

A PROCLAMATION

FROM its earliest beginnings, America has been devoted to the cause of education. This country was founded on the ideal of ministering to the individual. It was realized that this must be done by the institutions of religion and government. In order that there might be a properly educated clergy and well trained civil magistrates, one of the first thoughts of the early settlers was to provide for a college of liberal culture, while for the general diffusion of knowledge, primary schools were established. This course was taken as the necessary requirement of enlightened society.

Such a policy, once adopted, has continued to grow in extent. With the adoption of the Federal Constitution and the establishment of free governments in the states of the Union, there was additional reason for broadening the opportunity for education. Our country adopted the principle of self-government by a free people. Those who were worthy of being free, were worthy of being educated. Those who had the duty and responsibility of government, must necessarily have the education with which to discharge the obligations of citizenship. The sovereign had to be educated. The sovereign had become the people. Schools and universities were provided by the various governments, and founded and fostered by private charity, until their buildings dotted all the land.

The willingness of the people to bear the burdens of maintaining these institutions, and the patriotic devotion of an army of teachers, who, in many cases, might have earned larger incomes in other pursuits, have made it possible to accomplish results with which we may well be gratified. But the task is not finished, it has only been begun.

We have observed the evidences of a broadening vision of the whole educational system. This has included a recognition that education must not end with the period of school attendance, but must be given every encouragement thereafter. To this end the night schools of the cities, the moonlight schools of the southern Appalachian countries, the extension work of the colleges and universities, the provision for teaching technical, agricultural and mechanical arts, have marked out the path to a broader and more widely diffused national culture. To insure the permanence and continuing improvement of such an educational policy, there must be the fullest public realization of its absolute necessity. Every American citizen is entitled to a liberal education. Without this, there is no guarantee for the permanence of free institutions, no hope of perpetuating self-government. Despotism finds its chief support in ignorance. Knowledge and freedom go hand in hand.

In order that the people of the nation may think on these things, it is desirable that there should be an annual observance of Educational Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim the week beginning on the eighteenth of November, next, as National Education Week, and urge its observance throughout the country. I recommend that the state and local authorities cooperate with the civic and religious bodies to secure its most general and helpful observance, for the purpose of more liberally supporting and more effectively improving the educational facilities of our country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE, in the City of Washington, this twenty-sixth day of September, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine
[SEAL.] Hundred and Twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States, the One Hundred and Forty-eighth.

CALVIN COOLIDGE