolinians for their efforts in promoting public education, he identified Calvin H. Wiley as a "forgotten" hero of the state who had tried "to develop a public school system" before the Civil war, and he lauded the work of the recently deceased Major Finger, former superintendent of schools, who had been eulogized by Alderman prior to his speech.

Pronouncing the aristocratic approach to education a failure, Page complimented the efforts of "public-spirited, far-sighted and energetic young men, chief among them being your President (McIver) and the President of the University (Alderman), who came into activity ten years or more ago," and "began seriously to develop a public school system--." The result of their work was "an educational revival," unlike that ever "known before in North Carolina" or "in any state."

Page made extensive use of comparisons and analogies in "The Forgotten Man." He created a figurative analogy between the necessity to educate the "neglected and forgotten man" and the construction of a house, observing that "when you build a house, you make the foundation the strongest part of it, and the house, however ornate its architecture, can be no stronger than the foundation." Likewise he created an analogy between society and the body, "whose security and soundness are measured at last by the condition of the weakest part."
In order to amplify the failure of aristocratic and ecclesiastical education to benefit either the people or the state, the editor of the Atlantic Monthly drew a comparison between progress made in other states with that of North Carolina.

Asking what the class approach to education had achieved for the favored few and education itself, he noted that the state university and the denominational colleges did not "rank with the best" among comparable institutions in the other twelve original states and had produced "no select body of scholars." Neither could the Old North State boast of great libraries, publishing houses, or a people given to reading." He employed statistics to reinforce his claim that both the aristocratic and ecclesiastical approaches had "failed even with the classes they appealed to."

In speaking of the need to educate the children, Page created an analogy between the graduates to whom that task would fall, and the women in an essay by Montaigne, who chose to sacrifice all other possessions for the sake of their children. The inclusion of this analogy in the speech seems out of character for Page, who usually chose to draw upon his own experiences and events familiar to his audiences for illustrative material. While his intention is apparent, the analogy is strained and disrupts the familiar pattern of the speech.

After magnifying the failure of the class approach to education and the resultant primitive and ignorant status of the forgotten man, Page utilized a disjunctive syllogism as both a means of amplification and a transitional device to his plea for a turn to new leadership.
which favored educational opportunity for all people. Placed in proper form the syllogism reads:

Either the common man is incapable of learning or the present approach to education is a failure.
The common man is capable of learning.
Therefore, the present approach to education is a failure.

As expressed in the speech, Page reasoned:

Now one of two things is true--either these forgotten men and women are incapable of development, belong to a lower order of intelligence than any other people of the Anglo-Saxon stock; or our civilization, so far as they are concerned has been a lamentable failure. Of course there is no doubt which of these suppositions is true; for even these people are capable of development, capable of unlimited growth and elevation. But if they be capable of development, then both the aristocratic and ecclesiastical systems of society have failed to develop them.

As a result of his use of examples, comparisons and disjunctive reasoning, Page made clear his belief that the time had come for North Carolinians to initiate a meaningful commitment to public education.

In his Greensboro address Page appealed primarily to his audience's needs for self-esteem and self-actualization. As he had done in Chapel Hill, he utilized the pride of his audience in their heritage as Southerners as a means of affirming the capability of the common people. He praised North Carolinians as descended from Anglo-Saxon stock, most of whom had been "peasants of sturdy qualities; a very few from gentlemen; and some were descended from forced and hired immigrants. Taken all together they were a common people, capable of as sound development as the population of any state."
However, differing from the Winston address, Page criticized the people's pride, particularly for creating and believing false images of themselves. In so doing, he chastized them for having "written and spoken much nonsense about ourselves and our ancestors" and having "made ourselves believe that we were in some way better than other common people. Thus we came to put a false value on our social structure, and we have never looked ourselves in the face and seen ourselves as others see us."

While praising some preachers "cast into so large a mold that they walked with giants," Page criticized churchmen who opposed educating the people:

If any beggar for a church school oppose a local tax for schools or a higher school tax, take him to the huts of the forgotten women and children, and in their hopeless presence remind him that the church system of education has not touched tens of thousands of these lives, and ask him there whether he think it wrong that the commonwealth should educate them. If he think wrong, ask him and ask the people plainly, whether he be a worthy preacher of the gospel that declares one man equal to another in the sight of God? . . . In all reasonableness, it is impossible to understand how any man can regard it as a Christian act to stand in the way of the state's elevating the neglected masses?

Page also scoffed at the politician who, as the "dupe of the old political fallacy," contended the state "too poor to increase our taxes for education," calling him a "perpetrator of poverty" and a "victim of an ancient and harmful falsehood."

Declaring that the joint influences of politicians and preachers wedded to the past had "encouraged inertia" and prevented "the development of the people," Page amplified the manner in which the forgotten man had become "content to be forgotten:"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
He faithfully heard the politicians on the stump praise him for virtues that he did not always have. The politicians told him that he lived in the best State in the Union; told him that other politicians had some hair-brained plan to increase his taxes, told him as a consolation for his ignorance how many of his kinsmen had been killed in the war, told him to distrust anybody who wished to change anything. What was good enough for his fathers was good enough for him . . . And the preacher told him that the ills and misfortunes of this life were blessings in disguise, that God meant his poverty as a means of grace, and that if he accepted the right creed all would be well with him.

Thus, in "The Forgotten Man" Page stirred the people's pride by praising them as capable descendents of sturdy ancestors. However, he spent greater time blaming the people, in general, and political and church leaders, in particular, for their pride in perpetuating a society based on the false assumption that one man is not the equal of another "in the sight of the commonwealth." Believing that "what was good enough for (their) fathers" was not necessarily good for the present or the future, he castigated the complacency of those who accepted "a false value of our social situation."

Page appealed to the motive of self-actualization to magnify the individual's right to an opportunity to realize his potential in a democratic country. Defining a democracy as a "man-culture" where "one man must be regarded of as great importance as another," Page declared "the doctrine of equal opportunity is at the bottom of social progress, for you can never judge a man's capacity except as he has opportunity to develop it," and quoted Edmund Burke in urging North Carolinians to "break through . . . 'rank and title and all the solemn plausibilities of the world,' and come face to face with all the men who make up the social body, seeing them as they are, and not
through the medium of our traditions nor by their estimates of themselves." Thus cautioning his audience not to "give undue value to any class of men," he emphasized:

A community is not rich because it contains a few rich men, it is not healthful because it contains a few strong men of learning, nor is it of good morals because it contains a few good women--if the rest of the population also be not well-to-do, or healthful, or intelligent or of good morals.

Emphasizing the failure of aristocratic and ecclesiastical systems of education to do anything for "the masses," Page declared that the people "remained illiterate, neglected, forgotten." As "the forgotten man remained forgotten," so also did "the forgotten woman."

Through the skillful use of emotive language he dramatized her hopeless life:

. . . women thin and wrinkled in youth from ill-prepared food, clad without warmth or grace, living in untidy houses, working from daylight till bed time at the dull round of weary duties, the slaves of men of equal slovenliness, the mothers of joyless children--all uneducated if not illiterate. Yet even their condition were endurable if there were any hope, but this type of woman is encrusted in a shell of a dull content with her lot; she knows no better and can never learn better--never point her children to a higher life. If she be intensely religious, her religion is only an additional misfortune, for it teaches her, as she understands it, to be content with her lot and all its burdens, for they only prepare her for the life to come. Some men who are born under these conditions escape from them; a man may go away, go where life offers opportunities, but the women are forever helpless.

Page also appealed to his auditor's awareness of the need for equal opportunity to develop one's life when referring to children, "whether it be your child or the child of the dull-faced mother of the hovel." Considering "the child, whether it have poor or rich parents
... the most valuable undeveloped resource of the State," he noted that no one could know if "the child of the dull-faced mother may ... be the most capable child in the State. At its worst, it is capable of good citizenship and a useful life, if its intelligence be quickened and trained."

As he had in the Winston address, Page utilized appeals to self-actualization as a means of enhancing the premise that the principles of democracy apply to education. In his closing remarks he praised the young ladies of the Normal School for their commitment to "remember the forgotten child," for "in this remembrance is laid the foundation of a new social order. The neglected people will rise and with them will rise all the people. Open wide to them the doors of opportunity."

Perhaps the greatest strength of the Greensboro address and the reason it remains as the best known of the North Carolinian's speeches was his choice and arrangement of common language to create graphic word pictures.

Page's decision to entitle his speech "The Forgotten Man" was significant. He may have first heard the phrase in 1883 when it was used as the title of a lecture by Yale professor William Graham Sumner delivered before the Brooklyn Historical Society. In speaking of the common laborer, Sumner said: "Such is the Forgotten Man. He works, he votes, generally he prays--but always he pays--."53 Franklin Roosevelt would later recognize the connotative power of "the forgotten man."

On April 7, 1932, campaigning for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, he resurrected the phrase in a national radio broadcast. Promising drastic social and economic reforms to help the jobless and the farmer, Roosevelt guaranteed plans that would "build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid." In 1897, Page's repeated use of "the forgotten man" identified and emotionalized the plight of those in society who were denied the democratic doctrine of equal opportunity. Distinctive and easily remembered, "the forgotten man" quickly became the symbol for the Southern public education campaign. Howard Odum has observed that when the crusade for public education in North Carolina "began to lag, it was Page who furnished its rallying cry--'The Forgotten Man'--which lived in the popular mind and summed up, in a way that a thousand speeches could never have done, the great purpose for which the best people of the state were striving."

Throughout the course of "The Forgotten Man," which Peter Wilson has referred to as a "great prose poem," Page employed a plain but expressive style to endorse the concept of public educated, advocated by "public-spirited, far-sighted, energetic young men" like McIvers and Alderman, as capable of causing "a rejuvenation of our life and social order."


Even those critical of the address, admired the style exercised by the speaker in "The Forgotten Man:"

(Page) is a scholarly man, with an exceedingly active, aggressive mind, and is master of a style that is the vogue now--direct, plain, carefully wrought. There are no grand sentences, no massive thoughts, no splendid rhetorical displays, nothing that men of the South acquainted with the great literature would call eloquent. He is very clear, emphatic, positive, and sometimes sarcastic, biting, even virile. His address is very entertaining reading indeed. It is a decided success of its own kind.

Without question, Page's style in "The Forgotten Man" contributed a great measure to the effectiveness of the speech.

Assessment

"The Forgotten Man" provided the "rousing speech to kick off the summer campaign" that McIver had hoped. In this ceremonial oration Page censured the social forces which had ignored the needs of the people and praised the concept of public education. Utilizing appeals to self-esteem and self-actualization, he worked from two premises accepted by his audience: that North Carolinians were the heirs of a proud tradition, and that the principles of democracy also applied to education.

In praising the potential of locally supported education and criticizing the failure of its counterpart, a system based on social class, Page employed examples, authority, comparisons, and disjunctive reasoning clothed in a vigorous style. His fresh approach to the much discussed problem of education supplied arguments and insights for

57 Wilmington Messenger (North Carolina), May 26, 1897.

speakers and writers in the state.

The major weakness of the speech lay in the orator's digression to a speculation of the state's potential to create a co-educational university system by absorbing the denominational colleges of Davidson, Trinity and Wake Forest. If Page had not previously alienated church leaders, he did then. Perhaps learning from this experience, he never voiced such a proposal in any other speeches on southern education.

The bold spirit of the Greensboro address is probably the reason that the speech is regarded as Page's most famous effort. In "The Forgotten Man" the speaker threw aside caution, thus setting the speech apart from others of the day on the same subject. His abilities as a speaker, especially his word choice, apt illustrative material and his role as an expatriate Southerner provided him with advantages denied other speakers. Lacking the insight of a native, a Northerner could not have delivered "The Forgotten Man," and, even so, would have been discredited as a meddler if he tried. So too, a resident of North Carolina could not have delivered the address if he wished to remain in the state. A McIver or an Alderman, presidents of state institutions, would probably have faced the pressures of losing their jobs, state funds, or students. The risks were too great. Only a Walter Hines Page, a talented speaker and a native not dependent on local interests for his livelihood, could have delivered the speech.

After returning to Boston, Page received a letter from McIver who announced that the speech had "produced a very profound impression," and promised a packet of "newspaper comments" on the address.59

59Charles Duncan McIver, to WHP, May 5, 1897.
In some quarters of the state, Page's address stirred up a hostile reaction, particularly from the churches. One editor deemed it "an unfortunate thing that young ladies on a Commencement occasion should be taught by a brilliant author and speaker, that the church which warmed the hearthstones of the homes from which they came is an enemy to the sacred cause of education."60 The North Carolina Baptist considered the effort "a sneer at denominational education" and a "covert appeal for 'State aid.'"61 Another defender of ecclesiastical education denied that the churches had ignored the plight of "the children in huts" and claimed that "surely Mr. Page knew that where the State has reached tens the church has helped hundreds."62 The writer also commented that the idea of a university system was not to be taken lightly. "It expresses no doubt, the ambitions of the advocates of State-aid ... they would swallow us up. ... When the day comes, we may indeed not talk of the forgotten men and women, but we will long for a forgotten Christ."

Additional critics referred to Page's characterization of the state's educational structure as aristocratic as "moonshine--the merest attenuated figment of a thing ... a myth, a dream, a chimera, a ghost, without fealty or bones."63 The editor explained that "until recent times it was not considered a function of the government to educate the people." The Wilmington Messenger had earlier declared

60 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
61 North Carolina Baptist, July 2, 1897.
62 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
63 Wilmington Messenger, May 29, 1897.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
that Page, a resident of Cambridge, Massachusetts, had "evidently taken
on some 'yankee notions,' as all Southerners are apt to do who abide
long in that part of the world."\textsuperscript{64} Webster's Weekly, published in
Reidsville, neither accepted the speech as "history" nor "appreciated
the ridicule at the generations of Tar Heels who have preceded us. A
young man may be smarter than the old folks at home, but it is not to
his credit to joke about their stupidity . . . and apologize for their
unfitness to shine in society."\textsuperscript{65} McIver regarded such criticism a
"compliment" to the speech, and considered the fact that the people
were still talking about it as "a good sign."\textsuperscript{66}

The Aberdeen Telegraph endorsed the speech for its "great solid
chunks of facts" which while "not very pleasing to the ear of
Carolinians . . . was the truth and such truth ought to be beneficial
to the State."\textsuperscript{67} The Washington Evening Messenger regarded "The
Forgotten Man" a "masterly address" and observed that "if a copy of the
speech could be placed in every household in the State, no greater
impetus could be given to the cause of education which shall be free to
every child."\textsuperscript{67} The Charlotte Observer called the oration "one of the
most interesting and practical addresses delivered in the State during
the present generation."\textsuperscript{69} Noting that "Mr. Page didn't come down here,

\textsuperscript{64}Wilmington Messenger, May 26, 1897.
\textsuperscript{65}Webster's Weekly (Reidsville, North Carolina), June 9, 1897.
\textsuperscript{66}Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, June 4, 1897.
\textsuperscript{67}Aberdeen Telegram (North Carolina), nd., Page MSS.
\textsuperscript{68}Evening Messenger (Washington, North Carolina), May 27, 1897.
\textsuperscript{69}Charlotte Observer, nd., Page MSS.
a thousand miles, to utter pleasant platitudes to us," the Observer responded to the criticism of the editor of the Wilmington Messenger, advising him not to allow his loyalty to the state to "dull his ears to patient though unagreeable truths." Josephus Daniels applauded Page for speaking "his mind with utter disregard as to what Colonel This or Judge That may say about it." Daniels noted that Page was "a thinker" and that "his speech speaks for itself."

... it took him fifteen years to write the speech. It is the result of more than that many years of reflection. ... he believed so firmly that the doctrine he expounded is based on eternal truth that, having sown the seed, he will await with confidence the day of harvesting.

In the midst of his canvassing activities prior to the August elections, McIver wrote Page that his speech had "done great good. ... I have just returned from Mt. Airy, where they are making a desperate effort to carry local taxation for schools. I noticed their weekly paper yesterday published a long extract from your address--the part in regard to local taxation." When the votes were counted only twelve out of a total of 1,300 districts endorsed the concept of local taxation for public education. McIver claimed the reason for the overwhelming defeat was because "the teachers had no campaign fund and the question did not get a fair representation to the people. Josephus Daniels put the blame on the Negro question, and Superintendent Mebane blamed Democrats like Daniels.

70 Ibid.
71 News and Observer (Raleigh), May 19, 1897.
72 Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, July 22, 1897, Page MSS.
who used the local tax election as a springboard for 1898 legislative campaign."

The failure of more districts to pass the tax levy is not the final measure of the effectiveness of Page's speech. Virginius Dabney observed that the address was "a sound statement of the educational needs of the state, and it jarred many Southerners out of the almost impenetrable fog of smugness and self-satisfaction in which they had been enveloped for decades." The impact of the Greensboro address carried far beyond the summer months of 1897. Through his speech Page furnished a "rallying cry--'The Forgotten Man'--which lived in the popular mind and summed up, in a way a thousand speeches could not have done, the great purpose for which the best people of the state were striving." 

While Page had irritated many Southerners, his effort established his reputation as an educational reform spokesman. Inviting Page to attend the Conference for Education in the South in Capon Springs, West Virginia, Hollis Burke Frissell, principal of Hampton Institute, confessed having "been much interested in your address 'The Forgotten Man.'" As a part of his southern tour of 1899 Page returned to Greensboro and delivered an address entitled "The Making of Literature" to the ladies of the State Normal and Industrial School. Following this speech McIver wrote, "Nothing indicates to me

73 Harlan, Separate and Unequal, pp. 59-60.
74 Dabney, Liberalism in the South, p. 181.
75 Odum, Southern Pioneers, p. 65.
76 Hollis Burke Frissell to WHP, March 13, 1899, Page MSS.
more clearly that your address on 'The Forgotten Man' was thoroughly appreciated than that numbers of people at a distance from Greensboro have hoped to hear you come here again."

The education campaign of 1897 was a failure, but in the long-run gains were made under a new banner, "the forgotten man." Page's speech had popularized the cause across the South and the nation, and inspired dozens of men like McIver and Alderman to continue their efforts in the field.

Address at the Dedication of the Trinity College Library

On February 23, 1903 Page was in Durham, North Carolina, to deliver the principal address at the dedication of the Trinity College Library. Present for the occasion were the faculty, students and trustees of the College as well as "many visitors from a distance," among these were Page's brothers Robert and Henry, the latter named to the school's Board of Trustees in the following months.

Page's presence as an honored guest on the Trinity campus represented a weakening in the opposition of the denominational college toward public funded education.

Following the Civil War "Southern churches became for a time the center of resistance to the invasion of northern culture." Part of this obstinacy was manifested in opposition to public funding of education. Aside from running contrary to the traditional attitudes of

77Charles Duncan McIver to WHP, November 4, 1899, Page MSS.
78Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
the South, denominational leaders resented the competition of public education. "Increasingly, however, as the churches, with . . . their large investments in colleges, universities, and schools, and their private endowments became vested interests, and as they became more dependent upon the 'publicans' North and South--the tobacco trust, for example, and various Northern philanthropic endowments--the earlier tendency faded."80 The attitude of clergymen-president John Carlisle Kilgo of Methodist Trinity College reflected this gradual reduction in the vigor of opposition to public funded education.

Except for his disapproval of state supported education, Kilgo was much like Page in his attitude toward the New South. An advocate of developing the industrial potential of the South, Trinity's president "visualized the triumph of progress and prosperity and intellectual freedom over sectionalism, partisanship, and denominational bigotry."81 President of Trinity from 1894 to 1910, he was "not the only Southern leader who held advanced political, social, and economic opinions, but he was unique in his determination to build an educational institution where these views could be fully discussed."82 By 1903 the similarity in their attitudes toward the New South outweighed the differences between Kilgo and Page.

In 1900 J.B. Duke donated $10,000 toward the construction of a new library building on the campus of Trinity College. The structure

80Woodward, p. 173.


was completed in 1903 at a cost of $55,000. Assuming the entire expense of the project, Duke also donated $10,000 for the purchase of books.83

In January of 1902 William Preston Few, Kilgo's assistant, asked Page to "make the principal address" at the dedication of the new library. Considering the gift "the first opportunity to build up a great library the South has ever seen," and regarding its opening "as an event of more than ordinary importance," he urged Page to come and "speak on the significance of the event, or on any kindred subject that may suggest itself to your mind." He further promised that "If you will come I believe we can give you a big occasion, and I'm sure you will be doing a real service in a good cause."84 Page responded that he would be happy to do so, but noted that he was also scheduled to speak at the "A&M College" at "about the same time."85 When the conflict was resolved, he penned his brief acceptance: "Yes, Monday, February 23rd suits me, thank you, and I feel sorry only for you and your audience."86

After "The Forgotten Man" address Page had several opportunities to return and speak in North Carolina. In 1899 he delivered lectures in Greensboro at the Normal School on "The Making of Literature" and on "The Greater Republic," dealing with national affairs, at the University of North Carolina. Invited to address the

83 Garber, p. 136.
84 William Preston Few to WHP, December, 1902, Page MSS.
85 WHP to William Preston Few, January 17, 1903, Duke University, Archives, William Preston Few Manuscript Collection.
86 WHP to William Preston Few, January 17, 1903, Few MSS.
North Carolina Teachers Association in Wrightsville in 1902, he was prepared to "roast old preachers that have been scaring the courage out of these teachers." Ill-health prevented him from keeping this engagement. The next opportunity to deliver an address in his home state came from an unlikely source, Methodist-supported Trinity College.

Certain factors worked together to make Page a more attractive figure to private college supporters with whom he had been at odds in the school levy campaign in 1897. The expatriate-journalist was a former student, having attended the school for one year, and a member of a family well-known in the Durham area. In addition, awarded honorary degrees from Randolph-Macon College, 1900, and Tulane University, 1902, he now carried the title Dr. Page. Also, his journalistic career continued to grow. In 1899, attracted by the opportunity of being his own boss, he left the Atlantic Monthly and moved to New York to form Doubleday, Page & Company with Frank Doubleday. After establishing themselves as book publishers, Doubleday and Page introduced a new journal called World's Work in October, 1901, with Page serving as editor. Describing the magazine to Joel Chandler Harris, he said, "It is not going to publish fiction, but it will be rather a practical, man's magazine, handsomely illustrated, as well written as possible, a thing of serious purpose and broad scope." Under his guidance the journal became a success and served as an effective commentary on progressive efforts in agriculture and industry as well.

---

87 WHP to Wallace Buttrick, April 11, 1902, Page MSS.
88 WHP to Joel Chandler Harris, August 2, 1900, Page MSS.
as social, political, and educational progress. Southern educational leaders recognized the influence of Page and *World's Work*. Charles W. Dabney, president of the universities of Tennessee and Cincinnati, wrote, "Can you notice our school in the W's W? It will help us very much."89

Therein lies the secret of Page's appeal to Trinity College. He was an influential figure: A Southerner, editor of one of the nation's most influential journals, interested in education, and friend of numerous industrial and philanthropic leaders. Trinity College's president Kilgo, as had Charles Dabney, was aware of the power of Page's influence as a journalist and contact with philanthropists and foundations. Having been attacked by conservative denominational education leaders for his insistence on high standards and academic freedom and by liberals for "having sold out to the trusts"90 in accepting the patronage of the Duke family, Kilgo considered a friendly relationship with Page beneficial to the school's interests.

The formal opening of the Trinity College Library was held in the evening of February 23 in Braxton Craven Hall. Bishop William Wallace Duncan of the North Carolina Methodist Church offered the dedicatory prayer, and James H. Southgate, president of the Board of Trustees, read a history of the library building. Judge Armstead Burwell of Charlotte presented the building to the College which was accepted by President Kilgo.91

89 Charles William Dabney to WHP, nd., Page MSS.


91 "The Formal Opening of the Trinity College Library," Page MSS.
Line of Reasoning

While a significant event in the life of Trinity College, the dedication of the library was only of peripheral importance to the growth of public education in North Carolina. However, in praising the new edifice as a symbol of commitment to higher learning, Page found an opportunity to amplify the importance of universal education. Unbound by the expedient demands dictated by Winston's inauguration and the school levy campaign of 1897, he discussed the importance of public instruction in a more idealistic tone.

Based almost entirely on the premise that the democratic principle applied to education and the Southerner's pride in his country, Page amplified the following proposition:

... the next application of the democratic principle in a broad and general way should be to the training of all people.

In developing this concept Page sought to (1) define the democratic principle, (2) illustrate its benefits when applied to various areas of American life, and (3) hypothesize its success if applied to education.

Although he again followed a problem-solution organization, Page's Trinity address differed from his remarks in Chapel Hill and Greensboro in that it offered much praise and little blame.

Forms of Support

Page relied upon examples, comparisons, illustrations, testimony, hypothetical reasoning, appeals to motives of self-esteem and self-actualization, and connotative language as the major means of amplification in the Trinity address.
In emphasizing the desirability of applying the "democratic principle to all parts of life," Page proposed "to remind" his audience of the successful application of the principle to three "notable achievements in the country's history.

He stressed that the application of the democratic principle to the formation of the government had resulted in "a thing so momentous that it marks an epoch in all human history." Likewise, speaking of "the settlement of the West," he described "the first great democratic migration of men in history" in which "the task was done better than any such task was ever done before." Every man "went in a democratic way. He marched, camped, fought, and settled as he pleased. It was the working out of the individual genius in him that determined his course."

Passing over "that horrible nightmare of the Civil War," Page still found cause to praise the power of the democratic principle referring to the example of men who had not been trained for battle but "became such soldiers as no preceding commander had lead."

Developing his final example of the successful application of the democratic principle, Page praised the rapid growth of industry resulting from the opportunity for every man to "seek that occupation in which he can best succeed, that craft for which he has the greatest aptitude." Thus, the "American workman not only makes better things, but he makes them faster and more cheaply; and yet he gets more money for making them than any other workman ever got." Page employed comparisons to emphasize that the nation stood apart from all other countries in its application of the principles of democracy.
Of politics and the formation of government, Page noted "there never was any other political event so strong in its liberalizing influence." He contrasted the westward settlement in which each man "settled as he pleased" with "every preceding great migration of men" who "had followed a king or a warrior or a chief of a clan." As a result, he concluded "there has never been in any country or time such a population as the contented, well-informed, energetic multitudes that dwell between our two mountain ranges."

Page used two hypothetical illustrations to develop the benefits which he expected from the application of the democratic principle "in a broad and general way" to education. In his first illustration he asked his audience to assume that 20% of the people in every community had reached "their ultimate cultivation of hand, of mind, and of body," and were trained "to the point of each man's and woman's ability." While an exceptional community, that well-trained twenty, he stressed, would have to "carry the other eighty." However, he asserted no imagination could "conceive the change that would take place" if the eighty had the chance to develop and perfect their talents.

Explaining that Utopian dreamers from Plato to Bellamy had sought to release men from work, Page observed that "man would degenerate if he ceased to toil," and defined his own Utopia in terms of "ever increasing efficiency of well-directed labor, every man working according to his own aptitude." With this concept in mind, he shared his vision of the ideal community, city or state where:
1. "everyone has equality before the law,"

2. there is "equality of opportunity," so that "a man would naturally find his fittest place and fall into it;"

3. there is "compulsory training," so that "every citizen will be trained to do something,"

4. the people are "healthful," and

5. there is "free thought and free speech . . . about anything that is for the public welfare."

He asserted that in such a community "most of our 'problems' would" solve themselves.

In his closing remarks Page referred to his recent conversation with the well-known and highly respected James B. Duke, donor of the library, native of Durham and patron of the college:

I reminded him that you had paid me the compliment to ask me to make the address at the opening of this Library, and I asked 'what shall I say?'

He replied with great earnestness, 'Tell them every man to think for himself.'

On that authority Page dedicated the library to "free thought, reverent always, always earnest . . . about all subjects, the frequent thought that is the very atmosphere of an ideal community."

As he had in the Greensboro address, Page employed syllogistic reasoning as both a transitional and amplificatory device. Following his discussion of the successful outcome of the application of the democratic principle to various aspects of life, he asked his audience why the same principle might not be applied to "the right training of all men." In proper form the syllogism would read:
If the democratic principle worked when applied to the formation of government, western settlement, and the development of industry, then the same principle will work when applied to the right training of all the people.

The democratic principle worked when applied to the formation of government, western settlement and the development of industry.

Therefore, the democratic principle will work when applied to the right training of all the people.

Expressed in his speech, Page said:

Now if the democratic principle worked a revolution in the organization, and in the very conception of government . . . if it worked a revolution in the conquest of a continent . . . and if it worked a revolution in industry and in the organization of industry . . . why may not this same principle work revolutions in other parts of life, if it be trusted and applied.

I have gone through this catalogue of familiar things, I hope not to your weariness, for the single purpose of coming to the point that I had in mind at the beginning,—namely that the next application of the democratic principle in a broad and general way must be directed to the training of the people, the right training of all the people.

Page's use of examples, comparisons, illustrations, testimony, and hypothetical reasoning were all intended to amplify the premise that the democratic principle applied to education.

In the Trinity address Page utilized two motive appeals, self-esteem and self-actualization. The emotional tone of the speech was established by the speaker's commendation of the benefits of applying the principles of democracy to various aspects of life and his audience's pride in their school and country.

Page defined the democratic principle as "nothing more or less than this:"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
that society shall be so organized that every individual may have the same opportunity for his development that every other individual has, that everyone may find his natural aptitude, that none may be hindered, and that every man who has the possibility of growth in him may achieve it, and most easily.

He heightened the importance of the principle by labeling it "the greatest truth that civilization has wrought out," and "the central secret of human progress." Thus, in calling for the "application of the unhesitating and uncompromising democratic principle to all parts of life," Page accentuated the need to begin at "both the top and the bottom of society (for) so long as any human being is left out of the scheme of perfect training, all will suffer some loss. You cannot know that the one left out might not be the greatest leader you have ever had." As such, he praised Trinity College for sending out its men "to develop a scheme of instruction whereby none shall be neglected. There is no other mission quite so important." Page used appeals to the audience's pride in their association with Trinity College and their country to enhance his amplification of the right of each individual to receive an education. He congratulated the audience for their part in "the progress" of the school in quickly establishing "a standard for scholarship that is as high as if you had had a long period to grow up to it," and for taking a "place at once among the very best institutions of the kind, and the kind is best for the high culture of men." He also praised the school "as an institution for the higher training of youth, where they get standards of thought and life fixed, to which they hold throughout their careers."
To a greater extent Page attempted to arouse southern patriotism to compliment and magnify his appeals to self-actualization manifested in their allegiance to the democratic ideal.

Speaking of the application of the democratic ideal to the formation of government, Page mentioned the "fathers of the republic" and "the thing that we fought for in the revolutionary war." Referring to the settlement of the country, he described how man made a "conquest of that wonderful country between the Appalachian and the Rocky Mountains," marching, camping, fighting and settling as they pleased. The end result was to settle a continent "better stocked with men than any other country ever was because every man had the same opportunity that every other man had." Finally, referring to industry, he praised "the American workman" who had "invaded the oldest kingdoms of the world," and now reigned along with "the American Organizer" as "monarchs of the world's industry today."

Combining the democratic appeal and appeals to pride by extolling the "capacity of American manhood" and "demonstrating the capacity of the democratic principle," Page concluded: "If we are inclined to boast, we should not be warranted in boasting of ourselves, so much as in boasting of the one great central secret of human progress that we have discovered and applied."

One newspaper reported that Page's address "was calculated to stimulate our interest in a free government, in free people, in free thought. He closed with the statement that the realization of the democratic ideal is the highest manifestation of humanity."92

92 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
Page's speech was characterized by word usage that expressed the speaker's pride in his country, its people and its system of government. Thus, as the newspaper account indicated, he labeled democracy "the greatest truth that civilization has wrought out" and characterized by "free thought" and "free speech." Referring to the people, he spoke of "strong men," the "American worker," the "American Organizer," "American Manhood," and "monarchs of the world's industry today."

Trinity's new library building was not only the stimulus for the speaking occasion, but Page used it as a symbol of the institution's commitment to educational progress. As such, he pronounced the building of a modern library as "a new thing in North Carolina" and "almost a new thing in the world." The editor of World's Work called the completion of the structure evidence of "colossal common sense" on the part of Trinity's leaders and supporters.

Page's speech was also characterized by its oral quality. Rhetorical questions were employed to aid the audience in following the course of the speech. Referring to the application of the democratic principle to various aspects of society, questions raised by the speaker were: "With what result?," "What has happened?," "But what do we do?," and "What is the result?"

The North Carolinian also employed expressions such as: "what I propose very briefly to remind you of," "I need not rehearse to you," "I hope not to your weariness," "The first thought that would occur to you," and "you who pursue your studies in this college." These further indicate the speaker's awareness of his audience and concern for oral
Thus, in his address in Durham, Page again employed his usual plain and direct style. His words conveyed a sense of optimism and idealism. In this respect they accentuated the positive theme of his message.

**Assessment**

Although speaking on the campus of a private college, Page utilized the stimulus for the occasion, the dedication of a library, as an opportunity to promote the concept of public education. He accomplished this goal by reasoning from the premise that the principles of democracy apply to education and the sub-premises that all men have a right to an education and to the fair opportunity to discover and develop their talents.

Page's address at Durham was considered:

...characteristic of the man, fresh, practical, advanced, and bold... The large audience was in full sympathy with the speaker, and rendered the tribute of frequent applause. Mr. Page may content himself with the realization that his address was a great inspiration to the student body and all others present.93

The Trinity address probably proved inspirational to the audience because of the speaker's use of examples and comparisons which appealed to their pride in the college and their country. He also utilized optimistic illustrations which developed the expected benefits of the right training of all people and presented an attractive picture of a utopian society. In dedicating the new library, Page wisely chose to quote the benefactor of the school, James B. Duke,

93Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
Page made the library a symbol of Trinity's academic standards and ideals of freedom of thought and expression. His emphasis was prophetic. Seven months after his speech, Trinity became embroiled in a controversy over academic freedom. John Spencer Bassett, history professor and editor of the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, published an article entitled "Stirring up the Fires of Race Antipathy" in which he declared Booker T. Washington "a great and good man, a Christian statesman . . . all in all the greatest man, save General Lee, born in the South in a hundred years," and charged that some editors were guilty of "stirring up the fires of race antipathy" for their own political advantage. His observation brought down a storm of abuse on Bassett, Kilgo and the College.

In this controversy Page played a small but important role. Writing to B.N. Duke, he argued the correctness of Bassett's observation was of no consequence, but it was "of highest importance that a professor from Trinity College be allowed to hold and to express any rational opinion." The Duke family threw their support behind President Kilgo who stood ready to resign if the trustees called for Bassett's dismissal. Fortunately the Board voted 18 to 7 to support Bassett.

94John Spencer Bassett, "Stirring Up the Fires of Race Antipathy," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, II (October, 1903), 299.
95Bassett, 303.
96WHP to B.N. Duke, November 23, 1904, Page MSS.
Page remained in contact with Trinity College over the years. In 1908 he was invited to attend the unveiling of the Washington Duke Memorial Statue.\(^98\) In his last year as Trinity's president, Kilgo remarked it was always "both a pleasure and a profit to share Page's companionship."\(^99\)

By 1903, with denominational colleges enjoying the patronage of philanthropists, his speech at Trinity College, and his role in the "Bassett affair," Page enjoyed a more cordial relationship with ecclesiastical educators in North Carolina. A great obstacle to public support of higher education had been rolled away.

"The Man Behind the Plow"

Three months after he presented the dedicatory address for Trinity College's new library, Page delivered his commencement oration "The Man Behind the Plow" at the North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College in Raleigh on May 26, 1903. He spoke at the invitation of its president, his old friend George Winston. His audience was composed of the graduates of the A&M College, their families, the faculty, trustees, and "a splendid, representative Raleigh audience completely filled the big hall to the very back seats . . ."\(^100\) Seated on the platform with Page were: President Winston, S. L. Patterson, Commissioner of Agriculture, members of the Board of Agriculture, Chief

\(^98\)John Carlisle Kilgo to WHP, March 9, 1908, Page MSS.

\(^99\)John Carlisle Kilgo to WHP, June 14, 1910, Page MSS.

\(^100\)The News and Observer (Raleigh), May 27, 1903.
In December, 1912, Winston invited Page to deliver an address at the dedication of the Pullen Memorial Building, scheduled for completion in February:

We all desire you to make the address of the occasion. You knew R.S. Pullen, you knew the series of events and forces that produced the Agricultural and Mechanical College . . . you know the sturdy character of the rural population of North Carolina and its utter lack of industrial skill and knowledge, you know the recent scientific discoveries along agricultural lines, you know the movement for industrial training and education in all civilized nations, you know how contemptuously the Old South and especially North Carolina looked upon all forms of industrial activity much less upon industrial education, you know how the resources of North Carolina invite and demand skill and knowledge no less than labor for their conversion into wealth, and, in short, you are the man to speak to our people on this subject and this occasion.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Page feared a conflict in dates of the dedication of Trinity's new library and the new building of the A&M College. However, when construction of the Pullen Memorial Building was delayed until the summer, Winston asked him to speak at the spring commencement.

Page's association with the College harked back to his days as editor in Raleigh and a member of the Watauga Club. "A few weeks after the club was organized:"

101 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.

102 George T. Winston to WHP, December 15, 1902, Page MSS.
a committee was appointed to prepare a report on the need and practicality of an industrial college in North Carolina. Arthur Winslow, a graduate of M.I.T., and chairman of the committee, submitted, on January 7, 1885, a report which was so convincing that the club voted to memorialize the General Assembly on the subject. Winslow, Peel, and Page were named as a committee to present the memorial and to supply the legislature with the necessary information.

In preparing the report queries arose as to whether the school should include agricultural training. Page settled the question "when he stated that the bill would never be passed by the 'damn farmer legislature unless there was some agriculture in it somewhere." His opinion was as pragmatic as it was abruptly stated, for "it was the public school that held the key to improving educational opportunity for the agricultural masses of North Carolina, and the farmer periodicals recognized that such was the case." The powerful Farmer's Alliance "through its local meetings, its newspapers, and its public gatherings, emphasized that if the agricultural classes wished to improve their conditions in the total society they must do so through education."

The legislature approved the bill and on March 3, 1887, the North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College was chartered as a land-grant college. Today known as North Carolina State University, the school received its first class in the fall of 1889.

103 Lockmiller, A History of the North Carolina State College, p. 27.

104 Ibid.


106 Ferguson, 134.
Page was forty-seven in 1903. The corncob pipe of his college
days "had been replaced with elegant and more prosperous looking
cigars. The eyelids still hung heavy over large brown eyes, but the
face was fuller . . . the hair thinner and farther back on the
forehead,"107 and he now sported a moustache. Although not particu-
larly handsome, his appearance and manner were befitting a man whose
progressive observations were read and heard with interest across the
country.

"The Man Behind the Plow" was delivered in the Academy of Music
Building. Winston introduced Page as editor of both World's Work and
Rural Life, another publication of Doubleday and Page. The president
praised him as "fitted" to edit an agricultural journal because "he is
a fine specimen (sic) of rural manhood, having been raised among that
class of people in Wake County." This remark drew a round of
applause.108

Line of Reasoning

Addressing the young men of the A&M College, most of whom had
prepared themselves for careers in agriculture, Page emphasized that
"no field of work . . . offers a greater reward in human progress than
agriculture as it is today, and as it is in North Carolina." The
proposition of the speech is thus found in his charge to the graduates:

You have the high duty to make the man behind the plow an
efficient man. In doing this you will do more than to add
incalculably to our wealth. You will bring also a better

107 Ross Gregory, Walter Hines Page: Ambassador to the Court of

108 Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
view of life.

Page again followed a problem-solution development in his speech. After (1) identifying the problem, the inefficient and unprofitable work of cheap and unskilled labor, he (2) praised Raleigh's progress which resulted from men willing and able to "do the job," (3) indicated that similar progress was feasible for the rest of the state, and (4) commended the graduates for their commitment to the right training of all men, especially the man behind the plow.

Similar to his speeches in Chapel Hill, Greensboro and Durham the editor of World's Work expressed his confidence in public instruction to present an opportunity for a better life for all the people as well as provide prosperous returns for the state.

Like the Trinity address, "The Man Behind the Plow" was a ceremonial oration characterized by ample praise and minimal blame. Reasoning from the premise that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of all men, Page identified "cheap labor" as the "curse of any country where it exists, because it means inefficient labor." As one would expect from a commencement speaker of an agricultural college, he also based his comments on the need to improve the rural economy on the premise that the state represented an agrarian society.

Forms of Support

"The Man Behind the Plow" is characterized by an extensive use of examples and comparisons and appeals to motives of self-esteem and self-actualization expressed in common language to amplify and enhance his reasoning.
Page used examples to illustrate the problems that arise from unskilled and inefficient labor. Recalling an embarrassing episode from his days as editor of the Chronicle, he described how he had extolled the "cheapness of labor" in the state to a group of New England businessmen prospecting for industrial sites. "When the speech was done, one "grissly old Vermonter" replied, "Young fellow, that's just the trouble: we get too little for our work here." This response had caused him to realize that: "While I was starving for lack of decent pay for my own work, I was boasting about the lowness of wages. For I was so ill paid at my trade that I couldn't make a living. Wages were too low."

As a means of both identifying with his audience and amplifying the changes that had taken place in the South, Page referred to the growth of the College itself. Noting that where it stands was once "an old field and the road that ran by it was the worst piece of highway," he recalled as a boy having "hauled peaches to market over it." This road, "the very worst piece of highway on earth," would be remembered by "every horse and mule and driver in this end of Wake County . . . throughout all eternity."

Page cited another personal example to illustrate that "the difference is not in the soil," but "in the man:"

Thirty years ago an old man in Rhamchat worked two acres of land and made just enough 'truck' to buy liquor on Washington Street to get drunk twice a year. I used to see him riding out Hillsboro Street standing in his wagon, making a speech in praise of Governor Vance. I have seen two acres in a colder climate of no better land--till it was made better by man--yield a crop worth $600 an acre net.
Page employed comparisons as the major amplificatory device in his speech. As such, he compared and contrasted: (1) Raleigh and the state in 1883 and 1903, (2) the divergent ways of looking at society, and (3) the economic measure of North Carolina and Iowa.

Comparing the city of Raleigh with itself as it was two decades earlier, Page observed "it has so completely changed in the personal relations of its citizens, in the relative importance of its families, in the nature of its industries, that an old resident must get all his bearings anew." He noted that "the population has increased half a million," illiteracy is "decreasing now faster than ever before," "manufactured products are worth more every year than its farm products," and "railroad mileage increased from less than two thousand to four thousand miles." He also recalled that two decades earlier the A&M school existed "only in the minds of a group of young men who used to meet in an office on Fayetteville Street and talk over the possibility of such a thing."

Page compared and contrasted two different ways of looking at society as a means of commending state leaders for their confidence in the ability of the people. "One way ... is to say that God made some men useful and that he made others worthless and that we can't do much to change the Almighty's handiwork." The alternative or the democratic point of view is "to say that all men are capable of some degree of development, and that it is the duty of society to give everyone a chance to develop his aptitudes the best he can." Contrasting the differences of the two, he declared "the first method makes a
sort of aristocracy of privilege and opportunity." The other way gives "the clodhoppers and jacklegs and their children--a chance. . . to become a skillful man and get the rewards of his skill." Again contrasting the two, he compared the first method to "life in the Middle Ages" and the second to "life in the modern republic." In the age of kings, "a man with power looked up the great body of men as a common head, good to till his land, to fight his battles, to obey his orders . . . to keep their place." In the modern age, "men began to get individual chances," and "every man began to adjust himself to society according to his character and ability." The end result was that "society moved forward," and "almost every man in Wake County now lives better than the Kings of England once lived."

Announcing that "the best way of getting a right economic measure of North Carolina is by comparing it with some other State of a generally similar character and opportunity," Page embarked upon a comparison of his home state and Iowa," another agricultural state. He employed a wealth of statistics to magnify the greater progress achieved by the midwestern state. In this manner he emphasized:

Population: While the states are relatively equal in size and population, "600,000 persons . . . have gone to Iowa" and only "83,000 . . . have come to North Carolina" . . . "46,000 more persons have gone to Iowa than have come from it; but 246,000 more have gone away from North Carolina than have come to it." This, the speaker observed, was "the first start-difference between the two states. Iowans moved away from home; but persons from other States come and take their places. More come than go away. On the other hand, for every person who comes to North Carolina from another State, four native Carolinians go away"
Home Ownership: "In Iowa 60% of the houses are owned by the persons who live in them; in North Carolina 46%. In Iowa about 30% of the homes are leased. In North Carolina more than half are leased."

Education: "Of children from 5 to 9 years of age North Carolina has 30% at school; Iowa has 67%. Of children 10 to 14 years North Carolina has 63%; Iowa has 91%.

Industry: "... the average annual wage per hand in manufactures is only a little more than twice as much in Iowa ($408) as in North Carolina ($196) ... Yet every factory worker in Iowa turns out a product about twice as valuable as the factory worker in North Carolina."

Farming: "Not only are their farm products worth more than four times as much as ours; but their farm property is worth eight times as much as ours. Our farm property has increased 50% in twenty years; theirs has increased 150% ... We have a greater diversity of soil than the Iowans. We are as near markets as they are. We grow some great staples that they cannot grow--such as cotton and tobacco and rice ... the average income of farm-workers in North Carolina is $146 a year, and in Iowa $611 a year. In other words a farm-worker in Iowa makes, earns and gets nearly four times as much as a farm-worker in North Carolina. In other words, he is four times as capable a man--four times as good at his business.

Reasoning from effect to cause in his lengthy comparison between the two states, Page announced, "the key to the difference is the efficiency of labor," that is, "It's the difference between the men behind the plows." To conclude this line of reasoning, he stressed that Iowans "have trained their people better. They till the soil better; they know it better; they use more machinery; they use more intelligence." The implication was clear: "So long as the man behind the plow is untrained, the earth resents the insult and becomes barren; and every untrained man behind the plow makes the soil of North Carolina poorer--makes the state poorer--makes us all poorer."
In his oration Page again focused his emotional appeals on two motives, self-actualization and self-esteem, as a means of enhancing the premises that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of all men.

Page utilized the motive of self-actualization in glorifying "the modern republic" where "at last men began to get individual chances." Whereas human society had gone on for "centuries without any great change," men free to develop the full potential of their abilities "became richer--so immensely richer that comforts multiplied beyond precedent:"

The commonest with equal chances given to him now and then developed into the most uncommon. Men no longer looked on any class as fixed or doomed; and every man began to adjust himself to society according to his character and ability. See what changes came! In a few generations human society moved forward as it had not moved for centuries.

Pointing to Raleigh's progress over a period of only two decades, Page lauded the leaders who refused to accept "the doctrine that our people are incapable," but rather "believed in the efficiency of the people."

Page excited the pride of his audience by lavishing ample approbation on North Carolina in general and the graduates of the A&M College in particular. In congratulating the commonwealth on its aim of "training men to work," Page cited the increase in population, the decreasing rate of illiteracy, the rising value of industrial and agricultural products, increased railroad mileage, urban growth, changes in leadership, and the appearance of the A&M College itself.
The speaker claimed "the greatest progress has been made in manufactures and education," which was the result of the efforts of "our own men and women."

Directing his attention to advances made in education, Page declared "the progress... is much to our credit--very much to our credit:

The descending line of black illiteracy has come down from 43 per cent in 1880 to 28 per cent in 1900--a wonderful record to the everlasting glory of the North Carolina school-master, school-mistress, school-agitator, and to the undying credit of an awakened people. This is one of the most creditable chapters on the recent history of any commonwealth or of any country.

Pointing to the rapid growth in industrial progress, Page emphasized that "during the last ten years the value of manufactured products in North Carolina has increased at a faster rate than Iowa," a state similar in many respects. He noted that the state's "manufactures have gone beyond our agriculture in value," which he attributed to the presence of "better trained men in our factories and better men to manage them."

Page commended the graduating class as "the first generation of men in North Carolina that has had a chance to be trained to scientific agriculture." Expanding the importance of their potential to the state, he reminded them of their duty "to make the man behind the plow an efficient man." In so doing, they would add incalculably to our wealth and "bring also a better view of life." Amplifying this charge, the editor from New York combined both praise and admonition:
You understand the right training to work--to work with the hands. . . Other people may fool themselves, if they still care to do so. Some may think that it is better to be a jackleg lawyer than a master carpenter. Some may think that a lazy drone of a preacher is better than a good blacksmith. Some may think that to be an unproductive 'prominent citizen' is better than to make good split-bottom chairs. But you know better. You have got away from all these delusions. You have set your life square with the great truth that underlies all progress in a democracy--that a man is worth to the state exactly what he can do well--no more, no less. His work may be any sort of work--no matter what. He is sound in proportion to his skill in doing it well.

Applauding the graduates for their decisions to pursue careers in agriculture, Page appealed to the agrarian myth. He praised agriculture as offering "a greater reward in human progress" than any other work, and identified those who engaged in its study with "the great of all ages, from Abraham to Thomas Jefferson." Cognizant of their common heritage as agrarians, he lauded "the constancy" of values in an agricultural society.

Echoing Sidney Lanier's poem "Thar's More in the Man Than Thar is in the Land," Page stressed "the difference is not in the soil. It is in the men." In so doing, he urged the graduates to remember that agricultural prosperity lay in the right training of the farmer.

In answer to the rhetorical question "What is North Carolina?" Page stirred Tar Heel pride in answering "these rolling hills . . . :

... these sand slopes that lead eastward to the sea, these uplands that rise to our mountains. These are all fertile, each in its own way and each according to the knowledge that men bring to their culture. These are North Carolina; . . . your civilization depends on this--whether the man behind the plow be a clodhopper, or a sympathetic scholar of the soil.
The graduates of the A&M College expected commendation from the commencement speaker for their decision to serve the agricultural interests of the state and Page was not reluctant to bestow the anticipated praise.

In reporting Page's address to the graduates of the A&M College, The News and Observer (Raleigh) ran the headline "The Man Behind the Plow, by Walter H. Page."\(^{109}\) As he had done with "The Forgotten Man," the orator had employed a phrase which served as the title of his speech and throughout the course of his remarks. A rhythmic, easily remembered phrase, "The Man Behind the Plow" possessed a literal as well as figurative power. The title was capable of arousing up concrete images of a farmer plowing his field, a familiar sight throughout the state, and functioning as the symbolic key to the difference between efficient and inefficient labor.

The News and Observer reported that the oration was "one of the most practical, powerful, common-sense and at the same time eloquent addresses on farming and North Carolinians' opportunities ever heard in this part of the country,"\(^{110}\) and the Progressive Farmer (Raleigh) called it "a forceful enunciation of the truth."\(^{111}\) The Raleigh Post printed that Page had expressed his critical observations of "his own people . . . bluntly perhaps, but none of the less sincerely and

\(^{109}\) The News and Observer (Raleigh), May 27, 1903.

\(^{110}\) Ibid.

\(^{111}\) Progressive Farmer (Raleigh), June 9, 1903.
kindly. As these accounts indicate, the New York journalist had employed language that was clear and to the point. Page had scoffed at "cheap labor" and "inefficient labor" and declared to his agriculture-minded audience that "the earth resents the insult" of work by an untrained man. Thus, the speaker extolled the virtues of "efficient labor," "the training of men to work," "the advantage of good workmanship," "the better training of men," and "the efficiency of the people." In addressing a representative audience of an agrarian society, he lauded the study of agriculture as a work offering a "greater reward in human progress" than any other field. Reminding the graduates that "the difference is not in the soil. It is in the man." He urged them not to be a "clodhopper" but a "systematic scholar of the soil."

The editor of World's Work enhanced his ideas by expressing them in common language. As such, he spoke of how "Almost every man in Wake County now lived better than the Kings of England once lived, for they had neither forks nor soap, and in emphasizing the importance of worthwhile labor he asked, "If a man was of no account in Wake County, of what account could he be in Heaven after you got him there?"

As he had done in his previous speeches on education in the South, Page utilized an oral style. Thus, the North Carolinian commented: "You smile at the notion that cheap labor is advantageous," "I therefore invite you to make a comparison between North Carolina and

112 Raleigh Post, May 27, 1903.
Iowa,” "Here, then, we find," "When we come to," "our first duty then," and "Here comes your opportunity." These expressions also helped the listeners follow the development of the address.

An address characterized by a choice of words which appealed to practical thinkers, "The Man Behind the Plow" was praised by the *Progressive Farmer* which hoped that the young men of the state would understand "that 'it is better to make good split-bottom chairs' than to be an unproductive 'prominent citizen.'"\(^{113}\)

**Assessment**

In inviting Page to deliver a commencement address emphasizing the importance of skilled training to industrial and agricultural progress in North Carolina, Winston had told his friend "you are the man to speak to our people on this subject and this occasion."\(^{114}\) Winston considered him "the man" for the occasion because of the editor's middle-class North Carolina background, his knowledge of industrial and agricultural affairs in the state, the South and the nation, and his reputation as an advocate of progressive reforms in the South.

In "The Man Behind the Plow" Page attempted to heighten the appeal of public education by basing his reasoning on the premises that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of all men and that the state represented an agrarian society whose values must be preserved.

\(^{113}\) *Progressive Farmer*, June 9, 1903.

\(^{114}\) George T. Winston to WHP, December 15, 1902, Page MSS.
Relying primarily upon personal examples and comparisons, Page praised the benefits of efficient labor and the accomplishments of energetic men who could do a job. In a lengthy and detailed comparison between his home state and Iowa he followed an effect to cause line of reasoning to emphasize that the midwestern state had achieved far more with fewer resources because of better trained farm and industrial workers.

In its review of the speech the Raleigh Post printed:

Mr. Page is a native of the county of Wake and his reflections upon his early experience and observations were happy, specially when used in contrast with conditions under different environments. He loves his State and people and shows it more fully by his criticism and earnest admonitions than could be done by words of sympathetic flattery. His observations in other sections enable him to see the weak places among his own people and his affection provokes him to point them out, bluntly perhaps, but none the less sincerely and kindly.

While congratulating the young agriculturists of the college upon their opportunities and encouraging them in their labors, his remarks are as much intended for the people generally, specially those who lead in the new propoganda of education.115

The voice of the agricultural interests of the state, the Progressive Farmer, had high praise for the address: "A careful reading of our State exchanges shows that no other commencement address delivered in North Carolina this year has been so widely discussed as Dr. Walter H. Page's 'Man Behind the Plow' at the A&M College."116 The editor promised to print the orator's "striking parallel between Iowa and North Carolina" in the next issue.

115Raleigh Post, May 23, 1903.

116Progressive Farmer, June 9, 1903.
Page's speech in Raleigh was a well-received effort to promote the concept of public education by emphasizing the potential of right training to insure agricultural progress in particular and economic growth in general.

Summary

Walter Hines Page delivered four addresses between 1891 and 1903 in support of universal training in his home state of North Carolina. Although the final two speeches were presented nearly twelve years after his initial effort, the orations at Chapel Hill (1891), Greensboro (1897), Durham (1903), and Raleigh (1903) constitute the speaker's contribution to the public education movement in the state: (1) made ready by the Teachers' Institutes of McIver and Alderman, and highlighted by (2) the selection of George Tayloe Winston as Kemp Battle's successor at the University of North Carolina, (3) the founding of a woman's college in Greensboro with McIver as president, (4) the election of Charles Aycock as governor of the state, and (5) the growing prosperity and philanthropic interest which eased the financial burden and reduced the opposition of private colleges. In 1891 local support of public schools was regarded as a new and radical concept, but twelve years later attitudes had changed. While the state's education problems were not eliminated, the major voices of organized opposition were silent. In "The Man Behind the Plow," he praised the efforts of the "school-agitator" in popularizing universal education. The term aptly describes his view of his own role in the movement. Prior to his
address in Raleigh he apologized for his absence from a meeting of the Southern Education Board because of his commitment "to go off down South on a missionary journey."

In his speeches delivered in 1891 and 1897 Page's strategy differed from those in 1903. The early addresses, particularly "The Forgotten Man," were more abrasive and belligerent in mood. His attacks on the aristocratic attitude which opposed universal education were directed toward political and ecclesiastical leaders. As ceremonial speeches, they included almost equal amounts of praise and blame.

The emotional tone of the early speeches was established by repeated appeals to the audience's awareness of the individual's need for self-fulfillment, emphasizing the pathetic life of a forgotten people. Page's choice of language was also highly connotative and emotional. His title "The Forgotten Man" became a symbol for the neglected people whose lack of education denied them any hope of improving their lot in life. In referring to the forces which "chained" the forgotten man and woman, he spoke of aristocracy, "servitude to partyism and ecclesiasticism," yokes and halters, "slumbering" lands, "love of gain," "gilded and rancid self-righteousness," "the dulling touch of money-getting," "mendicant traditions," "compromise," "prejudice," failure, "colossal inertia," "special privilege," people who were dupes, dead-weights and opponents of progress, men with a "mendicant whine" who were "beggars for a church school" and perpetuators of poverty" whose "doctrine smells of the almshouse;" of "joyless"

117 WHP to Wallace Buttrick, May 22, 1903, Page MSS.
women "clad without warmth or grace" living without hope "in a shell of
dull content," and "dead men's hands" which held the people down. When
referring to the concept of public education advocated by "energetic,
public-spirited, far-sighted young men," he spoke of: "broadening
opportunity," a "new day," "high duty," the "people's institution,"
resounding workshops, "the interests of the people," courage, virtues,
Truth and God, hope, "the common people," "wiser-statesmanship," and
"a more certain means of grace."

Page's speeches in 1903 at Durham and Raleigh display a differ­
ent spirit. With the election of Aycock, the tide of public opinion
had turned and sentiment rested largely in favor of education. The New
York editor's target for censure became more generalized, shifting from
attacks upon specific groups, preachers and politicians, to the state of
mind which opposed local support of schools. Appeals to self-esteem
were directed at commending the people for what they had accomplished
and could hope to accomplish. While appeals to self-actualization were
still used, the speaker made no effort to duplicate the earlier word
pictures of pathetic, forgotten people. Consistent with the abundant
praise he offered, the speaker frequently used words such as: democracy,
democratic principle, the American Organizer-Workman-Manhood, "the
right training of all the people," free thought-opinion-speech,
"equality before the law," "doers," and "efficient, intelligent,
skilled labor." His choice of "The Man Behind the Plow" for the title
of his speech in Raleigh also conjured up images of strength and
agrarian values.
Page employed examples, comparison, illustration, testimony, and expressive style to amplify his ideas. These devices drew their strength from the fact, for the most part, that they were drawn from the speaker's own experiences and were familiar and relevant to the interest and experiences of his listeners.

Developing his line of reasoning from premises already agreed upon by his audiences, he utilized their belief in their heritage and ability as Southerners to achieve both identification with them and to praise their potential. By 1903, however, he spent less time referring to the past. As a recognized educational spokesman and famous native son, he apparently felt less pressure to establish his own credibility and to achieve a fair hearing. Instead he devoted more effort to amplifying the premises that the principles of democracy apply to education, that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of all men, that Southerners are a patriotic people, and that the South is an agrarian society.

In his speeches Page never turned to the Old South myths, i.e., visions of plantations, gallant gentlemen, lovely belles, courageous soldiers, and happy darkies, to enhance his ideas. In this respect he differed from other New South spokesmen. When speaking of the people's heritage, he looked past the war years to the revolutionary era when the South played an integral role in building the new nation. However, in criticism of the aristocratic attitude of southern society which stood in the way of the progress he envisioned,
he avoided any direct confrontation with the men or the institutions which represented the myths. His own upbringing as a Southerner had taught him that such a diatribe, typical of outsiders, would antagonize the people.

The years 1891 to 1903 were significant for both North Carolina and Page. During that time the state enjoyed an unparalleled growth in building both a state and locally supported school system, and Page rose from editor of the Forum and the Atlantic Monthly to a partnership in Doubleday, Page & Company, and was a recipient of honorary degrees from Randolph-Macon College and Tulane University. As a result of his oratorical efforts he was recognized as an advocate of southern education.
CHAPTER V
Southern Education Spokesman

Page's interest in southern education carried beyond the borders of North Carolina. The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of his activities in promoting education in the South and a rhetorical study of his speeches on its behalf.

In the years from 1901 to 1911 Page was afforded numerous opportunities to speak in the South. Business affairs, ill-health, and his involvement in various social and philanthropic organizations such as the Southern Club and the North Carolina Club of New York, the Johns Hopkins Alumni Council, the Columbia University Board of Trustees, President Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission, formed to eradicate hookworm in the South, the Southern Education Board, the General Education Board, the Jeannes Fund and the Slater Fund demanded much of his time. As his reputation grew he became one of the most sought after commencement and convention speakers in the country, and for a period of several months in 1909 "delivered no lectures or speeches anywhere because the thing got to be a nuisance."\(^1\)

While Page presented an address at Tuskegee Institute on March 9, 1899, and spoke at almost every meeting of the Conference for Education in the South from 1901 to 1911, no complete record remains of his remarks at the Alabama school and only one address was printed

\(^{1}\)WHP to John Spencer Bassett, January 21, 1910, Page MSS.
in the Conference Proceedings. Therefore, this chapter considers only the three extant speeches: "The School That Built a Town," a commencement address at the State Normal School in Athens, Georgia, December 11, 1901; "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," an address at the Seventh Conference for Education in the South held in Birmingham, Alabama, April 26, 1904; and "A Layman's Notion of a University," the Founder's Day oration at the University of South Carolina, in Columbia on January 12, 1911.

Education and the South

With Reconstruction over and optimistic about their future, the post-bellum generation of Southerners were more receptive to the concept of universal education. However, educators and educational statesmen like Page were confronted with a task of enormous proportions in their effort to encourage the development of public school systems in the southern states.

In North Carolina the War and the backlash to Reconstruction rule retarded or destroyed the little accomplishments of post-bellum attempts to develop public schools in the South. The situation in Virginia was typical where, although "the school system was launched by native conservatives," by 1878:

the unpaid sum due Virginia schools was over a million dollars. Despite the warning of the state commissioner that one half of the schools would fail to open in the fall, the state auditor ignored an act of the legislature requiring him to pay the schools their constitutional quota of state funds in cash, on the grounds that the state's obligations to its bondholders came first. John W. Daniels thought that 'It were better for the State to burn the schools' than to readjust the state debt;
Governor F.M.W. Holliday considered public schools 'a luxury . . . to be paid for like any other luxury, by the people who wish their benefits;* while William L. Royal, editor and one of the counsels of the state bondholders, thought that free education beyond the barest rudiments was 'imported here by a gang of carpetbaggers . . . '2

Similar reactions were common across the South where, in general, the average school term was shortened 20%. In 1880, the amount spent per pupil in the South Central Division of states was 59.5% of what it had been in 1871, dropping to 81% by 1890. Expenditures per pupil in the South Atlantic states decreased from $10.71 in 1871 to $7.63 over the same period.3 In 1900-01 the total amount of school funds raised per capita in the South was only one-third the national average, only one-fourth of that expended by the North Atlantic states and "the reformers protest against 'five cents worth of education per child' was supported by official statistics that showed a range from four cents a day in Alabama to two cents, in Texas."4 By the close of the century southern public schools "were for the most part miserably supported, poorly attended, wretchedly taught, and wholly inadequate for the education of the people. Far behind the rest of the country in nearly all respects, southern education suffered from a greater lag than any other public institution in the region."5


5Ibid.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
The poverty the South suffered following the war was extreme and the ability as well as the desire to maintain schools was impaired. "The severe conditions following the war caused two and a half millions of its people to leave the South and seek homes in the West or in foreign countries (some went to Brazil) where conditions were more favorable. Worst of all was the loss of leaders of thought and action." Still, in 1900 school attendance in the South had doubled and "to raise a certain amount for each child of school age" would have placed a burden "three times as heavy for the whole United States." Referring to sectional differences in the ability to support education, C. Vann Woodward noted:

The special difficulties which beset the South placed her educational problem in a unique category. In the first place the greater proportion of children to adults in the South made her burden heavier. In New York there were 125 adult males to every 100 children of school age; in Massachusetts, 135; and in Connecticut, 134; but there were only 66 in North Carolina and Mississippi and 61 in South Carolina. The average adult in the Southern states had about twice as many children to educate as the adults of Northern states. Moreover, there was less money with which to do it. The amount of taxable wealth per child of school age in Massachusetts was $6,407 as compared with $1,301 per child in North Carolina. This meant a tax more than five times as great in the Southern state as in the Northern state in order to provide equal school funds. Even that would not produce equality of schooling, since the South had the extra expense of two separate school systems for the two races, with two corps of teachers and two sets of physical equipment. In addition to these burdens, there was the great Southern problem of sparsity of settlement, for approximately 80 per cent of the population was rural. 

7 Dabney, p. 85.
8 Woodward, p. 399.
Edgar Knight observed that between 1870 and 1900 Southerners "knew that their schools were poor, because they themselves were poor, but they had not yet learned that they were poor largely as a result of poor schools, or that their poverty was itself a convincing argument for better schools."

Toward the end of the century forces were at work which were to arouse the public's interest in education. The efforts of early educational advocates like J.L.M. Curry and others like him prepared the ground for the educational revival of the first decade of the twentieth century. The South also began to enjoy an "increase in wealth, the appearance of an ambitious middle class and a new race of leaders, the awakening of class consciousness among the rural population, the political revolt, and the elimination of the race issue in politics." As Edward Carter observed in his study of "The Educational Awakening in the South:"

Toward the end of the century the people of the South were ready to lend support to a movement to improve educational conditions but they needed organization in their efforts. Both organization and stimulation were furnished by the work which out of the Conference for Education in the South and the boards set up by the philanthropic foundations established during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By 1901, when Page delivered his first speech on education outside of North Carolina, the South was on the verge of a decade of rapid educational growth.


10Knight, p. 428.

11Dabney, p. 43.
The Conference for Education in the South

The formation of the Conference for Education in the South provided the machinery for an organized campaign for universal education in the southern states. As such the Conference offered Page opportunities to utilize his talents as an emissary between the sections, as a journalist and as an orator.

The Conference for Christian Education in the South first met at Capon Springs, West Virginia, in 1898 and was attended by southern leaders and educators and Northern philanthropists who shared an interest in improving educational opportunities for the negro. At the outset these men had no intention to initiate "a general education campaign . . . but the movement once started, was forced by the logic of the situation into the larger field of endeavor . . . to educate first the neglected whites, convert the South to a belief in universal education, encourage local tax-supported schools, and teach the people how to make money to pay the taxes."12 As interest in the movement continued to grow plans were made to create a central organization which would effectively filter information, enthusiasm and dollars to where they were needed most. Page was invited to join these planning sessions for what was to become the Southern Education Board.13

The Board represented "an intersectional partnership of moderate progressives, moderates in the North on the delicate racial and sectional issues, and progressive in the South in the limited sense


13W. H. Baldwin to WHP, February 24, 1902, Page MSS.
that it offered education as a key to regional progress." Membership on the Board was controlled to maintain a balance of Northerners and Southerners, Page playing a versatile role as both a New Yorker and a North Carolinian.

One of the primary functions of the Board was to manage the various gifts received from philanthropic leaders and interest groups. The Rockefeller family alone donated $53,000,000 to the Board between 1902 and 1909, "the largest sum ever given by a single man up to that time, for social or philanthropic purposes." The issue of sectionalism was a problem which the Board faced at the outset of its operations as some southern editors warned their readers of a "yankee trick" to "put the bottom rail on top." Thus, Robert Ogden, chairman of the Board and a New Yorker, wrote Page, "It is the first part of our task to show the southern people the simplicity and honesty of our efforts." To deal with this problem, Charles Dabney, president of the University of Tennessee, was appointed to head the Bureau of Information for the Southern Education Board. Within a matter of weeks "Dabney began to flood the South with educational propaganda—press handouts, circulars, and thick bulletins filled with statistics," but the "primary method of arousing educational sentiment


16*Atlanta Constitution*, April 18, 1901.

17Robert C. Ogden to WHP, November 19, 1901, Page MSS.
was the state campaign:\textsuperscript{18}

Without cost to the community, the committee would send one or more of its voluntary campaigners to conduct rallies. Each campaigner, who utilized his prestige and oratorical ability to arouse the people, was usually accompanied by a teacher or school official who served as technical advisor.\textsuperscript{19}

Attempts to alleviate Southern suspicions of the Board's intentions were successful and following the 1902 Conference in Athens, Georgia, The Outlook observed that it had "taken hold of the South as nothing had taken hold of it since the war."\textsuperscript{20} Dabney attributed this success to "the propaganda work in the field" which was "left entirely to southern men who were known and loved by the local people and were in complete possession of the information and forces to be used."\textsuperscript{21}

Page was confident of the potential of the Board to do good service to the South. In writing to Wallace Buttrick, he promised "whatever I can write, wherever I can go to get in a word, or wherever at any time I can go and do anything for the cause--these are my tools and channels and ways of doing it; . . . I am at the service of the Board for fieldwork, pen-work or tongue-work--all, of course, and always, at my own expense."\textsuperscript{22} Once when he apologized for not doing

\textsuperscript{18}Harlan, p. 94.


\textsuperscript{20}The Outlook, "Southern Education Conference," LXXI (May, 1902) (May, 1902), 12.

\textsuperscript{21}Charles William Dabney to Edgar Gardner Murphy, December 7, 1903 1903, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{22}WHP to Wallace Buttrick, April 11, 1902, Page MSS.
more for the Board, Ogden told the Carolinian, "Some of the rest of us have a chance to put in a little more time, perhaps than you, but our own work is mixed with your brains, and thus you make all contributions larger." 23

However, as Cooper points out, Page "does not seem to have become a major force on the Southern Education Board:"

Surviving minutes of Board meetings do not portray Page as taking a large part in discussions, nor does his correspondence with Ogden and others reveal him suggesting or challenging specific moves and overall policies. . . . Most of the editor's contributions involved publicity and speaking. The World's Work began calling attention to efforts to improve Southern education even before the Board's formation. Frequent comments in the "March of Events" and a steady stream of articles described the activities of the Board and other educational reformers. Also, by the end of 1912, the magazine had carried full-page pictures of every Board member except Page himself. 24

Emphasizing his role as an orator, Cooper further noted that the North Carolinian "owed his own appointment to the Southern Education Board in 1901 to his prominence . . . as an expatriate spokesman on southern education." 25

Page and Black Education

The race question placed Page and his co-workers in the campaign for southern education in a precarious position. Unanimous in their opinion that the training of the negro would ultimately determine a return to southern prosperity, they were also aware of white public

23 Robert C. Ogden to WHP, January 20, 1902, Page MSS.


25 Cooper, p. 221.
opinion opposed to attempts to elevate the black man's status. Thus, in order to achieve their primary goal of promoting universal education in the South, Page and his colleagues acquiesced to southern racial prejudice. Although they followed a pragmatic strategy, their course of action created for them a sense of dissonance which was almost impossible to resolve.

While the original interest of the Conference for Southern Education was in providing instructional opportunities for the negro, by 1901 Ogden was willing to admit to a southern audience that "our impulses had risen . . . to the question of the entire burden of educational responsibility that you have throughout the whole section of the country."26 This shift in emphasis came in response to the realization of Ogden and other Northerners that "in certain regions, more money was being spent for negro than white education."27 As Barbara Hulbert Walsh points out in her study of the Southern Education Conference, one of the purposes of the Conference was to promote harmony between the sections and to maintain this harmony "most Northern philanthropists and newspaper editors unquestionably accepted Southern wishes concerning negro education."28 As a result, although Ogden wanted Booker T. Washington, the only negro agent ever hired by

26Fourth Conference for Education in the South, Proceedings, p. 6.


the Board, to appear on the platform as a speaker, he "consistently refused to invite Negroes to the annual conferences, for fear of offending the South." Speaking of his actions he admitted, "I am greatly ashamed, but nevertheless it is worse than useless at present, to quarrel with conditions we must accept because we cannot control."29 Thus, the Board's "sympathetic and gentle approach to the race issue in southern public education lacked moral firmness, . . . was weakened by compromise," and "seems to have had almost no effect on the negro schools."30

Torn between the influence of his southern heritage which taught him that the negro was and would always be his inferior and his belief in the Jeffersonian principles of equal opportunity for individual growth, Page found himself treading an uncomfortable path as an advocate of Southern education and training for the negro. Pragmatism appears to have won out over principle, for the North Carolinian did not wish to endanger the promotion of universal education by tying it to the race issue. As a spokesman for southern education, he rarely mentioned the negro and the only address in which he dealt with black education to any great extent was delivered at Tuskegee Institute in 1899.

Page took greater advantage of opportunities to serve the cause of negro education when he was outside the South. Speaking at a meeting in New York in 1899, he was instrumental in helping Booker T. Washington raise "about eighty thousand dollars" for the Institute's

29Walsh, p. 104.

30Harlan, pp. 268-69.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
endowment fund, and in 1906 Hollis Burke Frissell requested a copy of his remarks on why he "believed in Hampton (Institute)," spoken to a private gathering in Mrs. Doubleday's home.

In March of 1903 Page delivered two lectures on the negro to Boston audiences. One, "the third lecture in the University Extension Course on 'The American Negro'" was entitled "The Best Way to Help the Negro to Self-Reliance." and the other, before a meeting of the Twentieth Century Club, was called "The Building Up of Backward States." On both occasions he acknowledged the negro's capability of development and praised the work of Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. In "The Best Way to Help the Negro to Self-Reliance" he went so far as to say that "If I had a fortune to help solve the problem, I should give it to Booker Washington." His remark drew no criticism from southern critics who were content to let him express whatever opinion he chose to a northern audience.

Such was not the case later in the year when he delivered a speech entitled "The Negro in the South" before a New York audience. In speaking of the disenfranchisement of black voters, Page remarked that "it would not be so" if he had his way, but that he "would have established the same binding voting qualifications for white and blacks alike." While this statement passed unnoticed, the Time's report that

31Booker T. Washington to WHP, December 11, 1899, Page MSS.
32Hollis Burke Frissell to WHP, October 10, 1906, Page MSS.
33Unidentified newspaper article, Page MSS.
34Sunday Herald (Boston), March 15, 1903.
"two negroes sat down at dinner last night in a company that included several Southerners of this city" raised a storm of indignation from several southern editors. Investigating the incident the Richmond Dispatch reported with relief that "the only foundation for the report was that after the dinner was over one negro came in to hear the speeches." Edgar Gardner Murphy was also relieved by this news "but wishing to avoid 'even the appearance of evil,' suggested McIver remonstrate with his friend. He himself had attempted to and got from Page the stinging retort that if anybody other than the revered gentleman had tried it he would have been thrown out."

As spokesman for southern education Page objected to racism but he saw that his struggles to come to terms with it were similar to "kicking against the goads." As a Southerner and a realist he could not take a clearly defined stand against racial discrimination, nor is it likely he was able to formulate such a position in his own mind. His strategy was to acquiesce to white southern opinion that the races were not social equals and that the white boy be educated before any attempt to teach the black child. In an editorial on race friction he wrote:

And the endless discussion of it, so far from doing good, does harm. It keeps the minds of the people fixed on the subject. It narrows their thought by keeping it on one grave trouble. It prevents the wider view of life which comes from thought on many large topics. If the subject of discussion could be changed--especially in the South--to industry, to farming, to education, to the weather--to

36 Dispatch (Richmond), December 5, 1903.

anything--the result would be wholesome. You cannot meet a Southern man who is in public life, nor pick up a Southern newspaper, but the race question comes up. The Southern people are more concerned and more eager than any others for a quiet solution of the old question, and the first step toward a quiet solution is--to be quiet about it, sometimes at least.\(^38\)

Thus, in his speeches in the South, Page avoided any major discussion of the negro and his education.

"The School That Built a Town"

Page delivered his address "The School That Built a Town" at the commencement of the State Normal School of Athens, Georgia, December 11, 1901. The audience was composed of the thirteen young women who were to graduate, their families, members of the community, and students from the University of Georgia and the Lucy Cobb Seminary for Women. Also present were Hollis Frissell, principle of Hampton Institute, Charles McIver, president of the State Normal and Industrial School for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, Edward Alderman, president of Tulane University, Charles Dabney, president of the University of Tennessee, and J.L.M. Curry, agent for the Slater and Peabody funds.\(^39\)

In 1901 Page and Eugene C. Bronson, president of the State Normal and Industrial School for Women in Athens, Georgia, were elected vice-presidents of the Conference for Education in the South at its meeting in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, April 18-20.\(^40\) At


\(^40\)Eugene C. Bronson to WHP, June 29, 1901, Page MSS.
that time Bronson invited the New York publisher to speak at the December commencement of his school. Two months later he wrote:

May I remind you also of my request to have you deliver our commencement address on December sixth? If it is possible for you to come South at that time, we will give you a great audience and I feel sure that your message to our people at this time would be of great value to us at this particular juncture in the life of the Institution. 41

As a result of a conflict in Page's schedule, Bronson postponed the commencement exercises five days to December eleventh.

Page was a particularly appropriate speaker for the Georgia girls' school. In addition to his national prominence as a journalist, his speech "The Forgotten Man" delivered four years earlier on the campus of Normal School had catapulted him into the limelight as a spokesman for public education in the South. His recent involvement with the Conference for Education in the South further enhanced his reputation and the ladies who were to graduate doubtless anticipated an uncommon address.

The commencement exercises of the Normal School were held at 10:00 in the morning "in the presence of a large audience." 41 The program was opened "with prayer by Rev. Mr. Beatty and there followed the school song." Preceding Page to the platform, "James G. Oliver, of Dooly County, delivered a splendid address on 'The Function of a Normal School,' and Miss Mary D. Lyndon, of Athens, read an admirable essay on the 'Educational Value of Play.'" Following Page's address McIver and Chancellor Hill of the University of Georgia "made a few

41 Atlanta Constitution, December 12, 1901.
appropriate remarks to the graduating class." The next day Page, McIver and Alderman accepted invitations to speak at the Seminar and the University.

Line of Reasoning

Page's commencement oration at the Normal School in Athens parallels his speeches in Chapel Hill and Greensboro in contrasting the concept of public instruction in a democracy with limited educational opportunities based on class differences.

The New York journalist implied rather than stated the proposition for "The School That Built a Town." In doing so, he employed a subtle strategy designed to make the people aware of the educational deficiencies of their cities and their state without offending them. To accomplish this task, he told the story of Northwood, a community much like "hundreds of other American towns." In his tale of this mythical city, he detailed problems similar to those in many southern towns which impeded educational progress. He also described the success Northwood subsequently enjoyed when its citizens took seriously the task of educating their children. Page identified and assailed almost every element of southern society and thought which hindered educational progress without making an example of any particular town or group of people. In this manner he allowed each member of his audience to reason for himself that Northwood's problems were similar to those of his own home town or a community with which he was familiar and that something could indeed be done to solve those

42Ibid.

43Weekly Banner (Athens), December 13, 1901.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
problems. Thus, Page's implied proposition was: You can do for your community or any other town in Georgia what the citizens of Northwood did for their home.

In "The School That Built a Town," Page developed his comments of praise and blame from two premises accepted by his audience: that the principles of democracy apply to education and that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of all men. He also utilized the premise that Southerners are patriotic people. The orator followed a problem-solution-benefits pattern of organization in his address. In developing the problem-solution state he (1) told the story of how the people of Northwood came to realize that they had been "fooling themselves" by "playing" with education and embarked up an intensive program of building a public school system. After a period of years the high school became the center of the people's activities and was literally responsible for rebuilding the town. Throughout the remainder of the speech he praised the concept of universal education as the key to the prosperity of communities, states and the country itself.

Forms of Support

While Page used examples, comparisons, appeals to self-esteem and self-actualization, and stylistic devices to expand the ideas in his speech, his detailed illustration of how a school built a town served as the primary amplificatory device.

As mentioned previously, Page employed the story of Northwood as a means of encouraging the members of his audience to see for them-
selves the parallels between the educational deficiencies of the hypothetical city and towns in Georgia. He hoped further that his auditors would consider the possibility of emulating the actions of Northwood's citizens in solving those problems.

Page described Northwood as similar to "hundreds of other American towns:" the people "were of sturdy and good qualities," "were pretty well-off," and represented "the same kind of population that you could find almost anywhere in the Union." The home of numerous schools, Northwood's people "boasted . . . of their zeal in education," however, the speaker observed that the "educational advantages of the town" were "unusual." One of the schools, intended for "a group of the best-bred children of the town," met in the home of a widow:

She taught them to speak with a certain prim correctness, and at the end of every term she coached them to stand in their pretty frocks and clean breeches in a pretty row and to recite pretty verses and to make a pretty bow to their mothers.

A second school was run by: "a young and energetic" lady who emphasized "modern methods of education:"

She had a real Frenchman to teach French . . . and laid great stress on calisthenics . . . the children of strenuous parents came to her school and they boasted that she made it her business to teach, not to confer a social distinction on her pupils.

Serving the "sons of the best-to-do families was a school run by an old fashioned scholar:"

. . . who made the boys learn Latin grammar by heart, and who flogged them when they failed . . . His partner was a bookkeeper and a businessman who taught the boys to write a plain hand . . .
A seminary for young ladies was run by a preacher and his wife:

Most of its pupils came from families that held the faith of the church that had built it. The girls of other religious faiths were sent away to finishing schools which were under the management of their own churches.

The public school was "regarded as a sort of orphan asylum for the poor:"

The building was not large, nor the equipment worth mentioning. . . . the teachers were changed every year or two, sometimes they got tired, and sometimes because they got married, but oftenest because there were other young women who wanted their places, and turn about was regarded as fair play.

In addition to these schools, over a period of "eight or ten years," as a result of "church quarrels," other squabbles and deaths, "there grew up, perhaps a dozen more schools for children . . . For, with every social division among the people and with every church difference, schools continued to multiply."

Continuing his chronological unfolding of the Northwood story, Page told of how "the principal of one of the public schools" made "a very careful study of the population" and discovered that "in spite of all the schools in town, there were a great many children that were not at school at all," and that those attending classes received little more than "a smattering of book learning." From this he concluded, "These people are not in earnest about education; they are simply playing with it and are fooling themselves." Sharing his observations with others, he persuaded "first one man then another . . . to think about the subject in a new way," and after many years of concentrated effort progress was made:
1. new schools were built,
2. well-trained teachers were employed,
3. "the best men in town served on the school-board,"
4. a superintendent of schools was appointed, and
5. the curriculum was reworked so that "one boy may, if he persist, become a scholar; another a wheelwright; another a farmer; and so on. And it is found that by doing hand-work also the pupils do better head-work as well. It simply opens to all the intellectual life and the way to useful occupations at the same time."

The high school became the "intellectual and the industrial center of the town," and "at last a generation had grown up that had been educated in the public schools of Northwood." The town prospered and grew famous, and numerous people and industries moved into the area, drawn there "because of the school." Public education "ceased to be regarded" as only for the poor, and the citizens were united in "their universal interest in the school;"

Everybody is linked to the school by his work, and there is, therefore, no school party and no anti-school party in local politics. There is no social set that looks down on the school. The school built the town, and it is the town. It has grown beyond all social distinctions and religious differences or personal fortune.

Through the Northwood illustration Page identified the various elements which were impeding southern educational progress without alienating his audience. In addition, he used the story to suggest a means for solving those problems and the benefits which could be expected from their solution.
Page's story of Northwood further served to establish a point of departure for an extensive use of comparisons as a means of amplifying the distinctions between universal and aristocratic views of education. According to Page, education when "dallied with, played with, tolerated and imperfectly done is a costly and troublesome thing," and "the community grudgingly supports its schools as a burden." However, when education "becomes not only part and parcel of the life of the people, but a thing that they have all profited by—a thing that underlies life as the soil underlies the growth in the garden—then education becomes cheap and easy." Elaborating upon the differences between "one conception of education and the other," he stated:

1. "one view is selfish and the other is patriotic"

2. "One undertakes to develop a few men and women and it fails because no man can be really well developed in a community of undeveloped men . . . the other conception of education is that it trains all the members of a community and thus enables everyone to find his natural aptitude."

3. "education as a privilege is to mistrain some and to leave the others untrained," and "as a universal duty is to open to everyone his natural opportunity, to enable everyone to find himself and to find his usefulness to his fellows."

Developing the differences between universal and privileged education as they relate to a democracy, Page declared that "free public education for every child" is inherent to a democracy and that any other approach is "a mockery," and recalls "the Middle Ages, when it was regarded as a privilege of gentlemen or as a duty of the church and not as a necessity for the people."
Page insisted that when the people of Georgia ceased "merely" playing with education and came to "see its full meaning," the State would grow "as well-tended gardens grow under the nurture of your Southern sun." He further likened the state, "prosperous and fortunate as it is," to a "raw wilderness in comparison with the Georgia that may be."

In closing his speech, Page created an analogy with a card game in urging the young ladies to persevere in spreading "the central secret of human progress:"

Since civilization began, religions and statecraft, priests and conquerors, cliques and classes, sects and sections of society have played for the leadership of man. We play for it, too; and we hold the master trick against them all; for, when we win, man leads himself.

The speaker might have been wise to have deleted those two sentences from the peroration, for the image of an epoch bridge game seems an unfitting close to a speech extolling the virtues of education in a democracy.

Referring to the propensity of Southerners "to talk much about our natural resources and invite all the world to come and live with them," Page used examples to emphasize that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of its people.

Page considered "the program of sheer dependence on Nature" to attract immigrants as indicative of "the old conception of wealth-creation; for it took no account of the part that men play in making wealth." He cited Holland, overflowed "with the sea," Egypt, "after
the neglect of centuries," and "a part of our own country so poor in natural resources that God must have forgotten to finish it," as lands attracting immigration because the Dutchman was forced "to reclaim the very soil he lives on," the Egyptian is guided by trained English administration," and the American "spent money on school-houses and their equipment and on libraries." Reasoning from these examples, the speaker emphasized that "the right training of men is a better thing than the bounty of Nature itself," for "Nature alone never makes prosperous states."

Page attempted to heighten the effect of his speech by appealing to motives of self-esteem and self actualization.

Relying primarily on the motive of self-esteem, Page praised the graduates of the Normal School for choosing careers in public education, and appealed to their pride both as Georgians and Americans. He complimented the graduates for their decision to train the "children in the public schools," a work which "stands for as useful work as any work done in the world," "gives exercise to the highest qualities," "brings the results of the highest value," and "is free from doubt." Similar to his comments in Greensboro, he lauded the girls as "high servants of the State," "the builders of a new social order," and declared "the future of Georgia is in your hands." He applauded them "as rebuilders of the Commonwealth" and commended their dedication "to the most solemn high serve of democracy." Reminiscent of the peroration of "The Forgotten Man," he lauded them for responding to "the mute appeal of neglected children" and announced it their
privilege to "lead them who have been forgotten through the wide-swinging doors of opportunity."

Exhaling "the triumphs of trained democracy," Page appealed to his audience's sense of state pride, urging them to "see what this means for Georgia!" Paraphrasing Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition address, he noted, "There are more than two million pairs of hands and brains in Georgia. If they were all trained to wasteless work and to straight thought while they work, men would soon come from every land to learn of you." Speaking of the "neglected boy of the sandhill" and the "girl that plays in your galleys," he promised:

By training everyone of them . . . to a useful occupation and a steady balance of body and mind, in two generations, even before many of us here shall die, you may have more wealth, a better diffused well-being, a more robust manhood, greater grace, than Georgia in all her generations has yet had, and more reknown than all the deeds of all her honorable sons have yet brought her.

He concluded that the right training of all Georgians would build a state such that "No other part of the globe would be so rich, no other part of the multitudinous swarms of mankind would be so blest."

Appealing to his audience's pride as Americans, Page announced that "it is the training of men that makes a country great," and boasted of the "mechanical work and mechanical achievements" which enabled "the trained American" to cover "the earth with his influence;"

In London the Englishman will go from his home to his office on an electric railway owned by Americans. He wears American shoes and uses American cutlery. If you cross Southern Europe on one of the fastest express trains, you will be drawn by an American locomotive. In Spain itself they use American engines and American machinery. And

American locomotives whistle in African jungles and climb the Andes, and run across Japan. We have built bridges over rivers on the road to Mandalay. American electrical machinery lights the southernmost beacon on the globe in Terra del Fuego, and American machinery cuts timber at the northernmost lumber camps in Sweden, almost under the midnight sun, whither it was drawn on reindeer sleds. The lantern of Aladdin has been superseded in Bagdad by American lamps. The coolies that fanned Indian princes have lost their job, for American fans do it better. We send laundry machinery to Shanghai, and brewing apparatus to Germany.

Through the selection and wording of this appeal, Page found an effective means for linking the importance of right training and national pride. However, while adept in his own right as a phrase-maker, there is little doubt that he lifted the familiar "on the road to Mandalay" from the poem of his close friend Rudyard Kipling.

Page appealed to his audience's awareness of the need for self-fulfillment as a means of castigating those who upheld the traditional aristocratic approaches to education. Observing that when only a few men are educated they set themselves off as "a special class," and "a false standard" is established, "seeds of snobbery and discontent" are sown over "all the wide wastes of social life." The "worst result of this system" is that those who need training the least, get it, while the ignorant "are neglected." Noting that is "likely that among the neglected are those that would become the most capable if they were trained," Page praised "the shining day in any educated man's growth when he comes to see and to know and to feel and freely admit that it is just as important to the world that the ragamuffin child of his worthless neighbor should be trained as it is that his own child should be."
Page's caustic attack on those who opposed public education was based upon the strategy that such an attitude was a denial of an individual's or a people's right to self-fulfillment:

You are one of the reasons why its (Georgia) property is not now worth five times what it is. You are one of the reasons why the products of its soil are not five times as great as they are, for such schools as I mean would make most farmers highly successful farmers. You are one reason why the population of the State is not twice or thrice what it is; for such schools as I mean would attract good people from every part of the world, and cause more children to grow to healthful maturity. You are one of the reasons why Georgia is not one of the greatest manufacturing States in the Union, for such schools as I mean would train thousands of the best-trained hands and minds to the making of beautiful and useful things. You are one of the reasons why the Georgians have not more scholars, more orators, more organizers of industry, more owners of beautiful homes, more horses and cattle and grass and fruit and more good roads and more strong men and more lovely women and more beautiful children than any other state in the Union. Last of all you are not a democrat. You have never thoroughly read Thomas Jefferson. You do not know that his ideal State was a State in which every man was trained at the public expense. You are a frayed-out 'knight' of feudal times with a faded plume, and you think in terms of the Middle Ages; and the sooner you know it the better for the community, and I am glad of a chance plainly to tell you so.

Page's berating the man who is "a dead weight on Georgia," particularly in his portrayal of him as a "knight" with a "faded plume," sounds similar to the criticism of the South of Mark Twain, another southern expatriate-author-orator who exercised no reluctance in assailing "the Walter Scott Middle-Age sham civilization" but for which "the South would be fully a generation further advanced than it is."45

In "The School That Built a Town," Page established and maintained a positive tone through the use of simple and familiar language, and an oral quality. However, the most significant stylistic device was his employment of effective phrasing.

In lauding the concept and benefits of public instruction, Page used common words like "democracy," "useful," "efficient," "profitable," and "handwork" that helps "headwork." He characterized any other approach to education in a democratic country as a "mockery" supported as a "burden" or a "charity" on a "semi-mendicant basis."

Page's address also indicates the speaker's concern for oral style. Throughout the course of his remarks he used expressions such as "if I can repa... at all, it must be by telling you the story of the school that built a town," "Education, ladies and gentlemen," and "the sooner you know it the better for the community, and I am glad of a chance to tell you so."

Page employed numerous phrases in which he used familiar words to give a new insight on his message. Thus, he spoke of education as the "central secret of human progress" and lauded the "advantage of free democratic training" which had enabled "the trained American to cover the earth with his influence." Believing that right training could open the "wide-swinging doors of opportunity," he promised that a Georgia committed to universal education could expect "more wealth, a better diffused well-being, a more robust manhood, greater grace."

The journalist-orator also applauded the concept of universal education as responsible for the nation's growth and prosperity.
The title "The School That Built a Town" symbolized the optimism of the speaker and his confidence in education to rejuvenate the South. The expression is simple yet forceful, easily remembered and quotable. "The School That Built a Town" captured the essence of the orator's message in a phrase. Page also recited a creed which he asked his audience to embrace as their own:

I believe in the free public training of both the hands and the mind of every child born of woman.

I believe that by the right training of men we add to the wealth of the world. All wealth is the creation of man, and he creates it only in proportion to the trained uses of the community; and the more men we train, the more wealth everyone may create.

I believe in the perpetual regeneration of society, in the immortality of democracy, and in growth everlasting.

This creed exemplifies the simple and direct style and adept phrasing employed by Page to establish the positive undercurrent of his speech.

Assessment

Page's commencement address to the graduates of the Normal School was based upon a description of how the public school built the mythical town of Northwood. His lengthy and detailed account of this story was intended to illustrate that a community prospers in accordance to the right training of all its citizens. He employed this hypothetical illustration as a means of criticizing the influences which were hindering the development of universal education in the South without the risk of offending any particular community or group of people. As such, he permitted his listeners to draw their own parallels between Northwood and the situation in their own towns or any
other community in Georgia.

The North Carolinian developed his reasoning from three premises accepted by the audience: that the principles of democracy apply to education, that prosperity results from a people's commitment to universal training and that Southerners are a patriotic people. To amplify and enhance his message, he employed comparisons, appeals to self-esteem and self-fulfillment, and a plain, direct and expressive style.

"The School That Built a Town" was an effective address on behalf of public education for several reasons. Page's use of familiar and relevant means of amplificatory material probably appealed to the young ladies of the Normal School. As such, the emphasis always focused upon the importance of elementary and secondary schools, the field for which they were trained.

In its account of the exercises, the Atlanta Constitution labeled the effort by the commencement orator "... a magnificent address." The newspaper reported that "under the subject of 'The School That Built a Town,'" the speaker "drew a graphic word picture of the intellectual growth and prosperity of the people as well as the town when they grew to look upon the schools not as a burden supported for duty's sake, but as a blessing and a privilege."\(^46\)

In thanking Page for his address and for returning the fee for his services, Bronson wrote:

\(^46\)Atlanta Constitution, December 12, 1901.
That you more than confirm my statement about you to our audience last Wednesday. How in the world do you expect to get rich at this rate. I was only sorry that we did not have five times as much to put into your hands for that magnificent address; and now here it all comes back to us for our library. You could not have done such a thing on the spot, but at long range there seems to be no stopping a fellow with your generous impulses. However, we are exceedingly indebted to you for your presence here and your address.47

Six years later Bronson penned a thank you to Page for an item which had appeared in World's Work and noted, "we are not likely to do, for many years to come, all the things you put into your great address to us here several years ago, but that address was a distinct inspiration, and is a working idea for us day by day here."48

Page expressed his own pleasure in "The School That Built a Town" in a letter to his wife: "My speech went off pretty well. They all seemed very much pleased. It was the most important commencement, they say, that they ever had. The speech was as good a one for the occasion, I think, as I have ever delivered."49

Response to the speech bore out Page's own assessment of it as an effective statement on behalf of public education in the South. In 1905 he included "The School That Built a Town" in his volume The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths along with an essay of the same title and his speech "The Forgotten Man."

47 Eugene C. Bronson to WHP, December 16, 1901, Page MSS.
48 Eugene C. Bronson to WHP, June 19, 1908, Page MSS.
49 WHP to Alica Page, December 13, 1901, Page MSS.
"The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South"

On April 27, 1904, Page delivered an address entitled "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" at the Seventh Conference for Education in the South held in Birmingham, Alabama. Similar to other speeches and reports at these meetings, he directed his message "not to the public, but to the members of the conference" who held the positions of greatest influence across the South in promoting the cause of education. Attendance at the yearly conferences had increased dramatically "from thirty-six in 1898 to 2,000 or more five years later." Meeting in a different southern city each year, the audience and delegates were predominately Southerners. The conferences were also attended by a number of Northerners who usually arrived aboard a special train commissioned by Robert C. Ogden.

In preparing the agenda for the Birmingham conference, Edgar Gardner Murphy, Executive Secretary of the Southern Education Board, wrote Page "to say we are counting on an address from you:"

At every Conference I have attempted to secure some discussion of the economic side of our educational question. There are few men who really think clearly enough to handle the subject well, My attempt to get this discussion has been fruitless. The speech ("The Man Behind the Plow") which you made last year in North Carolina is so clearly just what we want that I am sure you are just the man to perform this important service. I would suggest some such popular title as 'Education and Prosperity.' You will have a noble audience and you can bring our educational message in a most practical and convincing form to one of the live industrial centers of the South. Your words will do incalculable good . . .

The Outlook, "Conference at Pinehurst, North Carolina," LXXXII (April 27, 1907), 910.

Walsh, p. 97.

Edgar Gardner Murphy to WHP, February 10, 1904, Page MSS.
Two weeks later Robert C. Ogden, chairman of the Southern Education Board, urged the editor of World's Work to "accept the duty assigned . . . by Mr. Murphy on the program at Birmingham. The topic is important and you are the man."

Page was considered "the man" for the occasion because he symbolized the commitment of a Southerner to the belief that right training would result in economic progress. As Murphy inferred in his letter inviting the journalist to address the Conference, in "The Man Behind the Plow" delivered the previous year, Page had argued that Iowa farmers and businessmen earned more money because they had received better educations than their North Carolina counterparts. In fact, Murphy could have cited each of Page's previous speeches on southern education to assert that no other Southerner knew more about the importance of skilled training and its bearing on prosperity.

Accepting the invitation, Page set to gathering information establishing "the economic value of practical training" as the primary means "to hasten the return to the South its natural and full share in the leadership of the Nation." In writing to Charles McIver he explained, "They have put upon me the task of delivering an address at Birmingham on 'The Economic Value of Training:'"

I want you to tell me, if you can, what the experience of your school shows is the economic value of the untrained woman and of the trained one, and I want permission to quote you. Add whatever interpretative facts, or remarks that may occur to you.55

53 Robert C. Ogden to WHP, February 29, 1904, Page MSS.
54 Carter, p. 64.
55 WHP to Charles Duncan McIver, April 16, 1904, Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
He wrote similar letters to George Winston, president of the North Carolina State Agricultural and Mechanical College, Hollis Burke Frissell of Hampton Institute in Virginia, Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee Institute, and the heads of the Slater School for Negroes in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and the Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn, a school for white males. Winston responded that Page could "easily capitalize the average labor at 15, 20, 30 or 50 dollars per month and change it to skilled workman with an earning capacity 3, 4, 5, or 10 times as great. Our average graduate can easily earn $100 a month. Some go to $200, while the best, in a few years reach $300 or $400. These are average North Carolina boys." Frissell answered with "a report made by Mr. Dickerman, in our Southern Workman, taken from the census showing what the indirect results of Hampton's work has been." Page quoted in his address the testimonies he received from these and the other gentlemen from whom he had requested information.

Page delivered "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" as the final address of the evening session on April 27. Following the speech "the Conference adjourned until the following morning at ten o'clock." 

56 George T. Winston to WHP, April 16, 1904, Page MSS.
57 Hollis Burke Frissell to WHP, April 12, 1904, Page MSS.
58 Fourth Conference for Education, p. 110.
Line of Reasoning

In "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" Page developed the proposition:

... there it stands--a stark economic fact--the state must train every child at the public expense; and it must train him to usefulness.

As he had done in "The School That Built a Town," Page followed a problem-solution-benefits pattern of organization. After (1) identifying the unfulfilled ambition of the South as its failure to exert any real leadership in the affairs of the nation, he (2) emphasized the necessity of right training of the masses and (3) magnified the benefits which could be expected from universal education.

In developing his ideas in this address, Page reasoned from several premises upon which he and his audience were in agreement: Southerners are the heirs of a proud heritage and are a patriotic people, the principles of democracy apply to education, the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of its people, the South is an agrarian society, and the races are not social equals.

Forms of Support

Page employed examples, comparisons, testimony, appeals to self-esteem, self-actualization and self-preservation and a clear style to amplify his reasoning in his speech at Birmingham.

Page used examples to magnify the benefits of universal training and to illustrate how the untrained masses exert a negative influence on public opinion. As in previous speeches on education in
the South, he relied primarily on personal experiences.

Emphasizing what happens when people believe in universal training, Page shared what he saw on a recent journey from Boston to St. Louis:

Across that row of states one may see everywhere workshops that are schools and schools that are workshops, the people are doing some economic service and training the young. The earnestness of academic life, the hum of industry, the cleanness of agriculture--from the lecture rooms of Harvard College to the power room at the World's Fair where an engine turns 10,000 horsepower...these are our countrymen (and these are their ways) who have already taken a mortgage on the future of the world, for they are its masters.

In describing the "kind of trained activity that has enabled the United States to take the lead in the industrial world," Page mentioned that where:

Men once pegged shoes by hand. They are pegged much more cheaply by machinery. Whole towns are given to shoe-making and a man who invented shoe-pegging machinery lately died and left a great legacy to one of our universities. Men once shoveled iron ore with spades. On Lake Superior ore is now lifted from the earth by machinery and it is not once moved by muscle-power of man till it becomes steel rails and they are laid on the roadbed.

Illustrating how the absence of compulsory training allows the uneducated to dominate public opinion, Page recalled his recent conversation with a college president and a newspaper editor. While both men agreed upon the economic necessity of "training every child in the state," they were reluctant to express their convictions fearing "public opinion." These fears, he concluded, permitted the "untrained mob" to control thought and was "the reason why other parts of the country (had) taken intellectual leadership" away from the South.
Page employed comparisons to heighten the differences between men and communities who endorsed universal training and those that did not. Answering the rhetorical question of who would "shovel the dirt and chop the wood and draw the water" in a community of trained men?, Page responded that the dirt could be shoveled more "cheaply than now," and so compared a trained man and untrained negro laborer. "A trained man would drive his scoop to your dirt, attach it to an electric wire and shovel the dirt more accurately, more quickly, more cheaply than any negro in Alabama."

Emphasizing the difference "between an untrained and a better trained community," Page returned to his comparison of Iowa and North Carolina. More succinct than his use of the same comparison in his speech at Raleigh the previous year, he said only:

They are both agricultural states. They have approximately the same area and the same population. They have approximately the same number of farmers. Yet the value of the farm products of Iowa is more than four times the value of the farm products of North Carolina; and the value of the farm property is eight times as great. A farmer makes more than four times as much in Iowa as he does in North Carolina; and a farm-hand receives twice as much. The difference is not so much a difference in soil as it is a difference in men. Most of the farm work in North Carolina is done by untrained negroes. It is practically all done in Iowa by intelligent and trained white men. It is the difference between a clodhopper and a trained man.

Similar also to his speech three years earlier in Athens, Georgia, where he referred to the state as "a raw wilderness" to what it could be, Page called Alabama "hardly more than a wilderness" with man "just beginning to make a permanent impress upon it." So too, he referred to Birmingham itself as a city "wholly built within my easy memory."
One of the strongest amplificatory devices in "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" was Page's use of testimony. Emphasizing that Southerners had not lost their ambition to return their section to a position of leadership in the nation, Page shared the memory of John Banks Wardlaw, his room-mate at Randolph-Macon College, a "Georgian of gentle breeding and of high spirit, ardent and eloquent!" During their last visit together, Wardlaw had looked out the window over the gullied field:

... (it was an endless waste of mistilled land), and he said sadly: 'I love the old red hills, and we must show that men live on them yet.' A hint of death was already in his eyes, but an unbounded patriotism shone there too. He wrote me a little later: 'I do not mind dying, but I hoped to do something for the South before I went.' And he never wrote again.

In order to dramatize the impact of right training on the "earning power of particular persons before they were trained and after," Page read the responses from the heads of "several good schools for negro men and women" to the question "does training pay the individual?" The answers from Tuskegee Institute, the Slater School for Negroes in Winston-Salem, and Hampton Institute all concurred that a trained negro could expect his monthly income to increase four to five times over that which he had earned previously. Responding to the same query, the "president of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, at Auburn," a school for white males, indicated that most of his students "have been poor boys in the strictest sense of the word," and that had they "remained on the farm" they could have expected to earn "about a hundred and fifty dollars a year," the average for a farm laborer. However, "the present average earnings" of the school's graduates was
"eight hundred dollars a year," including the salaries of those who had 
"just left college, but who in a few years will rise to something 
better." Reasoning from these authorities, the speaker asserted that 
right training pays the individual.

In previous speeches on education in the South Page had taken 
opportunities to align his cause with that of God and Truth, and his 
speech at Birmingham was no exception. Speaking of the Southerner's 
love of the land, he told his audience, "my brothers, we owe it a debt 
that we cannot pay devoutly enough." In the spirit of the Southerner's 
"solemn, filial duty, he offered up a prayer of forgiveness 'For our 
sins to our land:"

O Land, the giver of plenty; sustain us yet, untrained 
workers.
O Sunny Land, clothier of the world, sustain us yet, 
untrained workers.
O Land, our sunny home; sustain us yet, untrained 
workers.
O fertile, sunny, and plenteous country, provider, 
clothier, home; sustain us yet, untrained workers.
We will worship thee with better labor, 
Renew the riches of the soil with knowledge, 
Make green thy hills, thy lowlands white with cotton, 
Preserve the forest mantle of thy mountains, 
Keep clean thy streams for constant flowing, 
Teach thy boundless beauties to our children, 
Till we lie down in silence in thy bosom. 
Amen

The effectiveness of this prayer lay in the speaker's strategy of 
identifying Southerners' love of the land with their devotion to the 
Almighty.

Similar to his previous speeches on education delivered in the 
South, Page played upon the motives of self-esteem and self-actualiza-
tion as a means of enhancing his remarks. In addition, he exercised an 
appeal to his audience's sense of self-preservation.
Page stirred the pride of his audience in their heritage to identify with them as a Southerner and thus to assert his right to speak boldly. While his audience in Birmingham was comprised for the most part of Southerners, there was also an appreciable number of important individuals from the North who had invested both time and money in furthering the cause of education in the South. However, the speaker announced his intention to "speak directly" to the southern men present and "to them only." Defining his target audience he addressed his comments to those:

... bound together by an ardent patriotism which is the inheritance of every Southerner especially if his traditions run back to the large-minded period when Southern men built the spacious house of our liberties. And every such man would give his work if he knew how—he would give his life, if need be—to restore the thought, the character, and the influence of the South to the commanding position that they held a hundred years ago.

In describing the "Southern gentleman" to whom he was limiting his address, he continued:

... --a man who is frank and fearless, generous to his fellows, a proud man with an instinct for leadership; the weaker the man is with whom he has to do, the more scrupulous is his justice, the weaker the woman is with whom he has to do, the more scrupulous his honor.

Such "men of our traditions and our temper," he added, "were born far too large" to allow either misfortune or ambition "to change his relation to his fellow man or to his country."

While lavish in his approbation of the southern gentleman, Page did not glorify the antebellum period, but attempted to combine appeals to his audience's patriotic nature as Southerners and as Americans, Thus, he stressed the traditions whose roots were in
"the time of Washington, of Jefferson, of Marshall" rather than of Davis, Lee and Jackson. His strategy was designed to stimulate Southerners to identify with each other as men whose "unfulfilled ambition" was "for our country--an ambition for these States and these people as part of the Union."

Page also commended the agrarian heritage of his audience, their love of "the land we were born to." As such, he affirmed:

Those of us that do not till the earth still keep a love of it. Even those of us whose trades have buried us in great cities feel exiled if we do not come at short intervals and touch this soil. The call of the earth compels us. This is always our home. And the odors of a southern springtime stir deep emotions in us.

The editor of World's Work used the motive of self-actualization to dramatize how the influence of an aristocratic conception of society had thwarted the ambition of Southerners to assert themselves in the affairs of the nation. In addition, he emphasized the opportunity for self-fulfillment which lay before the South.

Referring to how Washington, Jefferson and Marshall "wrought out their high wish" of building the nation, Page voiced the frustration that "our wish, equally high, we have not wrought out; and that is our sorrow," and asked "why are we not, why may not we become, leaders in our country's progress?" Since Southerners were neither "incapable" nor had they lost their "ambition," he reasoned the answer lay elsewhere, in the region's failure to train the masses of the people.

Noting how "the blind push of untrained men" dominated public opinion and eventually limited freedom of thought, Page pointed out the irony of how:
... we of all men should have suffered an eclipse of free thought. Our forefathers supposed that they had made this blessing secure for all time. It was Jefferson's great dream. Yet we, who ought to have been born into the full blaze of intellectual liberty, are the only English-speaking men to whom it is denied.

The speaker's emphasis on the importance of free speech and opinion reflects his involvement and concern in the "Bassett affair" at Trinity College which had erupted the preceding October.

Lauding the rapid changes which were coming to the South as a result of an economic rather than aristocratic view of society, Page emphasized the opportunity of the future: "If we have a rough task, it is a high task. While we are doing it, we shall have the joy of constructive activity. We look forward to a golden age that we may surely help to bring, not back to one that never was."

In addressing an audience of educated Southerners, Page appealed to the motive of self-preservation to accentuate the contribution of public instruction toward maintaining a free society. Reasoning that in a community where the opportunity for right training is denied, he stressed that "thoughtful men (scholars like Bassett)" are "not free because of the mass of unthinking men about them." He declared that "always an untrained mob will control thought," and that "in an untrained democracy low minds will lead, and an organized howl will lift demagogues to power."

Page's concern over the rise of the southern demagogue was genuine. In 1893 in an editorial in the Forum he had criticized the "red-handed, deformed, and swaggering villain" who "with his oaths and
'honor'... has strutted through all the quiet ways of Southern life calling himself 'the South,' writing and speaking of 'our people,' and leading 'mobs' to avenge 'our women.'”

In its report of "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," the Birmingham News noted that Page presented a "clear and concise exposition of the rewards" of right training and the Progressive Farmer printed that the North Carolinian's address was "made in his usual severely practical style." He achieved this clear and practical style through his use of familiar language and extensive employment of rhetorical questions. However, again the speaker's talent as a phrase-maker was the most striking element of his style.

Remarking that "education" was "a confusing word," meaning one thing to one man and another to another," Page announced he would avoid using words "about which men deliver dissertations." Thus, he chose to talk about "plain 'training,'" and declared that "the secret of the unrivaled progress of the United States--the secret of the swift forward movement in our time that puts all preceding social advancement to shame--is the training of the people." He called that the "doctrine of universal education at the community's expense" a "moral fact," "patriotic action" and "the secret of the unrivaled progress of the United States."


Page made extensive use of rhetorical questions as signposts in his speech. As such, he asked: "What ails us, then, or what ails the time we live in?", "First--does training pay the individual?", "But if a negro be a fool not to train himself, what shall be said of a white man?", and "What is the South?" His reliance on rhetorical questions added an oral quality to his style and aided the listener in following the speech.

The most outstanding characteristic of Page's style was his use of striking phrases. Referring to those who became confused over the meaning of the word education, he employed the metaphor of "blind little men scrambling in a fog for a path that was not there. Then I have looked outdoors and seen the roses blooming and thought of the children that cannot bloom."

As the title of his address, "The Unfulfilled Ambition" aroused curiosity causing people to ask what that ambition was, an interesting, poetic, quotable phrase, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" symbolized the orator's strategy of identifying the southern states with the nation. Arguing that the South needed to fulfill its ambition of national leadership, Page used the scripture-like phrase that at present Southerners were "almost strangers in the house of our fathers."

Page had praised Washington, Jefferson and Marshall as examples of southern men who placed the welfare of their nation over "the desire to achieve something merely for one's own glory." In the peroration of his address, the speaker invoked the spirit of these great men by paraphrasing the Declaration of Independence:
When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a generation of men to dissolve the hereditary bands that have connected them with an economic error and to assume among the workers of the world an independent and equal station to which their intellectual ability and their economic capacity entitle them, a decent regard for the opinions of the laggard requires that they should declare the purpose which impels them to their emancipation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men should have equality of opportunity; that we are endowed by our institutions with inalienable rights; and that among these are free training and free opinion.

We, therefore, the descendents of men who meant to establish free thought for us when they laid the foundations of our liberties, pointing to the benefits of free opinion among English-speaking men throughout the world, do in the name and for the development of the good people of these states declare that free training and free opinion of right ought to be theirs.

And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Page's plain and direct style, especially his phrasing which encouraged fresh interpretations of his use of familiar words, added both clarity and vividness to his remarks.

Assessment

Page's speech "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" was a ceremonial address in which the speaker praised the benefits of right training and issued a southern declaration of independence from the constraining influences of the past. Offering a new and economic vision as opposed to the concept of privilege, he pointed the way for the South's return to prosperity and prestige.

The Birmingham address is characterized by a speaker's attempt to identify himself and his audience with the noble qualities and traditions of the true Southerner—those that made him instrumental.
in founding the nation. To amplify his proposition that all men have the inherent right to enjoy equal opportunity and free opinion, Page employed emotional appeals based on the needs for self-esteem, self-actualization and self-preservation and utilized numerous examples, comparisons, testimonies, and a practical yet striking style.

Page's address at the Conference for Education in the South is unique among his previous speeches on education in that he used a wider range of premises from which he developed his reasoning. As such, he praised Southerners as the heirs of a proud tradition and as a patriotic people, contended that the principles of democracy apply to education and that the greatest economic progress occurs when a society is committed to the right training of its people, and reaffirmed that the South was an agrarian society and that the races were not social equals. In light of this observation, "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" represents a culmination of his speeches on southern education delivered during the previous twelve years.

Public response to the speech was interesting. The New York 
Evening Mail reported the speech as creating a "sensation" at the Conference and published its account under the headline "Says South Is Under Tyranny." The report indicated that the speaker's "somewhat radical statements aroused no opposition in this progressive city, but are questioned by more conservative Southerners."63 The Birmingham News concurred with the Northern newspaper in assessing Page's effort as a "bold address:"

63Evening Mail (New York), April 28, 1904.
... in some respects the boldest ever delivered on a Southern platform by a man who claimed to speak by right of kinship. The great body of his hearers did not applaud some of his utterances, but if they dissented from him they made no visible sign. If the courage of the speaker was admirable, so was the courtesy and consideration of the people to whom he spoke.64

The account in the News went on to say that there was "truth" in Page's message that right training pays both the individual and the community:

This was impressively set forth by Mr. Page in an unanswerable argument to those who question the value of education as a necessary means to a higher civilization and a more profitable existence.

We commend Mr. Page's address as a valuable lesson in economics. It is practical, sound and helpful. It goes to the very foundation of the matter and demonstrates the great need for training in the Southern states and in Alabama as a business proposition for the material progress and prosperity of our people.

The News concluded that "thoughtful people who heard" the address "must have been deeply impressed with the soundness of many of the speaker's remarks" and labeled the editor of World's Work "not only a strong writer, but ... also a forceful speaker."

The Progressive Farmer referred to Page's speech "as made in his usual severely practical style, a strong address," and considered it "the ablest and most suggestive" address delivered at the Conference. The editor of the Farmer continued:

It ought to be studied by every man in the South, especially by every young Southerner. Himself a Southern man by birth and training, Dr. Page speaks of our problems not only from fullness of knowledge but fullness of sympathy. And whether or not one agrees with him in all his conclusions, it must be

64Birmingham News, April 28, 1904

65Progressive Farmer (Raleigh), May 3, 1904.
clear to all that the South has been held back by its failure to train its laborers by its mistaken confidence in the saving power of trained leadership of untrained masses. . . . The better the training, the greater is the margin of profit.

Response to the speech by Page's friends and colleagues was entirely favorable. W.H. Baldwin, a member of the Southern Education Board, wrote: "Your Birmingham Speech was just you--as I know you. I would that I had been there to feel it with the audience--and to watch the faces of some hearers. . . . What blushes have come to the cheeks of many who heard it and read it." Requesting a "dozen or more copies of the address," Booker T. Washington called it a "really good speech" and declared, "I cannot see how it can fail to accomplish good. I wish it might have a much wider circulation than it has had. I am arranging to have it published widely in the negro press; but it ought to get into the hands and heads of the Southern white people." Most enthusiastic, Edwin Mims, professor of English at Trinity College, labeled it "a vigorous, timely, and inspiring address:"

. . . I am getting everyone to read it--all my students and colleagues. A Southerner who does not see that what you say is true is totally blind, while one that does not respond to your call for leadership has no soul. What a chance we have! I have felt for a number of years that a man could have no better chance to do enduring work than here in the South now. Your words confirm me--they sound like a bugle blast on the battlefield. This address ought to have great publicity given to it. It is a man's word to men!--as notable in its way--when all the circumstances are taken into consideration--as Emerson's American Scholar. Although I did not have the privilege of hearing it, but I shall always count it as one of the genuinely

66W.H. Baldwin to WHP, May 14, 1904, Page MSS.

67Booker T. Washington to WHP, May 17, 1904, Page MSS.
helpful things I have had to come into my life.\textsuperscript{68}

Page's response to Mims' complimentary letter indicates his commitment to education as the key to uplifting his beloved South. Ever ready to rail against "the croakers and the critics and all kinds of narrow men" responsible for keeping "us forever in the lowlands of complaint," the southern-expatriate urged Mims to "keep sounding the note of leadership and the next generation will hear it and take it up and do it, praise God."\textsuperscript{69}

"The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" represents Page's last speech delivered in the South in which he exclusively promoted the concept of universal education, and as such exists as the climax of his oratorical efforts at Chapel Hill, Greensboro, Durham, Raleigh, and Athens. In this forceful and practical address, the speaker clearly enunciated the argument of all Southern educators and educational statesmen that the South would reap both economic and social benefits from the right training of all its people, men, women, white and black.

"A Layman's Notion of a University"

Page delivered the chief address "A Layman's Notion of a University" at the Founders' Day celebration of the University of South Carolina in Columbia on January 12, 1911. He spoke to an audience representing the faculty, trustees, alumni, and students of the University, the South Carolina legislature, and many of the city's distinguished citizens.

\textsuperscript{68} Edwin Mims to WHP, May 15, 1904, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{69} WHP to Edwin Mims, May 15, 1904, Page MSS.
The Founders' Day celebration was the creation of Dr. Samuel Chiles Mitchell, president of the University of South Carolina. "The first day to be thus celebrated was January 14, 1910:"

... the 10th of January was the day of the first opening of the college, but owing to the session of the legislature, which nearly always meets just after the tenth, it was decided to hold the celebration on the Thursday immediately following the opening of the legislative session. The alumni hold a meeting in LeConte College in the morning; in the afternoon there is a gathering at some point on the campus, usually in the chapel, and hear a number of addresses, the majority of which are short; in the evening the chief address of the day is made in the hall of the house of representatives. The addresses of each year have been preserved in the Founders' Day Bulletins.\(^7\)

In publishing Page's speech, the Bulletin regretted that the "masterly address could not be secured in full for publication," and presented only "a partial view" copied from The State, January 13, 1911.\(^7\) No other text of the oration is known to exist.

Seven weeks earlier, Page had delivered the closing address "The Country School of Tomorrow" at the Fifth Educational Conference in Richmond, Virginia. While no complete copy of that speech remains, portions of it quoted by the Richmond Times-Dispatch\(^7\) are identical to those printed in The State. Therefore, one can assume that the North Carolinian delivered basically the same speech with the necessary adaptations to audience and occasion in Columbia and that the news report of it was accurate.

\(^7\)Edwin Luther Green, A History of the University of South Carolina (Columbia, South Carolina: The State Company, 1916), p. 132.

\(^7\)"Founders' Day," Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, XXVI (July, 1911), 37.

\(^7\)Times-Dispatch (Richmond), November 26, 1910.
Acquainted with Page through his involvement in the Southern Education Board, Mitchell invited the New York publisher to deliver the main address at the second annual Founders' Day celebration:

Thursday January 12th next is our Founders' Day. I sincerely hope nothing will prevent you from making the address at that time. It is the chief event of the session, as the legislature and many of the leading men of the State are present.73

Page's acceptance of the invitation was apparently confirmed in August when Mitchell went to the office of Doubleday, Page & Company in New York where the members of the Southern Education Board were meeting.

In January 1911, Dr. Walter Hines Page was recognized as one of the most important Southerners in the country. A successful editor and publisher, a friend of former President Theodore Roosevelt and of President Howard Taft, a spokesman on southern education, and a neighbor from North Carolina who, with his brothers, was taking an active interest in farming and land speculation in the nearby Pinehurst region, he was a familiar and respected figure to South Carolinians.

"The weather" on Thursday, January 12th, "was delightful--a circumstance which added greatly to the success of the exercises and the pleasure of the occasion." In the afternoon in the University Chapel Professor W.K. Tate spoke on "The Enrichment of Rural Life in South Carolina" and Dr. Seaman A. Knapp followed with an address entitled "The Application of Science to Agriculture and Industries."

The evening program began at 8:00 "in the Hall of Representatives in the capitol" with Governor Ansel presiding. "Professor W.H. Hand,

73Samual C. Mitchell to WHP, July 12, 1910, Page MSS.
State Inspector of High Schools and professor of Secondary Education in
the University," delivered a speech on "The Purpose of the Founders." . .
The next speaker, and the chief guest of the University, was Page,
editor of the World's Work, New York, a distinguished son of North
Carolina, who spoke impressively on 'A Layman's Notion of a
University.'"74

**Line of Reasoning**

Similar to the Richmond address, in "A Layman's Notion of a
University" Page chose to speak on the quality and direction of
education, urging in the proposition of the speech:

> We should develop activities--develop the creative,
the doing, faculties and aptitudes.

In developing this proposition he followed a problem-solution plan of
organization, examining (1) the need for a revolution in education and
(2) encouraging his audience to work to make life better for the people
of South Carolina. The North Carolinian based his reasoning on the
premises that Southerners were the heirs of a proud heritage and that
every individual had the right to an education in which he could dis­
cover and develop his own talents.

Thus, in his address Page praised a system of education which
emphasized responding to the individual's interests and aptitudes as
opposed to the traditional curriculum of "the old metaphysical system."

**Forms of Support**

Page employed comparisons and contrasts, illustrations, appeals
to the motives of self-esteem and self-actualization, and expressive
style to amplify his reasoning in "A Layman's Notion of a University.:

74"Founders' Day," 7-10.
Utilizing the device of comparison and contrast to emphasize the differences between the traditional and modern approaches to education, Page declared the "metaphysical system, which by mysterious ways was supposed to 'train the mind,'" a failure because it "was based on a metaphysical explanation of man and his nature, and not on the biological explanation." Those who accepted the biological explanation of man would see him as "an animal of intelligence and character. Body, mind and character are inextricably bound together and dependent on the body." This was not the first time Page had expressed this idea. In the Trinity address (1903) he had looked forward to the "ultimate cultivation of hand, of mind, and of body."

Comparing the American system of "so-called higher education," with that of Germany, Page noted that the Germans were far more advanced in skilled training:

Of the things that we expect from the United States about 90% of the value consists of the value of the material and about 10% consists of work done on it. Of the things that the Germans export about 10% of the value consists of the raw material and 90% of skilled work done on it. Much, of course, of that raw material is our own, and he has his chance to make useful and beautiful things of our material because we can not make them, because, in a word, we are untrained.

Observing that the state had suffered as a result of dependence on slave economy, loss of political prestige, the inability to attract and sustain industry, and the war, Page announced that "the South Carolina of today is a better place that it ever was. . . . Prosperity is diffused, training is within reach of an increasing number, freedom of opinion, very like the freedom of the spacious old days, is restored,
and the land is better tilled and conserved and the people are full of hope."

Page employed illustrations to amplify the weakness of education which reflected a partial view of life and what the University could expect from modern public school systems. Sharing the story of a professor he had known who had "spent his life in one-sided educational endeavor," Page noted:

To him education meant work in a particular psychological groove. He was a scholar of philosophy, so-called. He worked at theories of mental activity. He wrote learned treatises, which only a small group of similar men used. By these he made a reputation among that little group that worked on the mind as if it were something quite independent of the soul. He was sure that he was making headway with education. But the world knows nothing of what he discovered or formulated.

He continued that this man, although "born strong . . . with a good constitution," died in his early fifties because he failed to take proper care of himself. The speaker concluded, "If his view of life and his view of education had included even the simplest facts about eating and of the care of his own body, he would have been alive today. And to be a live man is better than to be a dead philosopher."

Describing the impact on higher education which would result from a modern approach to instruction in primary and secondary school, Page predicted that only "the picked boys and girls" would attend college. Their admission would represent "a great distinction . . . a physical distinction, an intellectual distinction and a moral distinction." While at college "the first task will be to fix on them still more definitely all the good habits of life:" proper diets, personal hygiene, exercise, and "good habits of mind--intellectual work and the
training of the judgment; and regular practice in discovery and at some art--finding out new things in an orderly way (research) and making something in an orderly way." Expanding upon this, he reasoned:

I conceive that a boy who wished thoroughly to understand Shakespeare would be most likely to do so by taking the subject of a play--say "Julius Caesar" or "Macbeth"--and try to make a play himself. If literature is going to be his business he might begin work in literature, as well as to read it--just as, if law or engineering or chemistry is going to be his business, he does now begin the school to work in law and engineering and chemistry. He must learn, in a word, by doing.

The editor of *World's Work* was convinced that modern education could build a better rounded person by teaching both arts and skills through actual practice. Page utilized appeals to self-actualization and self-esteem to enhance his reasoning in the Founders' Day oration. The North Carolinian relied upon an appeal to the individual's need for self-fulfillment to accentuate ideas developed from the premise that a man should have the opportunity to discover and develop his own talents. As such, he stressed that somewhere "in his activities a boy would find what he was born to do;"

. . . --a trade--a craft, an art, no matter what. He would discover that he loves the earth and wishes to make things grow--that he loves music, that he is a born builder, or a sculptor. No matter what he discovers if he discover himself, and that the school is the thing to enable him to find himself and to start in the way his aptitudes prompt him.

The New York journalist appealed to his audience's state pride and their sense of altruism as a means of encouraging them to develop a modern system of public instruction. He praised the "very high level of civilization in South Carolina at the beginning of the last century" when "the great men of the Revolutionary era yet lingered or were just
passing away and the high impulse of that noble struggle was yet active" as a standard for present-day citizens to emulate. Speaking of the state's suffering from "the enervating effects of slavery," the loss of political power, the failure to develop modern industry, and "the persistent inability of the old South to recognize the value of organization," all of which worked together to "turn the land into a battlefield" and "set civilization back," he observed that "the South Carolina of your youth and mine was not as good a land to live in as the South Carolina of a half century before." He concluded that the state, with its "public school system . . . yet in the process of developing," had a great opportunity to adapt a new approach to right training for "the masses of the population, children and adults."

Acknowledging that those who "teach" or "direct this great awakening" of education in South Carolina would "sometimes encounter personal discouragement," Page offered the comfort that "most men do--even the most resolute" feel the same frustration for "the world is full of fools who are obstructive." However, he assured them that if they ever found themselves discouraged that "looked at from the outside--by which it may be, the best measure of it is got--your work seems among the very noblest done anywhere in the world."

Page was fifty-six when he delivered the Founders' Day oration. In these years the North Carolinian paused several times to reflect on his life. In responding to Edwin Mims' request for advice regarding an offer to leave the University of North Carolina to accept the chairmanship of the English Department at Vanderbilt, Page replied, "I can tell you the principle that will and ought to guide you in making a
decision. It is this:

... you will go or you will stay according to the chance to be of greater service at one place than at the other. After a man passes 50, nothing else counts. That's the winning card—the greater service. 75

In his private notes under the title "The Adventures of a Modern Faust" he recorded, "Let him deliberately try every road to happiness and finally hit on the goethean conclusion—to help others!" 76 Thus, he appealed to his Columbia audience's sense of altruism advising:

When a man reaches middle life and tries to make true judgments of values and no longer accepts conventional values—then nothing counts so much as the solemn gratification that comes of having unselfishly served one's fellows; and that high and lasting satisfaction awaits you in very large measure, and, I am sure, there awaits you also the grateful appreciation of your country men and of those who will come after you.

This passage was reprinted word for word in the Times-Dispatch report of "The Country School of Tomorrow."

In "A Layman's Notion of a University," Page's style was characterized by his concern for simplicity and clarity. He displayed particular concern for achieving an oral quality and employed repetition and restatement as well as effective phrasing to amplify his meaning.

Indicative of his concern for oral style, Page made frequent use of personal pronouns and expressions designed to help his audience think along with him. The punctuation of his speech further suggests his concern for oral style. Thus, he used personal pronouns in phrases like "I knew a man," "this seems plain to me," "you who teach,"

75 WHP to Edwin Mims, December 29, 1910, Page MSS.

76 Page Notebook, Page MSS.
"we should develop our activities," and "Let us develop our old system." Interspersed throughout his remarks were expressions such as "I mean to say," "I do not mean to say," "Now the point is," "that is to say," "but, if you please," and "as I was about to say."

In this address Page also used repetition and restatement to magnify the limited scope of the traditional philosophy of education. He asserted:

... we are not trained. For instance, what can you do yourself--what have you trained yourself to do so well that you are an expert at it--that you get joy from it, that you have pre-eminence in it? How have you added beauty or culture or grace or real value to your community--more than the ordinary?

Did you ever make a beautiful piece of furniture with your own hands, or can you play a great piece of music? Can you put the plumbing in order in your house? Can you write a sonnet? Can you read Homer or Virgil or Dante or Goethe at sight? Did you ever plant a tree to make any sunny place more shady? Is there an acre of ground that is more rich or fertile because of your work--or a scene more beautiful because of anything that you have done?

The second paragraph of this quotation was printed word for word in the newspaper account of his speech at the Educational Conference in Virginia.

Making use of expressive words and phrases, Page referred to the traditional approach to education as "a waste of time," "useless," and "rubbish" for its insistence on teaching each pupil "the foolish old arithmetic, the scrappy reader, the criminal grammar and the start straight toward Latin, even if a boy was in training for the plow and should never read a line of Caesar in his life." Therefore, he called for a "revolution in education." Looking to the future, the orator spoke of the "rising tide" of opportunity which lay before the people.
and criticized the "fools" who opposed "this great awakening."

Assessment

Page explored a different aspect of southern education in "A Layman's Notion of a University." Focusing on the quality and direction of instruction rather than the necessity of supporting the concept of universal training, he discussed the need for "a complete revolution in education." Two reasons may account for his expression of this interest. First, as an active member of the southern Education Board and as a result of his frequent journeys in the South, the North Carolinian was aware of the educational progress of the region. Between 1903 and 1909 the eleven southern states had raised over $51,000,000 for education and "educational expenditures in the southern seaboard increased 80% in the period of 1900 to 1912." In the midst of his 1907 tour of the South he expressed his growing optimism at what he found to his wife:

There is no longer any Southern problem of the old sort. Problems there are, and enough of them. But the discouraging old Southern depression and aloofness are gone. It is a different people and I am astonished to find that the very programme (sic) that I laid down in the Chronicle in Raleigh twenty years ago is the programme that has brought this change not only in the condition but in the very character of the people.

An account of his trip published in World's Work reported growing towns, better roads, better live stock, increased interest and expenditures for public education, and an overall tone much the same as in other sections of the country.

77Harlan, pp. 248-9
78WHP to Alice Page, February 6, 1907, Page MSS.
Second, Page was concerned with the bearing of education on the quality of life. In 1904 in a speech entitled "The Cultivated Man in an Industrial Era" presented before the XXth Century Club in Chicago and as a Phi Beta Kappa address at Columbia University, he contended that prosperity could bring about greater opportunities to broaden the cultural interests of educated men. As a publisher he had also tried to combine "culture and profit through a book series." In April, 1911, he urged C. Alphonso Smith of the University of Virginia to write "a book explaining literature to ordinary people in simple, appealing terms ... The suggestion led Smith to write What Can Literature Do for Me?, which Doubleday, Page published in 1912.

By the latter part of 1910, Page was apparently satisfied with the efforts of educators and school-agitators across the South to popularize the concept of locally supported public instruction. In November of that year in his speech "The Country School of Tomorrow" he outlined his concept of the rural school of the future in terms of "its needs, its duties, its responsibilities and its possibilities." As such, he contended the school would "protect the health of the pupil and teach him to take care of himself physically. Then it (would) try him on the various possibilities of a career, to find where his capabilities and adaptations lie, and (would) fit him for the life he would lead."

81Cooper, pp. 261-62.
82Times-Dispatch (Richmond), November 26, 1910.
Thus, "A Layman's Notion of a University" represents a shift in focus in Page's speaking on southern education. Working from the premises that Southerners were the heirs of a proud heritage and that all men have the right to discover and develop their talents, he voiced his concern on another important issue, the quality and direction of education. An advocate of meeting the needs of the total man, mind, body and spirit, he reasoned that the public schools should help each student to take care of his own health and discover and develop his own interests, with the end result that the student should have learned to do something well.

As he had done in each previous speech on southern education, Page employed appeals to his audience's awareness of the need for self-fulfillment and their pride. And once again, the comparisons and illustrations he used to amplify his reasoning reflected his own personal experiences. His concern for a simple, clear oral style further added to the development of his message.

In commenting on the speech, The State (Columbia) concluded "A Layman's Notion of a University" was "excellently constructed and delivered." However, Page's message was ahead of its time, and the address drew little notice. Although enjoying more prosperous times, the South was not yet able to invest in school systems the like of which Page had proposed.

83 The State (Columbia), January 13, 1911.
Summary

From 1899 to 1911 Page was afforded several opportunities throughout the South to speak on education. However, for a variety of reasons he could take advantage of only a limited number of these invitations. Only two complete manuscripts, "The School That Built a Town" and "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," and the majority of a third, "A Layman's Notion of a University," exist as records of his oratorical activity as a spokesman for southern education during this period.

Membership on the Southern Education Board permitted Page to take part in developing educational programs and opportunities in the South. As a native North Carolinian and a successful New York journalist and publisher, he functioned as an emissary between northern and southern leaders in this effort. During this period the southern Education Board generated interest, funds and guidance which resulted in a rapid growth of southern public school systems, increased numbers of qualified teachers, and more and better equipment and buildings.

Page's speeches in Athens, Georgia in 1901 and Birmingham, Alabama in 1904 were characterized by a greater degree of praise than blame. In both addresses his reasoning developed from the reciprocal premises that public education is inherent in a democracy and that a society committed to right training enjoys the greatest economic progress. To enhance his amplification of his reasoning from these premises he utilized appeals to state and national pride. These patriotic appeals, similar to those he employed in his speeches in North Carolina in 1903, reflected his own feelings of nationalism and
further served as a means of identifying education with democracy. In "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South" he also employed a fear appeal, warning that freedom of opinion and speech suffers when an uneducated people control public opinion.

By 1911 Page appeared content with the growth and potential of educational progress in the South. In "A Layman's Notion of a University" he spoke about the quality and direction of instruction rather than emphasizing the need for public support of education. Although he still reasoned from the premise that all men are entitled to the opportunity to discover and develop their own interests and utilized appeals to pride and self-fulfillment, the speech lacks the dramatic quality of his prior speeches on education. The sense of immediacy and urgency is gone.

As he had done in North Carolina, Page made use of various examples, comparisons and contrasts, illustrations, and testimony as amplificatory devices in his speeches across the South. These devices were probably effective in that they evolved from the speaker's own experiences and observations.

Page's choice of language added to the clarity and attractiveness of his speeches. In the three orations studied in this chapter, he employed a style which was characterized by simplicity and clarity. Avoiding grandiose or florid language, he used common words to give a more exact meaning to his ideas. For example, he claimed that "a jack-leg lawyer can't compel any great respect from a really scientific horseshoer" and, referring to the South's lack of influence in the national government, he used almost biblical language to say

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
"we are yet strangers in the house of our fathers."

Indicative of his concern for oral style, he employed numerous personal pronouns, rhetorical questions and directed many comments to the audience such as "Education, ladies and gentlemen, . . ." and "if the other distinguished persons in the audience will pardon me, I shall speak directly to them (Southerners) and them only."

In addition, Page displayed his talent as a phrase-maker in these three speeches. The titles "The School That Built a Town," "The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South," and "A Layman's Notion of a University" are all suggestive and easily remembered phrases. In these speeches he praised education and "the right training of men" as: "a universal duty" and "necessity," "the secret of human progress," "unselfish," an economic and moral fact, "patriotic action," the key to profitable industry, "useful work," "the wide-swinging doors of opportunity," and "a golden age." He lauded right training as consistent with: "the voice of God," "the high virtue of our invincible democracy," the best of human virtues, and the Southerner's love of the land. By contrast, he spoke in critical terms of: "small men" guided by "personal ambitions," "frayed out knight(s)" with "faded plume(s)," men who were "dead-weight(s) on Georgia," those who "dallied with, played with, tolerated, imperfectly done" education, and those who were not democrats and had no understanding of Jefferson. He also referred in negative terms to education as: a "privilege," designed for a "special class" which "sowed seeds of snobbery and discontent," "tyranny of thought," and the "organized howl" that lifts "demagogues to power," and those who looked back to an age "that never was."
North Carolinian was also critical of "old metaphysical" approaches to education which he considered "useless," "a waste of time," "rubbish," and responsible for the "present unrest in the whole educational world."

Similar to the speeches he delivered in his home state, Page avoided the use of any appeals to the ante-bellum period to augment his ideas. So too, he eschewed attacks on specific individuals and institutions representative of the age "that never was." In praising the heritage of his audience, he referred back to the colonial period of Washington, Jefferson and Marshall rather than to 1860 and Lee, Jackson and Davis. His speeches in the deep South, as in the Old North State, exemplified his accommodation to the myths of the Old South as well as Southern opinion and the education of negroes.

Page exercised care not to offend his southern audiences. In Athens he constructed his speech around the story of the educational problems and progress of the hypothetical town of Northwood to allow his listeners to make their own conclusions about the state of public instruction in their own cities and in Georgia. At the Conference for Education held in Birmingham, he identified with his target audience as not just a native but as a southern gentleman "who is frank and fearless" and unafraid of "any truth" to establish his right to speak boldly on the problems of the South.

Study of Page's speeches in the South on education up to 1904 reveals a similarity to his addresses in North Carolina. While the speaker's attempts to identify broadened from that of a North Carolinian to a Southerner, the emphasis remained on stressing the
importance of education as the key to a prosperous new age remained. However, by 1911 the focus in his addresses had shifted and popularizing the concept of universal training had ceased to be his main objective.
CHAPTER VI

Building Up Country Life

Burton J. Hendrick observed that by 1906 "the problem of Southern education assumed a new phase." While Southerners had come to recognize the responsibility of the state in training the children, their poverty insured a weak tax base and hindered the development of public school systems. The solution was to strengthen the economy. The most immediate potential for economic rejuvenation was to build up the South's heretofore wasteful agricultural industry.

In response to this need the General Education Board sponsored the Farm Demonstration program of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp. In this endeavor, Knapp would select a farmer in a community and persuade him to cultivate one field according to his directions. If the crop made a profit, the farmer kept the money, but if it failed, Knapp assumed the loss. The agricultural scientist from Louisiana reasoned that if one man was successful in following scientific farming methods, his neighbors, witnessing the results, would do likewise. Both the method and the man appealed to Page, who "pled his cause with great eloquence... in his writings, in speeches, in letters, in all forms of public advocacy, (and) insisted that Dr. Knapp had found the solution of the agricultural problem."  


2Hendrick, p. 96.
However, by 1911 Page was convinced that right training alone could not benefit the southern farmer if he lacked the capital necessary to work his farm with modern methods and equipment. While still believing the difference between profit and poverty was "the man behind the plow," the North Carolinian realized that the farmer needed financial help.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a rhetorical study of four speeches Page delivered in the period of a year devoted to building up country life: "The Farmer's Credit," presented at the Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South, Nashville, Tennessee, April 4, 1912; "Message to the Country Man," addressed to the North Carolina Literary and Historical Society, Raleigh, December 3, 1912; and his opening and summary remarks as chairman of the Sixteenth Conference for Education in the South, April 16, 18, 1913 in Richmond, Virginia. The report of a fifth oration, "Country Life," presented to a meeting of the Charleston, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce is also discussed. These speeches represent Page's last efforts as a spokesman for southern education.

Page and Agrarian Reform

In 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Page to the Country Life Commission. Other members of the Commission included: Liberty Hyde Bailey, head of the Cornell University College of Agriculture, Gifford Pinchot, Henry D. Wallace, farm editor from Iowa, Kenyon L. Butterfield, president of Michigan State Agricultural College, C.S. Barrett of Georgia, and William Beard, an agricultural
journalist from California.\textsuperscript{3} The president directed the commissioners to investigate "the question of securing better business and better living on the farm . . . that will help to make country life more gainful, more attractive, and fuller of opportunities, pleasures, and rewards for the men, women, and children of the farms."\textsuperscript{4} But the scope of the assignment hardly squared with the means for carrying it out:"

Besides having to complete their work by January 1909, the Commissioners received no pay or expense allowances. Page made his first contribution to the group by using his philanthropic connections to get a $5000 grant from the Russell Sage Foundation to defray travel and investigatory costs. The Commission conducted two tours, through the Middle West and West in October in 1908 and through the South in November, staging over 200 hearings in thirty cities and towns. Page made only the second trip.\textsuperscript{5}

While the efforts of the Commission received "a frosty reception" from Congress, which refused to appropriate money to either continue recommended investigations or even to print a large number of copies of \textit{their} report,\textsuperscript{6} Page was pleased with the attempt to bring "such concentrated attention to the needs of the rural public schools."\textsuperscript{7}

"Before 1909, the former North Carolinian's interest in rural life had been strong but diffuse. For almost thirty years, he had regarded improved farming as more important to Southern progress than attracting manufacturing."\textsuperscript{8} Through his association with Liberty

\textsuperscript{3}John Milton Cooper, Jr., Unpublished biography of Walter Hines Page, p. 342.

\textsuperscript{4}Theodore Roosevelt to WHP, September 10, 1908, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{5}Cooper, p. 342.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{7}WHP to John M. Glenn, November 27, 1909, Page MSS.

\textsuperscript{8}Cooper, p. 341.
Bailey, who had once edited *Country Life* for Doubleday, Page, he had become acquainted with "Sir Horace Plunkett, the Anglo-Irish agrarian reformer." During the summer of 1909 Page crossed the ocean "to visit Plunkett and to study rural cooperatives in Europe," and shortly thereafter participated "in an effort by a Dutch agrarian reformer, Frederick von Eeden, to develop a cooperative farming and industrial community near Wilmington, North Carolina."


In 1906 the author described the efficiency of Nicholas Worth's brother Charles in managing the family cotton mill. Encouraging skilled labor, Charles had machinery "put in to make a better product and a more profitable one. A village had grown up around it. There at least were prosperity, orderliness, cleanliness and growth." Unconcerned with "economic" and "political affairs," Charles Worth focused his attention on solving "the practical problems of the management of

---

9 Cooper, p. 341
10 Cooper, p. 344.
11 Cooper, p. 287.
By 1909 the character Charles Worth had become a social theorist, governing "not one big-mill town now but a succession of mill villages." In these villages "Men, women and children worked, but under a system, which others had declared impossible, that required work in the mills to alternate with work at home and at school. The whole community was a school." Of his project, Charles now boasted: "We can solve all our problems here--right here! . . . and the aim is to teach people from their infancy that they can do better work and lead happier lives here than anywhere else--and to make this true."16

With respect to agriculture, not mentioned in the 1906 story, "he (Charles) had scientific direction for the farm: it was not one big 'plantation' but many small farms all worked by a sort of cooperation." Page described the idealistic life that developed and reported the speech of his fictional sibling to the "most skillful workers" at the annual Christmas dinner "to which every worker in the village sat down--:"

... therefore, men, during the coming year the farmer's cooperative company hopes to see as many as possible of you admitted by the Land Committee to land-ownership . . . Every man here may have as many acres, up to twenty, as he and his family can cultivate to the required standard--free of charge, to become his as soon as he brings it to that degree of culture which your own committee requires.17

As illustrated in The Southerner, Page was convinced that the organization of rural life and activity was essential to southern

16Page, The Southerner, p. 322.
17Page, The Southerner, pp. 401-02.
economic growth.

The election of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency afforded Page an opportunity to exert his influence on the government's agricultural policies. Following the election, "Page started working to convince . . . Wilson of the importance of a comprehensive educational assault on rural problems through the Department of Agriculture."18 As a result of a private meeting during which the president-elect had asked his advice on who should hold the position of Secretary of Agriculture,19 the New York editor: ". . . sketched a number of notes to himself about possible appointees to important jobs and about agriculture and conservation. He produced several drafts of memoranda on farm demonstration work, the Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Education."20 Forwarding this material to the president-elect, Page again advised, "The building up of the countryman comes to his own, the town man will no longer be able to tax, and to concentrate power, and to bully the world." He also recommended former North Carolinian David F. Houston, chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis, ex-president of the University of Texas, and a member of the Southern and General Education Boards, for Secretary of Agriculture.21

Page himself was regarded by many as a prime candidate for the cabinet position. While the North Carolinian was interested in the post, he "did no more than acquiesce in those efforts" of his friends

18 Cooper, p. 345.
19 Page Notebook, Page MSS.
20 Cooper, p. 366.
to win him the favor of the president. However, the secretaryship eventually went to Houston.

"The Farmer's Credit"

On the morning of April 4, 1912, Page delivered an address entitled "The Farmer's Credit" to those assembled for the Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. As it had done each year, attendance at the Conference had grown and the preface to the list of registered members in the Proceedings of the Conference apologized for omitting the names of "two or three thousand" students from area schools and colleges and "two or three thousand citizens of Nashville and members of the Middle Tennessee Education Association, which held its annual meeting in connection with the Conference." The delegates and officers of the Conference represented an impressive Who's Who in southern education. Among the many notables present were: Robert C. Ogden, Wickliffe Rose, Philander P. Claxton, George Foster Peabody, Clarence Poe, James Y. Joyner, S.C. Mitchell, Hollis Burke Frissell, Edward Alderman, Wallace Buttrick, Charles W. Dabney, Henry Fries, Edgar Gardner Murphy, David S. Houston, Albert Shaw, and J.H. Dillard. Tennessee Governor Benjamin W. Hooper welcomed the Conference to the Volunteer State.

Page was surrounded by old friends and long-time co-workers in the campaign for education in the South and the North Carolinian's reputation was well-known to those students, citizens and delegates who

22 Cooper, p. 268.

23 Proceedings, Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South, p. 297.
had never before had the opportunity to hear him speak. He was recognized as editor and partner in a firm that "had become one of the giants of American publishing,"\textsuperscript{24} an advisor to the Wilson administration, and a spokesman for southern education.

Following the first address of the morning, "The Rural Life Survey for Church and School" by Dr. Warren H. Wilson, Robert Ogden announced, "We now have the privilege of listening to an address from Mr. Walter H. Page, an original member of this Conference for Education in the South and always its supporter."\textsuperscript{25}

**Line of Reasoning**

In "The Farmer's Credit" Page announced, as he had on several previous occasions, that "the land and the man--these are the bases of our life," and reasoned that the right training of men and the scientific cultivation of the land would lead to prosperity. However, the purpose of his speech was to emphasize the necessity of a ready source of credit to permit the skilled worker to operate a modern farm. Thus, the North Carolinian developed the proposition:

I believe as I believe nothing else, neither dogma nor any other deduction from human experience, nor any teaching of any wise men--I believe and you believe that the extension of opportunity, the spread of democracy, the willingness to give the other man the same chance that you have yourself, is the most important truth for social and economic progress.

Page reasoned from the premises that the principles of democracy apply to economic opportunity, that the South is primarily an agrarian society and that the greatest economic progress occurs when men are properly trained. In "The Farmer's Credit" the speaker

\textsuperscript{24}Cooper, p. 248.

\textsuperscript{25}Proceedings, Fifteenth Conference, p. 97.
(1) discussed the lack of credit available to farmers as the main economic problem in the South, (2) suggested credit societies as a possible solution and (3) urged his audience to help extend the democratic principle to economic life.

**Forms of Support**

Page used an illustration, comparisons, examples, appeals to motives of self-actualization and self-esteem and expressive language to amplify his reasoning in his speech in Nashville.

To accentuate the southern farmer's inability to obtain credit, Page gave an account of a recent survey he and some friends had made of a "country neighborhood in one of the Southern States." "That inquiry resulted in something like this:"

There were eleven (a family living together or a man or woman who earned his or her own living) who had bank accounts in a little bank in the adjacent town; there were about forty who could borrow small sums on their land, from money lenders or from the bank or from their neighbors. This accounted for something like 50%. This is a prosperous farming community. Now, what about the other 50%? They have no credit, there is no way for them to borrow money in any appreciable sums or under any profitable conditions.

The speaker concluded that "more than half the workers in that area had not capital enough to do their work even passably well."

Page compared the easy access to credit in the city as opposed to the country to accentuate the difference in prosperous results of labor:

Now, suppose every farmer in that area had money enough to equip his farm scientifically, so as to work it to its utmost and to equip it as industries in the city are equipped. What would be the result? I do not think that any imagination can tell what would be the result. Presumably not one acre in a hundred is worked one-half as well as they would all be worked under such conditions.
as I speak of. If in an area like this every man had all the money he needed to equip his farm, if there were no waste either of time or of land, if they worked as men work in organized industries, you can hardly imagine the improvement.

As a New York businessman, an editor of a farm journal, an investor in the farm industry, and friend and publisher of Frank Norris (The Octopus), Page recognized that the cities held the purse-strings for the farmer.

In emphasizing the practicality and attractiveness of a credit society as an organized and ready source of capital for the farmer, Page referred to a conference which had "been going on in this city for three or four days . . . about the credit society systems that have revolutionized agriculture on continental Europe." In describing the operation of such a society he said, "It works this way:"

Here are, say fifty men who have no credit, and who are not doing profitable labor. Take these men, organize them in what is known as a credit society. Make every one of them responsible for the debts of any one, and then on the recommendation of them all or of a committee of them lend any one man $100 for any approved productive pursuit whatever, not to pay any debts and not to indulge in any frivolity, the credit of every man being pledged. . . . In Germany little organizations like these borrowed $200,000,000 in 1910 and paid the current rate of interest and nothing was lost in the transaction.

The speaker concluded that such societies would work in this country because every creditor is "interested in every other one's success."

Emphasizing that "science is beginning to show us what can be done" with the land, Page repeated his oft-heard call for "the right kind of men" to till the land:

It yields riches anywhere in proportion to the character and skill of the men who are on it. For the first time in human history we are coming to know what one square rod of earth will do--I came near saying any square rod
of earth. The sand hills to the southeast of us the day before yesterday were given away for a fraction of a dollar an acre for taxes. I have seen that country yield sixty bushels of corn and one and one-half bales of cotton to the acre.

This example served to reinforce the need to train the farmer as well as help him financially.

Page referred to the memory of Thomas Jefferson to identify and amplify the concept of democracy and altruism in urging his audience to grant the farmer economic opportunity:

There is one aspect of the life of Jefferson that I should like to call to your attention, and that is the serenity of his old age. Here was a man who had fought and fought hard. He brought greater love of justice into our life, and he did great injustice to his personal enemies. But in his closing years he presented the beautiful spectacle of a serene old man, because he had found and he knew that he had found out what the democratic philosophy of life means. He had found out that it means human helpfulness. I think he knew that that was the most important thing that any man can learn at any time anywhere in any world.

This example once again indicates Page's propensity to appeal to the southern heritage of his audience by recalling the period he considered the true Old South.

Page directed emotional appeals to the motives of self-actualization and self-esteem. His strategy was apparently to emphasize the implications of denying credit to the farmer and to urge the audience to offer their assistance through appeals to pride and altruism.

Utilizing the motive of self-actualization, Page stressed that southern farmers were unable to fulfill the potential of their skills or their land because they were denied access to credit. Under such circumstances, he contended that farmers could not do their work
"even passably well." In those cases where the farmer was able to borrow he was forced to "pay an unreasonable rate of interest--nobody knows what rate." The result was that the man "below the credit line stays there."

Appealing to their pride and sense of altruism, Page encouraged his audience to lend their interest and support to the task of helping the southern farmer. Asserting that of "all groups of people . . . working for any purpose in our country today," the delegates to the Conference held "'the Ark of the Covenant' in their keeping:"

It is you who sacrifice most to serve your fellow man. It is to you, therefore, that it is proper to make an appeal that you should direct your thought to the application of democracy and the economic condition of our country. Man has been on this earth unknown millions of years. He will be here unknown millions of years. The progress of the race has been determined chiefly by man's helpfulness to man.

In his speech at Nashville, Page's choice of language was plain and direct, characterized by his use of familiar phrases, rhetorical questions and an oral quality.

The title "The Farmer's Credit" represents the speaker's tendency to rely upon common language. As such, he spoke of "an economic chance" for the farmer, praised the delegates to the Conference as carrying "the Ark of the Covenant" and urged them to "search" their hearts to find a way to "remake the country man." In stating that "the progress of the race has been determined chiefly by man's helpfulness to man," Page emphasized that "there is no such thing as stopping for progress." To dramatize this thought, he employed a metaphor: "Civilization is a moving tide, and any man who attempts to
stop it will be drowned, and deserves to be."

Page employed numerous rhetorical questions as signposts and transitional devices. For example, in revealing that his survey had shown that 50% of the people in a farming community had access to credit, he asked, "Now, what about the other 50%?" To introduce a discussion on the credit society concept as a means of providing the farmer with a ready supply of credit, he inquired, "Is there any way to bring that about? There is."

"The Farmer's Credit" exemplifies the speaker's concern for oral style. Thus, he used phrases such as: "What is the pertinence of these remarks to this audience?," "It is you who sacrifice most to serve your fellow man. It is to you, therefore, that it is proper to make an appeal that you should direct your thought to the application of democracy," and "with that serene assurance, I bid you Godspeed and good night."

Assessment

Page's brief speech in Nashville developed the theme that the right training of the farmer, long advocated by the Conference, was ineffective if that farmer was denied access to the financing necessary to operate a modern agricultural operation. In developing his speech he reasoned from the premise that the South was an agrarian society and that right training was necessary for economic progress. The North Carolinian also extended the premise that the principles of democracy apply to equal educational opportunities to include also equal economic opportunities.
To amplify and make his reasoning more attractive, Page employed appeals to self-fulfillment and self-esteem, illustrations, comparisons, examples, and a plain and direct style. These devices were probably effective because of their relevance to the occasion and as representing the personal interests of the speaker.

"The Farmer's Credit" is a significant address in that it indicates the awareness of the speaker and the Conference for Education in the South that right training alone was not enough, but required the addition of an organized means of economic assistance for effective results. Referring to Page's address in his work Universal Education in the South, Charles W. Dabney commented, "Page made the address in the year 1912. Has not this prophecy been fulfilled?"26

"Message to the Country Man"

On December 3, 1912, eight months after his address "The Farmer's Credit," Page delivered "The Message to the Country Man" at the annual meeting of the State Literary and Historical Association in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Raleigh News and Observer predicted large audiences for the annual meeting, reporting that "the number of visitors, who have written that they are coming, is already large. Many more are expected. Interest in this association has been growing each year until it is being justly appraised as one of the biggest events celebrated in North Carolina."27 The newspaper printed the names of some of the many influential and prestigeous educators,


27 News and Observer (Raleigh), December 3, 1912.
businessmen and citizens in the state who were planning to attend.

On January 15, 1912 the members of the "new Executive Committee of the State Literary and Historical Association just appointed by R.D.W. Connor" met "in the offices of The Progressive Farmer in Raleigh" to prepare the program for their annual gathering. Present were E.K. Graham of Chapel Hill, Wm. K. Boyd of Durham, T.P. Harrison of West Raleigh, W.L. Poteat of Wake Forest, F.A. Woodard of Wilson, President Connor, and Secretary Clarence Poe. The committee chose Raleigh as the site meeting, selected late November or December as the date, decided on a program encompassing two evening and one afternoon sessions, and planned to have "a North Carolinian who has become eminent outside the State" to make an address, "the first choice of the committee being Dr. Walter H. Page . . ." Edwin Markham, author of "The Man With a Hoe," was invited to speak at the second evening session.28

Page accepted the invitation, and, in advertising the opening session of the Association meeting, the News and Observer ran the headline "Dr. Walter Page Speaks Tonight." The press was highly complimentary of the former area resident:

The Association always has a man of distinction, North Carolina born, to make the annual address on the first night. Dr. Walter Page, editor of the World's Work, and a man now being proposed by magazine men as secretary of agriculture in the Wilson cabinet, is a Wake County man. He was born in Cary fifty-seven years ago. He has been editor of the Forum, of the Atlantic Monthly, and organized the Doubleday, Page company, now one of the great publishing houses of the world.

He has had a notable career, has written fine

28Minutes, January 28, 1912, North Carolina Historical and Literary Society, Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
fiction and this year, especially, wrote some of the most powerful campaign editorials yet written in this country. Perhaps the most remarkable address delivered in North Carolina within fifteen years, not on a political subject was his "Forgotten Man" in the summer of 1889 (sic) at the State Normal.29

The first evening session began at 7:45 in the Raleigh Auditorium. R.D.W. Connor's opening address "The Historical Foundations of Democracy in North Carolina" was scheduled for 8:00. Page was to follow with "Message to the Country Man" at 8:40 p.m.

Line of Reasoning

As he had done in "The Farmer's Credit," the editor of World's Work chose to focus on the credit societies as the surest means for providing the farmer a ready source of capital. With borrowing power similar to the farmer's counterpart in the city, he contended the country man could cultivate every available acre of the land and the resultant wealth would "put every civilization in history to shame."

Therefore, Page developed the proposition:

The fundamental problem of all is the building up of the country man. The main task in building up the country man is to enable him to get money to develop his land and train him to the safe and wise use of money.

In organizing his speech, Page followed a problem-solution pattern of development. Thus, he (1) asserted that the way to create a great literature was to build up the land and the people, (2) praised the work of the state in beautifying the countryside and (3) emphasized the necessity of building up the country man. To that end, he (4) urged the people to institute local credit societies for the farmers.

29 News and Observer (Raleigh), December 3, 1912.
Forms of Support

Page made extensive use of illustrations, comparisons, examples, appeals to self-esteem and self-actualization, and a direct style to amplify his praise for what North Carolinians had done in caring for their land, to emphasize the nature of the economic problem facing agricultural interests and to explain and magnify the benefits of a credit society.

Commending efforts to provide proper care for the land, Page recalled that "forty years ago" Moore County "was considered good to hold the rest of the earth together," but that the county had embarked upon a road building program and "men are coming from far and near to make the land bloom along these roads... Now nobody knew either the natural beauty of the country or the possibilities of gardens till it was made possible to drive over the country in automobiles. Planting a public garden along roads that through a wilderness of pine stumps and blackjacks--that ladies and gentlemen, gives a hint of what I mean by caring for our land and preserving it."

The editor of World's Work explained the nature of the imbalance between the farm and the city by illustrating how "the two great economic facts of the last century affected life in the United States:"

First, the unprecedented rush of men to the farms which was caused by the homestead acts. The Government gave away a domain of vast extent on conditions, easy without parallel in human history; and millions of men from every part of the older states and from the Old World settled our great agricultural area. There never was before such a rush of men to the land. They grew a great deal more surplus wheat and corn than we needed. Decade after decade our chief export was food products. In a word, they overdid the business of farming. There were far too many farmers in proportion to our population. There was,
therefore, in the next generation and the next a reverse movement—a movement of the young fellows from the farms to the towns. Farming was too poorly paid a business for them. At the same time it so happened at first that the towns had a use for these young fellows; it was the first great era of our city building. Railroads had brought great business chances in the towns; and soon we run against the second great economic fact of the century.

This second economic fact was the development of all the great new machinery of modern life—railroads, telephones, telegraphs, banks, chains of banks, corporations, trusts—all the vast machinery of doing business quickly and in great volume which has made our methods so different from the methods of our grandfathers.

To introduce his discussion of credit societies for the farmer, Page told a story he had heard from Dr. Knapp. His purpose was to stress that people could accomplish more and better work when they invested their time and effort together to "create something."

One Sunday he (Dr. Knapp) found himself in a village in one of the cotton states and he went to church with the friend at whose house he was staying. The preacher made an elaborate explanation of the debts and needs of the church. The roof leaked, some of the benches needed mending. They must raise $100 in some way. The Mothers Sewing and Cradle Society had generously arranged to hold a fair and to give an oyster supper (canned oysters of course)... That was the conventional way to do the thing—to wring $100 from the people who didn't have it to give and didn't wish to give it if they had.

On his way home, Dr. Knapp passed an uncultivated field whose owner belonged to the church. Knapp persuaded the man to "give one year's use of the field to the church."

The men of the church—rather I should say the husbands of the women of the church—agreed to work the field. So did the young people of the Sunday School. Dr. Knapp sent them enough selected cotton seed to plant it and one of his demonstrators to show them how to do it. Everybody volunteered a day's work. It was a frolic—sort of picnic—to work the church field. The fair and oyster supper yielded less than $20 net and everybody begrudged the money. The field of cotton brought more than $200 and everybody felt glad that he had worked a day or a half day in it.
Following this story Page described how a man named Raiffeisen had employed the same principle "sixty years ago in Germany" when he "organized a society of poor farmers who would band themselves together to borrow small sums of money . . ." Referring to the "peculiar conditions" under which members of such societies borrow money, the North Carolinian said, "Every member of a local society binds himself for all the debts of all the other members to the society. There is an unlimited liability. Every society is strictly local so that every member will and must know every other member and can have a friendly and neighborly knowledge of his methods of doing business; and it is directly to the interest of every member to help every other member to make his loan profitable."

Dramatizing the transforming power of such a society on a community, Page related the tale of two neighbors he had heard about from Sir Horace Plunkett:

The men were quarrelsome--more quarrelsome were their wives. No family had much to do with any neighboring family--except to criticize it--and they were all hopelessly poor.

After they were organized into a credit society, Pat borrowed $50 to buy additional land and so on. Pat and Mike despised one another and had expressed the polite opinion that neither was worth hell room, which Sir Horace, himself an Irishman, remarked was true.

Very well; in a little while Mike concluded he'd go to see Pat and see how he was getting on with his new cow. For they were equally bound to pay for her. Bridget was doing very well with the cow. Bridget wasn't such an infernally quarrelsome woman after all. Pat soon returned the call to see what Mike was doing with his new land. Mike was working it pretty well. There might be something good in that fellow after all. And so all around that quarrelsome neighborhood, families came to know one another by helping one another and by being bound in a common bond. The whole community changed. They organized themselves for other purposes. They saved themselves and they can now
command capital for any productive enterprise they have.

In urging his audience to consider sponsoring a local credit society for small farmers, Page detailed the course of action to follow:

... first, to find a community of farmers who are willing to borrow money cheap and for a long time on such conditions each to pledge himself for the other's debt. Let them organize. Let them appoint a managing committee. Let the managing committee pass on the applications and reject or approve them. Let them select a cashier, who is the only paid officer of the organization and who is, in fact, little more than a responsible bookkeeper.

Then the money must be got at first from some outside source. In a little while these societies will have money of their own, for their members would deposit their earnings with them as in a savings bank. But at first somebody must lend the money.

... Call a meeting of men in Raleigh who are willing to lend a little money at 6% for say four years on this best of all security, to be paid back in installments: and let us get together a few thousand dollars. Then find a neighborhood in the country where men will band themselves together in the way I have described to borrow it and put it to productive uses.

Throughout the course of his address Page made extensive use of illustrative material, the majority of which was derived from his own experience and encounters.

Page amplified the economic problem facing rural interests by comparing and contrasting the differences in the organization of life in the city with that of the farm community. He also used the same device to develop the nature of a credit society as opposed to a joint stock company and a mortgage.

With respect to urban and rural life, Page explained:

A town is an organization: It is that fact which distinguishes it from the country. In the country every farm stands alone. It has very few relations to any other. In the city, trade, finance, social life--everything is organized, from the Board of Trade to the Daughters of...
Rebecca.

The town is organized life; the country is unorganized life. That's the difference that counts.

Add to that fact this other fact—that most of the towns of the United States were becoming organized when farming was greatly overdone and consequently underpaid.

The more efficient organization of life in the town had an adverse effect on the rural community:

The most enterprising men were going to the town. The least enterprising men were staying in the country. This was the period when the average farmer was a mere clodhopper, a hayseed, a man who managed his little resources so badly that he was in debt to somebody in the town. Somebody in the town taxed him and owned him; and of course that made his lot worse and worse. What he ought to have had as his own profit went as profit to some master in some town.

Thus, Page announced that the "most fundamental advantage the town man has over the country man is his access to money to do business with."

In amplifying the ability of a credit society to provide the farmer with a reliable source of capital, Page asked his audience to observe that such an organization was "in some important respects . . . the antithesis of the joint stock company with which we are familiar and which colors all our thought."

A joint stock company (an incorporated company or corporation) is an organization of capital to hire men. A Raiffeisen credit society is an organization of capital to hire money.

A corporation is a company to make as much money as possible. A Raiffeisen credit society is an organization to make as little money as money can be borrowed for on the safest possible terms.

A corporation is a company in which shareholders are usually liable only for the amount of their stock. In a Raiffeisen society a member is liable for all the debts to the society of all the members.

A corporation is a machine to make money. A Raiffeisen credit society is a machine to make men—by
training them to use money--to bring men who are below
the credit line above it--to give the small farmer a
chance to command capital and at least as good terms as
the city merchant and manufacturer.

Page also compared the credit society with "any mortgage plan
of borrowing" to emphasize the advantage of the former:

. . . they band men together so that they are obliged
to help one another.

Consider this difference. A man mortgages his
land and gets money. He doesn't even like to let his
neighbor know he has done such a thing. He carries his
burden alone.

Another man pledges himself to help his neighbor
borrow and his neighbor returns the compliment. They are
both in the same boat. Not only does each know the
other's condition: each is bound to help the other. There
is a world of difference.

Page used comparisons to emphasize the difference between the
town and farm and the need for a different approach to provide a means
to a balance of the two. The same devices were employed to magnify the
advantage of a Raiffeisen credit society over other means of borrowing.

Page utilized examples to amplify the changes that had occurred
since his boyhood which had dictated the reorganization of the business
world and various methods designed to help the farmer become more pros­
perous and manage his money wisely. Referring to changes in the world
which had demanded a reorganization in economic life, Page recalled the
experiences of his own father who:

. . . as a boy went with my grandfather's caravan of
wagons, loaded with cotton, all the way from Wake County
to Petersburg, Virginia, to sell it--over miserable
roads, camping by the roadside at night and taking a
week to make the journey either way; and in those days
hogsheads of tobacco were rolled from Granville county
to market at Petersburg. Now think of all the organi­
zation of business that came between that primitive time
and our own day. That is what I mean by the modern
reorganization of the world.
Discussing several methods designed to help organize country life, the North Carolinian praised:

1. "the simple and fundamental method of field demonstration worked out by Dr. Knapp,"
2. "corn clubs and canning clubs--these are the first steps in the organization of both men and women," and
3. economic organizations for "cooperative buying and selling. This helped Denmark to leap from the place of one of the poorest nations of Europe to the place of the most evenly distributed prosperity. . . ."

Emphasizing the ability of a credit society to teach the farmer how to manage money, Page cited "the experience of more than half a century" to prove that if a country man and his neighbors "all work together . . . they all learn how to manage money--become economic men and get themselves above the credit line. These societies grew in Germany from 1,700 in number in 1890 to 15,000 in 1910. The average number of members of each society is 92. In 1909 they lent to their members more than two hundred millions of dollars and they had outstanding loans of more than four hundred million dollars."

Page's choice of examples, drawn from his own experience and knowledge, amplified his reasoning and supplemented his more frequent use of detailed illustrations.

In the "Message to the Country Man" Page employed appeals to self-esteem and self-actualization to enhance his reasoning. As such, he appealed to his audience's pride in their state and their heritage as country people and emphasized the commonwealth's potential for growth and wealth.

Stressing the need to take "care of our land" as the first step toward creating a great literature, Page appealed to the people's pride
in their state and their heritage as country people and emphasized the commonwealth's potential for growth and wealth.

Stressing the need to take "care of our land" as the first step toward creating a great literature, Page appealed to the people's pride in the Carolina countryside, "the smell of the earth, and . . . the bloom and perfume of our forests and fields." He commented on the joyful awareness "that Nature gave us every riot of her bounty . . ." To reinforce his point that the second step in creating a great literature was "by the care of our people," and as a prelude to his emphasis on building up the country man, Page praised the Old North State as an agrarian society: " . . . our people are country people. We have no cities yet and are not likely to have the great evils of great cities for many a year to come. In this, also, God is very good to us." Thus, the speaker identified himself as one with the people, invoked the agrarian myth, placed agrarianism and the people on the side of God, and indicated that Tar Heels were unique from city-dwellers in an urban society. Although his audience represented the best minds and highest level of society in the state, this appeal to their agrarian heritage provided them the opportunity to identify with each other as "country people," people who preferred to live close to nature. Page utilized appeals to self-fulfillment to heighten the audience's awareness of the state's potential for growth and wealth through agriculture. Declaring that if the farmer had both good training and adequate capital, he could create unimaginable wealth, Page said:
... if every acre of good land in North Carolina were as skillfully tilled by the man that owns it ... and if he could get all the money that he could use productively so that he cultivate his land to the very highest degree ... if you can imagine every productive acre in the hands of such a capable man with capital enough for his uses--men and brethren, what could that mean? Calculate it if you can, but you can't calculate it. ... For there is potential wealth enough between our mountains and our ocean--wealth in the soil--to put every civilization in history to shame.

Again emphasizing the prospects of what might be accomplished by a skilled farmer who had access to money and knew how to manage it, Page prophesied:

There is hardly an acre of land in North Carolina that would not well repay the wise investment of more money on it. Most of the acres in cultivation are bound to have money spent on them before they can yield good profits. And only a small part of the land in North Carolina is yet under any kind of cultivation at all.

Try to calculate the sum of money that could be wisely spent on all the arable land in North Carolina if it were all worked by men who know their business and could manage money wisely ... The sooner it comes the sooner shall we come into the wealth that awaits us. Our wealth and our well-being will increase as fast as we do it.

Appealing to their desire to create opportunities for the development of wealth for the state, Page urged his audience to support "the principle of the Raiffeisen credit society:"

You will start a great movement and make a great chapter in North Carolina history. You will be surprised to find how rapidly the idea will grow and spread and how many millions of dollars will soon go through these channels to the productive development of the soil and to the making of our farmers into business men.

The orator's use of the motives of self-esteem and self-fulfillment indicate his strategy of appealing to his audience's pride in what they had and potential for what they could achieve.
As the title indicates, in "Message to the Country Man," Page again employed a plain, direct yet expressive style. In choosing his words, the North Carolinian employed familiar expressions, common language and displayed his awareness of oral style.

At the outset of his speech, Page predicted that North Carolina would enjoy a burst of literary greatness when her land and her people were developed. After lauding the state's progress in caring for the countryside, he turned his attention to developing the country people. In doing so he announced, "I now come to my mutton by a different path in the pasture. . . ." He also spoke of two men in a credit society as "both in the same boat" and declared there is "a world of difference" in their concern for each other.

Page used common words in such a way as to add a fresh emphasis to his message. Thus, he declared "our people are country people," "the job is to build up the man and he will build up the soil," and "freedom begets freedom." In praising his native state he spoke of "the tonic of our air and the blue of our sky and the slope of our hills and the quiet richness of our lowlands even to the ocean . . . It is a good land to live in and, when one must die, a good land to die in."

As in his previous speeches, Page displayed his concern for oral style. Scattered throughout his speech are expressions such as: "as men grow older (you will agree with me)," "I pray your patience while I explain certain things that you already know," "Let me tell you how it is done in Germany," and "if you will follow me."
Assessment

In "Message to the Country Man," Page continued to develop a theme of providing the southern farmer with opportunities for right training and sufficient capital to operate a modern farm. As he had done in Nashville, he advocated the establishment of credit societies as the best means of providing an adequate source of credit. In so doing, he again reasoned from the premises that economic progress occurs when men are properly trained and that the South is an agrarian society. He also declared that the South needed to achieve a balance of power between industrial and agricultural interests.

Page employed illustrations, comparisons, examples, appeals to self-esteem and self-actualization, and expressive style to amplify his thoughts. Afforded considerably more time to address the Literary and Historical Association in Raleigh than he had at the Education Conference eight months earlier, he presented a more detailed explanation of the method and benefits of a credit society. His choice of amplificatory material reflected his own knowledge and experience. In this manner, the speaker's credibility asserted a significant influence.

While lamenting the "unorganized life" in the country and the "lopsided" relationship favoring the urban businessman, at no point did the New York editor and friend of the Rockefellers and other businessmen-philanthropists disparage Big Business. To the contrary, he referred to the "money trust in the United States" as "the natural and necessary result of our financial and economic organization--organization by the town for the town," and "not a consciously malevolent body
of men who sat down and deliberately made this machinery that draws our money within their uses."

Despite its enthusiastic announcements that Page would address the Association, the News and Observer's account of his speech was brief, confining itself to a report with little analysis and no evaluation. This indifference may be attributed to the fact that Josephus Daniels, editor of the paper, and Page had all but severed their relationship as a result of the Bassett affair nine years earlier, or that the paper was simply unimpressed with the speaker's remarks. The Observer did not mention his plea to the audience to sponsor a local credit society, commenting only that Page "had offered himself to come down here and help to wake up the whole of this world."30

While Page's address failed to arouse the interest of the local paper, the "Message to the Country Man" did capture the attention of a local agricultural commission. Following the program at the Raleigh Auditorium, the speaker wrote:

Here to address the N.C. Literary and Historical Association, an extraordinary hoop (sic), worked up by Connor and Poe and such young fellows, in the new auditorium, where at least 3,000 people came. Connor read an interesting historical paper on the Historical Development of Democracy in North Carolina. Then I spoke on "The Country Man," the speech about Raiffeisen credit societies. It set them all talking about it, and today (Dec. 4) the Agricultural Commission (is that the name?) invited me to address them, (they being in session here).31

While the "Message to the Country Man" apparently failed to stimulate the creation of a farmer's credit society, the speech does

30Ibid.

31Page Notebook, Page MSS.
provide an indication of Page's vision of the region as an agrarian society. The oration also represents the expanding interest of a southern educational spokesman to combine economic assistance and right training.

"Country Life"

On January 27, 1913, two months after he had spoken in Raleigh, Page returned to the South and delivered an address entitled "Country Life" to a meeting of the Charleston, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. Although no copy of his speech remains, the report of his address in the Charleston News and Courier indicates that he again developed the theme of skilled training and economic assistance as the solution to rural problems.

Page was the special guest of the Chamber of Commerce and shared the platform with former Governor D. Clinch Heyward, Francis Warrington Dawson and the organization's president and secretary William D. Harvey and A.D. Snell. The program attracted the largest gathering of members in the Chamber's history, two-hundred-seventy-five businessmen. The News and Courier informed its readers:

The very backbone of most that is good in Charleston was represented in the gathering last night. In addition to leading businessmen and planters, there were lawyers, physicians, engineers, educators and men from other professions and vocations, all appearing to have in mind a single, common purpose. The upbuilding of their common city, Charleston.

Additional special guests included Mayor John P. Grace, Rear Admiral James M. Helm, U.S.N., President John L. Sheppard of the Merchant's Exchange, President Daniel L. Sinkler of the Commercial Club, and

32News and Observer (Charleston), January 28, 1913.
President Seignious of the Cotton Exchange. 33

In introducing Page as "the principal speaker of the evening," President Harvey commented that the editor of World's Work "was one who had labored for the whole nation but especially for the South." He expressed the opinion that "if Woodrow Wilson is what we think he is' he will call Mr. Page to a position in the cabinet." His guest responded "when you, sir, are elected President, I shall know where to apply and not before." 34

The newspaper recorded that Page went on to deliver "a striking address, in direct and sledge-hammer style, making a number of interesting suggestions as to how the South and especially the coastal section of South Carolina could solve the question of filling unused farm lands with good farmers." As such, he identified the problem as keeping good men on the farms and bringing the right kind of men to join them. The News and Courier listed the potential solutions he proposed:

1. Establish credit societies to permit farmers to borrow money as cheaply as their counterparts in the city.
2. Advertise the availability of South Carolina farm land.
3. Encourage local banks to offer reasonable loans to induce new farmers to move into the area.
4. Institute programs not only to attract newcomers but also to make them feel welcome after they arrive.
5. Consider a program of the state purchasing land and giving it away to farmers who prove that they can cultivate it properly.

Although brief, the press report of "Country Life" indicated that Page, in speaking to an audience composed of Charleston's leading

33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
leading businessmen and financiers, reasoned from the premises that economic progress occurs in relation to the presence of well-trained workers, that the South is an agrarian society and that an equilibrium in economic power needs to be reached between the urban and rural communities.

"Country Life" was the third speech delivered in the South within the course of a year in which Page combined the need for education and financial assistance as essential for returning the South to prosperity. The only direct quotation from the speech printed in the paper was the North Carolinian's declaration "Your city . . . is going ahead only as fast as your back land is cultivated. Cities and all else, civilization itself, depend in the last analysis, on the quality of the man who cultivates the land which he owns himself." This statement, similar to that of William Jennings Bryan in "The Cross of Gold,"35 capsulized the agrarian myth and reinforced the speaker's role in promoting the agricultural interests of the South.

"Opening Remarks" and "Summary by the Chairman"

Due to the illness of Robert C. Ogden, Page presided as chairman over the Sixteenth Conference for Education in the South, April 16-18, 1913, in Richmond, Virginia. In this official capacity, he delivered brief addresses welcoming the delegates at the opening session and in closing the final session. Indicative of the expanding interest in the Conference was the registered attendance of 2,148 participants from

twenty-nine states, the District of Columbia, Canada, and Australia.

The Richmond meeting represented the expanding scope of the Conference for Education in the South. The evening sessions over which Page presided were devoted to the theme of "the building up of country life" while the morning and afternoon programs were set aside for numerous special interest groups.

The Conference in Virginia was unique in that the presiding officer was the nation's new ambassador to Great Britain. Only three weeks before, on March 26, the fifty-seven year old Page was appointed to the chief diplomatic post in England by President Wilson. Sailing for London on May 15, his first official audience with the King was scheduled for the thirtieth of the month. While the position marked the birth of a new career, it also signaled the end of the North Carolinian's active participation as a spokesman for Southern education.

Line of Reasoning

As chairman, Page was expected to address the delegates at the Richmond Conference at both the opening and closing sessions. Preparing to end his active involvement with the organization for an indefinite period of years, the Ambassador used the opportunity to summarize not only the activities of the Sixteenth Conference, and those of previous annual meetings, but also urged the delegates who would participate in future conferences to meet the "largest problem that faces

36 *Proceedings*, Sixteenth Conference for Education in the South, p. 325.

American civilization today . . . building up its country life." The proposition for both speeches was: "We must organize in the country."

In these brief speeches Page reasoned from the premises that the democratic principle applies to education, thus all men, women and children are entitled to the opportunity for proper training, and that the South is an agrarian society and should maintain its agrarian values and be strengthened so as to reach a balance of power with the industrial areas.

The North Carolinian considered education the key to the rejuvenation of the old commonwealths and regarded the work of the Southern Education Conference as a practical medium through which this goal could be achieved. Therefore, in his speeches he praised the Conference for:

1. the "long way" that the conference, the country, the South, and education had come in sixteen years,
2. the "greater conception" of education evidenced by the meeting in Richmond,
3. the "comprehensiveness" of the conference, with capable representatives from each southern state, and
4. the delegates' recognition of the necessity to build up "our rural civilization."

**Forms of Support**

To amplify the growth, expanding scope and achievements of the conferences, Page relied upon comparisons, appeals to self-esteem and expressive style.

In his "Opening Remarks" Page praised the expanding scope of the Conference for Education in the South by recalling "Sixteen years ago I dare say:"
... most men thought of education as something that was done to children in a house. Now the subjects that are most important at this meeting show that we take a very much greater conception of it. We still do things to children in houses, but the idea of education has extended beyond the child, not forgetting the child of course but taking in the adult.

Referring to his task of summarizing the work of the Sixteenth Conference, Page observed: "This was a custom of our earlier times. It could have been done very well then. But to attempt it at this time would be like summarizing the springtime, with its varied beauty and charm."

Emphasizing the nature of the "largest problem" facing "American civilization today," the building up of country life, the speaker declared: "We have just passed through a period of organization of the machinery of the modern world--making the city and the railroad--and the country has been left out. Now we must build it up, and that is the errand that brings us here."

In reasoning that organization was essential to place the farm community on par with the city, Page compared and contrasted the present situation with the early days of democratic life in the country:

... the characteristic of the people of the United States was individualism. Great as this was for the cause of democracy, it rested upon a false economic basis. A man's home cannot be his castle, for he is mutually linked as his brother's keeper, whether he will or no. A larger vision and a larger liberty and a larger opportunity now comes on us as the task for our working hours. We must organize in the country.

In praising the work of the conferences, Page appealed to the pride of his audience. Looking back over the efforts of the Conference to its inception, he observed "we have come a long way." He praised
the "greater conception" of education that had evolved marking the growth of the organization: "It has extended far beyond the house and it extends to the utmost limits of human activity and we have come to realize that every man and woman of us never finishes our education until we die."

The North Carolinian also commended the participants for their willingness to offer their talents to the campaign for southern education. In his opening address he stated: "I think there have never been gathered together anywhere in the Union so many well informed men in the various problems of building up our rural civilization than are gathered in Richmond this very night." He voiced the same sentiment at the closing session, however, this time directing his comments toward the southern delegates: "Never before, I believe, have so many thoughtful and suggestive people come together from so many regions of the South. Every State is represented by a group, and every member of each group seems to be a leader."

Lauding the patriotic impulses of his audience, Page identified the work of the Conference with the goals of democracy:

The historian of the progress of democracy could not write a more thrilling chapter than the events of the past ten or fifteen years, taking as the cue the note of the Conference for Education in the South. We begin with the school and the child, and we end with them, of course; but every step has been toward a widening democratic ideal, nothing less, to see how we could teach one another.

In his closing remarks to the Conference, his last formal address on southern education, Page praised the rewards of one's service for his fellow man: "To till the soil, to train the children, to make the home, a work of continuous service, I count it as one of
the greatest privileges that can fall to the lot of man. We have worked on a program to bring to pass the dream of the fathers, that our republic shall be and remain the hope of the world." Recalling the theme of his address in Birmingham in 1904, this remark reveals the nature of the speaker's involvement in the Conference for Education in the South. Despite making his home in Boston and New York for nearly thirty years, Page never ceased to consider himself a Southerner. His interpretation of Jeffersonian democracy, the influence of his "Union" father and grandfather, and his educational and professional experiences in the North and West had convinced him that the way to return the South to national prestige was to work to fulfill the southern dreams of 1776 rather than reminiscing about the hopes of 1860.

Page's final two speeches on southern education were brief, limited to 331 words in his "Opening Remarks" and 619 words in "Summary by the Chairman." These addresses again reflect the North Carolinian's preference for a plain style and are characterized by the speaker's use of common and familiar language, parallel structure and an oral quality.

In "Summary by the Chairman," Page contended that the concept of "individualism" rested "upon a false economic basis." Asserting man's dependence on his fellow men, he paraphrased two familiar expressions "A man's home cannot be his castle, for he is mutually linked as his brother's keeper, . . ."

Employing parallel structure to emphasize the expanding vision and progress of the Conference for Education in the South, in his "Opening Remarks" Page declared, "we have come a long way, our country
has come a long way and education has come a long way." Similar to this, in "Summary by the Chairman," he spoke of the future claiming, "A larger vision and a larger liberty and a larger opportunity now comes on us as the task for our working hours."

As with all his previous speeches on southern education, the brief addresses at the Sixteenth Conference are indicative of the orator's concern for oral style. Thus, he used expressions such as: "But there is one word that must be said in this first public meeting," "But there are a few thoughts that might have occurred to all," and "With that hope, and with infinite gratitude from the bottom of my heart to every one of you, and with a growing hope I declare the Sixteenth Conference for Education in the South adjourned."

Assessment

Page's opening and closing remarks at the Richmond Conference represent a summation to his career as a spokesman for southern education. His reasoning was based upon the premises that in a democracy all people have a right to an education, that economic progress occurs as a result of the proper training of the people, that the South is an agrarian society, and that Southerners are a patriotic people. In both speeches he relied upon comparisons, appeals to pride and familiar yet expressive style to amplify and enhance his message.

Primarily speeches of praise, the Richmond orations reviewed and commended the work of the Sixteenth Conference and all previous Conferences for Education in the South. The speeches represented the close of the final phase of Page's career as a spokesman for southern education. As such, they provided an indication of the expatriate's
concern for the South as an agrarian society. Convinced of the necessity to balance the industrial and agricultural economy, he once again emphasized the importance of agrarian values: "We all know that in the coming centuries, as in the past, the character and the vision of American life will come from the soil."

With the close of the Conference, Page departed the South for a career that would soon thrust upon him the strenuous duties of war-time diplomacy. He was to remain in England for over five years, returning home to North Carolina shortly before his death on December 18, 1918.

Summary

By 1910 the concept of state and locally supported education was generally accepted in the southern states, but the poverty of the largely rural population of the South insured a weak tax base which imposed limits on the growth of public schools. Therefore, the solution was to strengthen the southern economy. With few large cities and little industry, the most immediate potential for prosperity lay in agriculture. The activities of the annual Conferences on Education in the South and the speeches of Walter Hines Page reflect this concern for building up country life.

Between April 4, 1912, and April 18, 1913, Page delivered five speeches in the South on the theme that agricultural prosperity would result from educating the country man, providing him with a ready source of credit and teaching him how to manage his financial affairs.
Page's interest in rural affairs was not new. Since his days as an editor in Raleigh he had stressed the importance of building up the agricultural economy of the South. Appointed to the Country Life Commission by President Roosevelt, editor of a farm journal, a friend of agricultural scientists and reformers like Dr. Seaman A. Knaph and Sir Horace Plunkett, and recommended by many for Secretary of Agriculture in Wilson's cabinet, he was well-known for his expertise on rural problems.

Speaking before audiences composed of politicians, educators, businessmen, and farmers, Page based his reasoning on the premises that economic progress occurs when all the people of a community are properly trained, that the South is an agrarian society and that a balance of economic power be reached between the urban and rural communities. The North Carolinian also extended the premise that democratic principles apply to economics as well as politics and education.

In amplifying his ideas, Page relied on illustrations, examples, comparisons and contrasts, and testimony. These devices were probably effective in that they were relevant to the occasions and interests of his audiences, and represented his own experience and knowledge. As such, they added to the ethical appeal of the speeches.

Page utilized appeals to motives of self-esteem and self-actualization to enhance his reasoning. Appealing to city, state and regional pride, he praised his audiences for what they had accomplished in the past and their willingness and potential to achieve great things in the future. He also commended their desire to help their fellow
man. Appeals to self-actualization were used to accentuate the frustrations of people who were denied the opportunity to develop themselves and their land to their full potential.

In his final year as a spokesman for southern education, Page's speeches were characterized by a style that was plain and direct yet expressive. He relied heavily upon personal pronouns and rhetorical questions and utilized common language in such a manner as to invite new insight into his meaning. The North Carolinian's orations also indicate his concern for an oral style. The speaker's choice of language reflects his Jeffersonian heritage as a democrat and a southern agrarian. He used words and phrases like "democracy," "the democratic ideal," "democratic philosophy of life," and "the extension of opportunity, the spread of democracy, the willingness to give other men a chance." As an agrarian, he declared "the land and the man--these are the bases of our life," identified "our people" as "country people," and stated that "cities and all else, civilization itself" depends on "the man who cultivates the land."

As his last efforts as a spokesman for southern education, he voiced his concern for not just maintaining, but building up an agrarian region. Although identifying the problem as the town's taking the "surplus capital of the country for its own enterprizes and activities," and leaving the country man without "the capital he needs to do his work with efficiency," he was not critical of the business interests of an industrial society. Rather, he considered it "the natural and necessary result of . . . the organization by the town for the town." The solution he advocated was the logical antithesis, the
organization of rural life for rural life.

The year before he left to assume his duties as Wilson's Ambassador to Great Britain was Page's most active as a spokesman for southern education. Analysis of his speeches reveals that he considered the organization and building up of country life the most important problem facing the South.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Walter Hines Page considered the failure to educate the masses as lying "at the heart of all Southern problems."\(^1\) In contrast, the expatriate-Southerner advocated a democratic approach based on the belief that the greatest potential for progress existed when all men had an opportunity for training. He espoused a philosophy which stood in direct opposition to the attitudes of class and privilege characteristic of the Old South. The intent of this dissertation was to present a rhetorical biography, examining the relevant speech aspects of his life and career, of Page to ascertain and assess his strategy in eleven speeches he delivered on southern education from 1891 to 1913.

Recent scholars have suggested that post-bellum southern public address falls into two categories, a rhetoric of accommodation and one of exploitation.\(^2\) The purpose of the rhetoric of accommodation was to adjust to post-war conditions and to uplift the southern spirit by romanticizing the ante-bellum South and the Lost Cause. "Repining over an irrevocable past,"\(^3\) John B. Gordon and Benjamin Hill of Georgia, Robert Love Taylor of Tennessee and many others enthralled audiences


\(^2\)Opinion expressed by Waldo W. Braden, professor, Louisiana State University, in his Seminar in Southern Oratory, Summer, 1975.

with their reminiscences of a plantation society and its glorious
defenders. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, a new genera-
tion of southern leaders exploited the same myths as a means of winning
political power. Men like Ben Tillman of South Carolina, Tom Watson of
Georgia and James Wardaman of Mississippi portrayed themselves as
defenders of the Old South, particularly through enthusiastic appeals
to White Supremacy.

Refusing either to yield to or to profane the myths of the Old
South and the Lost Cause, Walter Hines Page does not belong to the
accommodaters or the exploiters. Convinced that universal education
was the key to a new South, he pursued what may be called a rhetoric
of aspiration, because he developed themes embodying optimism, promise
and assurance.

Examination of his speeches as a rhetoric of aspiration reveals
that Page followed four strategies to promote public education in the
South. Thus, in addressing southern audiences, his strategy reflected
the use of: (1) a "pass over" or avoidance technique, (2) the demo-
cratic myth, (3) the agrarian myth, and (4) the New South myth.

First, Page used a strategy of avoidance or in his words
"pass over" to not to confront the powerful myths of the Old South and
the Lost Cause. Instead of a direct attack on the romantic past, as
he had done in his novel The Southerner, anonymously published, he
avoided any discussion of the myths. In this manner, did not risk
the possibility of alienating public opinion.

"Walter Hines Page, Address at the Dedication of the Trinity
College Library, Page MSS.
However, some may argue that Page was an accommodator in his handling of White Supremacy. Although convinced of the necessity to train the negro, he hesitated to voice frankly his opinions in the South for fear of jeopardizing his greater goal of public education. Like other educational spokesmen, namely Edgar Gardner Murphy, Edward Alderman, Charles Duncan McIver, and Charles William Dabney, Page of course was unable to free himself completely from the past. While he may appear inconsistent and compromising, as were many of his friends, on this question, he followed what best may be described as a pragmatic strategy. He recognized that southern white opinion was adamant in its opposition to equal training for the negro, and almost fifty years passed before the situation was forced to change by court order.

Second, Page lauded the contributions of those Southerners who took leading roles in founding the nation. Recalling memories of the Declaration of Independence, George Washington, John Marshall, and Thomas Jefferson, he appealed to the democratic myth, patriotism, and the right to equal educational and economic opportunities. Thus, the North Carolinian identified the democratic myth with what he considered the traditional South.

Third, the expatriate-orator turned to the agrarian myth to emphasize the importance of "right training" (his phrase). He commended the South as a rural region and Southerners as a people who lived close to nature. Praising the agrarian life as the root of American character, ideals and values, he reasoned that ultimately the
nation's greatness was based upon a foundation of skilled farmers following modern methods who tilled their own lands. He contended that educational and economic opportunity were essential to the maintenance and growth of the agrarian South.

Fourth and last, Page utilized the myth of the New South to promise prosperity as the reward for a society committed to "the right training" of its people. He insisted that education would improve the agricultural economy and attract industry to the South.

While Page was criticized for his advocacy of increased industrialism in the South, his pleas echo those of men nearly a century before who advocated southern mills for southern cotton. Indeed, in "The Autobiography of a Southerner Since the Civil War" he changed the Page family lumber mill to a cotton mill and declared, "Cotton is a sure foundation of perpetual and even yet undreamed-of wealth," a wealth that would be realized "by the freeing of cotton from the methods of slavery." A reading of the North Carolinian's speeches clearly suggests that he placed a greater importance on rejuvenating the agricultural economy of the South than on building an industrial society.

As a ceremonial speaker, Page effectively employed the traditional means of amplification: illustrations, examples, comparisons-contrasts, testimony, emotional appeals and stylistic embellishment. Generally, the materials he selected reflected his own experiences as a boy in North Carolina, a college student, an editor

and publisher, a traveler, and his philanthropic work.

Page utilized emotional appeals directed primarily toward motives of self-actualization and self-esteem. Appeals to self-actualization were usually intended to emphasize the frustration of those denied the chance to realize their potential and to applaud the concept of democracy as synonymous with the opportunity for personal fulfillment. He employed the motive of self-esteem as a means of identifying with his audience as a Southerner and as an American by arousing state, regional and national pride.

The North Carolinian's choice of language was also an important factor in amplifying his message. Page avoided a florid style of the so called "Southern orator" and chose instead words easily understood by his auditors. Particularly skillful in his selection and arrangement of common words and expressions, he often used statements suggestive of an axiomatic and scriptural quality. The journalist-orator was a master locutionist and his addresses indicate his ability to evoke images through the use of attractive, readily recalled, quotable phrases.

In The Southerner Page wrote that even at an early age Nicholas Worth had learned "that nobody tells the whole truth about institutions. They prefer to accept traditions and to repeat respected formulas." Expressing his displeasure with the novel, Edgar Gardner


Murphy observed, "I often feel (especially in 'religion and politics') that in your reaction from formulas you have only exchanged one set for another . . ."\(^8\) As assessed by John Milton Cooper, Jr., "that was probably the most perceptive criticism of himself that Page ever heard."\(^9\) The North Carolinian had enthusiastically exchanged the structure of an aristocratic society which had placed power in the hands of a little class for the promise of industrial and agricultural growth he was confident would result when all the people were provided with the opportunity to discover and develop their talents.

As a spokesman for southern education, Walter Hines Page was not a policy-maker. He made his contributions as an articulate speaker and exponent of a liberal South.

---

\(^8\)Edgar Gardner Murphy to WHP, October 16, 1909, Page MSS.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Manuscript Collections

Conference for Education in the South, Proceedings, 1901-1913.


General Education Board, Rockefeller Archive Center, North Tarrytown, New York.


________________________. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

McIver, Charles Duncan. Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina.


Ogden, Robert C. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Washington, Booker T. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Speeches by Page

"Address at the Inauguration of President Winston." Delivered October 14, 1891 at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Page MSS, Harvard University: also, North Carolina University Magazine, XXII (O.S.), XI (N.S.), 61-71.


"Address of Dedication, Trinity College Library." Delivered February 23, 1903 at Trinity College in Durham, North Carolina. Page MSS, Harvard University; also, Page MSS, Duke University.

"The Man Behind the Plow." Commencement address delivered May 26, 1903 at the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts in Raleigh, North Carolina. Page MSS, Harvard University.

"The Unfulfilled Ambition of the South." Address delivered April 27, 1904 at the Seventh Conference for Education in the South held in Birmingham, Alabama. Page MSS, Harvard University; also, General Education Board MSS, Rockefeller Center; also, Proceedings, Seventh Conference, 1904, pp. 98-110.

"A Layman's Notion of a University." Delivered January 12, 1911 at the state capitol, Columbia, South Carolina. Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, XXVI (July, 1911, 37-43; also, The State (Columbia, South Carolina), January 13, 1911.

"The Farmer's Credit," Address delivered April 4, 1912 at the Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South held in Nashville, Tennessee. Page MSS. Harvard University, also, General Education Board MSS, Rockefeller Center, also, Proceedings, Fifteenth Conference, 1912, pp. 97-101.

"Message to the Country Man." Address delivered December 3, 1912 to the State Literary and Historical Association in Raleigh, North Carolina. Page MSS, Harvard University.

"Opening Remarks" and "Summary by the Chairman." Delivered April 16 and 18, 1913 at the Sixteenth Annual Conference for Education in the South held in Richmond, Virginia. Page MSS, Harvard University; also, General Education Board MSS, Rockefeller Center; also, Proceedings, Sixteenth Conference, p. 232 and pp. 280-81.

Secondary Sources

Books and Catalogues


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.


**Periodicals**


"Annual Address Before the University," *University of Tennessee Record*, §17 (1900), 25-6.

Bassett, John Spencer. "Stirring up the Fires of Race Antipathy," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, II (October, 1903), 297-305.


"Conference for Education in the South," *The Outlook*, LXXX (May 13, 1905), 101-03.


Doherty, Herbert J. "Voices of Protest from the New South," *Journal of Social Forces*, II (January, 1924), 164-68.

"Education in the South," *The Outlook*, LXXV (April 27, 1907), 910.


"Founders' Day," *Bulletin of the University of South Carolina*, #26 (July, 1911), 37-43.


"Larger Educational Opportunities," *The Outlook*, LXIX (November 23, 1901), 755-56.


"Notes from Tuskegee," *Southern Workman*, XXVIII (May, 1899), 185.


_________________, "New Political Sentiment in the South," World's Work, I (December, 1901), 134-5.


"Southern Educational Conference," The Outlook, LXXI (May 3, 1902), 9-12.


Unpublished Materials


Cooper, John Milton, Jr. A biography of Walter Hines Page to be published by the University of North Carolina Press.


Newspapers

The Age Herald (Birmingham, Alabama), April 28, 1904.

Atlanta Constitution, April 18, 1901 and December 12, 1901.

Baltimore Sun, August 21, 1902.

Birmingham News (Birmingham, Alabama), April 28, 1904.

Boston Post, April 29, 1898.

Boston Transcript, April 20, 1902.


Daily Observer (Charlotte), March 8, 1903.

Evening Mail (New York), April 28, 1904.

The Evening Messenger (Washington, North Carolina), May 27, 1897.

The News and Observer (Charleston, South Carolina), January 28, 1913.
The News and Observer (Raleigh), November 11, 1893 and December 3, 4, 1912.

North Carolina Baptist (Raleigh), July 2, 1897.

The Progressive Farmer (Raleigh), June 9, 1903 and May 3, 10, 1904.

Richmond Dispatch, December 5, 1903.

Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 25, 26, 27, 1910.

The State (Columbia, South Carolina), April 24, 1903 and November 13, 1911.

State Chronicle (Raleigh), February 18, 1886.

The Student (Tuskegee Institute), March 9, 1899.

The Sunday Herald (Boston), March 15, 1903.

The Telegraph (Macon, Georgia), May 30, 1901.

University Weekly News (Cincinnati), December 14, 21, 1910.

Wilmington Messenger (Wilmington, North Carolina), May 26, 1897.

Webster's Weekly (Reidsville, North Carolina), June 9, 1897.

Weekly Banner (Athens, Georgia), December 13, 1901.
VITA

Keith Howard Griffin was born January 1, 1949, in Massillon, Ohio. Graduating from Massillon Washington High School in 1967, he took his B.A. degree in Speech and theatre from the College of Wooster in 1971. For the 1971-72 academic year he served as a teaching assistant in the Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Department of Wake Forest University. He was awarded his M.A. degree by the University in 1973. Before enrolling in Louisiana State University, he served for two years on the faculty of Pikeville College in Kentucky. At LSU he has held a position as a teaching assistant in the Department of Speech and as an instructor in Spoken English in the English Language Orientation Program.

Mr. Griffin will join the faculty of Wingate College, Wingate, North Carolina, for the academic year beginning August, 1977.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate:  Keith Howard Griffin

Major Field:  Speech

Title of Thesis:  "A Rhetorical Biography of Walter Hines Page with Reference to His Ceremonial Speaking on Southern Education, 1891-1913"

Date of Examination:  July 11, 1977

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

July 11, 1977

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.