

A PROCLAMATION

Education is becoming well-nigh universal in America. The rapidity of its expansion within the past half century has no precedent. Our system of public instruction, administered by State and local officers, is peculiarly suited to our habits of life and to our plan of government, and it has brought forth abundant fruit.

In some favored localities only one, two, or three persons in a thousand between the ages of 16 and 20 are classed as illiterate. High schools and academies easily accessible are offering to the youth of America a greater measure of education than that which the founders of the Nation received from Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, and Princeton; and so widely diffused has advanced study become that the bachelor's degree is no longer a symbol of unusual learning.

All this is reason for gratification; but in the contemplation of worthy achievement we must still be mindful that full provision has not yet been made throughout the country for education of either elementary, secondary, or higher grade. Large numbers have not been reached by the blessings of education. The efficiency of the schools in rural communities is, in general, relatively low; too often their equipment is meagre, their teachers poorly prepared, and their terms short. High schools, notwithstanding their extraordinary growth, have not kept pace with the demand for instruction; even in great cities many students are restricted to half-time attendance, and in outlying districts such schools are frequently insufficient in number or inadequate in quality. In higher education the possibilities of existing institutions have been reached and it is essential that their facilities be extended or that junior colleges in considerable numbers be established.

These deficiencies leave no room for complacency. The utmost endeavor must be exerted to provide for every child in the land the full measure of education which his need and his capacity demand; and none must be permitted to live in ignorance. Marked benefit has come in recent years from nation-wide campaigns for strengthening public sentiment for universal education, for upholding the hands of constituted school authorities, and for promoting meritorious legislation in behalf of the schools. Such revivals are wholesome and should continue.

Now, therefore, I, Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, do proclaim the week beginning November sixteenth as American Education Week, and I urge that it be observed throughout the United States. I recommend that the Governors of the several States issue proclamations setting forth the necessity of education to a free people and requesting that American Education Week be appropriately celebrated in their respective States. I urge further that local officers, civic, social, and religious organizations, and citizens of every occupation contribute with all their strength to the advance of education, and that they make of American Education Week a special season of mutual encouragement in promoting that enlightenment upon which the welfare of the Nation depends.

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 on this 18th day of September in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and [SEAL] Twenty-five and of the Independence of the United States the One Hundred and Fiftieth.

CALVIN COOLIDGE