THE SCHOOLS.

North Dakota Has a Rich School Fund —There Are School Houses in Every Part of the State—An Account of Some of the Principal Ones—The University and the Normal Schools—No State is Better Prepared to Educate the Growing Generation.

THE UNIVERSITY.

As Americans we may claim for our educational systems as much of a distinction from those of other countries, both in their organization and in their aims, as is commonly granted our other institutions. This is partly due to the comparative infancy of the country, but more largely and permanently to the composite character of our civilization, a fact which will probably render it impossible for our educational systems to stand, at any point in their career, on a perfectly just basis of comparison with those of other lands.

While, however, the competition is waged between our country and others with such a degree of strength and equality in other respects, it seems to me, we must expect that the effects of our educational systems as well will be estimated by the results of the systems of other countries. We may therefore consider it our good fortune when we fall into the hands of so fair and comprehensive a foreign critic as the author of Bryce's American Commonwealth, who devotes a chapter of his extensive work to the methods of higher institutions of learning in America. Mr. Bryce not only gives due recognition to the influence upon the community of the large and older centers of education, but allows ample credit for the work of the younger institutions, which has not previously been given sufficient account in the summing up of educational results. From the summary of the chapter on universities are taken the following remarks: "In some of the smaller Western colleges one finds today men of great ability and great attainments; one finds students who are receiving an education quite as thorough, though not always as wide, as the best Eastern universities can give." * * * "They are but a multitude of poor men who might never resort to a distant place for education." * * * * "They give the chance of rising in some intellectual walk of life to many a strong and earnest nature who might otherwise have remained an artisan or storekeeper and perhaps failed in those vocations."

In speaking further on the general educational aspect of the country he says: "But if I may venture to state the impression which American universities have made upon me I will say that while of all the institutions of the country they are those of which Americans speak most modestly, and, indeed, deprecatingly, they are those which seem to be at this moment making the swiftest progress and to have the brightest promise for the future."

Six years before the admission of the Dakotas as states to the Union the need was felt in this section of the country for an institution of learning which should both supply a demand and prove a center of inspiration. Accordingly, some enterprising citizens of the territory pushed the matter and a bill was introduced in the territorial assembly by Hon. George H. Walsh and became a law Feb. 27, 1883. In the eighteen months following a substantial brick building was erected for the use of the university and it was first opened for the reception of students Sept. 8, 1889. By the division of the Territory of Dakota and the admission of North Dakota as a state in 1890 the university became the state university of the state. From the beginning the hope and aim was to establish just such an institution as Mr. Bryce describes—one in which should be found as teachers "men of ability and fine attainments" and which should provide an education "as thorough as the best Eastern universities can give" to "young people of strong and earnest natures" who might never be able to resort to places of education outside their own state. The university feels that it has already given a number of young persons of this description a chance to rise and take its place in the high citizenship of this country to which their capabilities entitle them, and that, in the institution's short career of twelve years, it has to a gratifying degree realized the fulfilment of its designs.

President Merrifield, a Yale graduate, who has taught in the institution since its organization and who for four years has stood at the head of the university, zealous in guarding the interests of the state as represented here, is a man who enjoys the friendship and respect of many of the foremost educators of the country and has, therefore, a superior advantage in obtaining for the university as heads of its departments graduates from the first-class institutions of this country and Europe. As a result, the university now possesses a staff of instructors, which, although limited in number because of the financial inability of the state to support an extensive instructional force, is in strength and modern culture on a par with those of many of the older institutions of the East.

Six classes have been graduated from the university thus far averaging eight members each. The class this year bids fair to more than double the usual number, as it now consists of twenty young men and women, the per cent of young women in this class being much larger than in the preceeding one. In ability, the members of this class can hold their own with any of the graduating classes of the institutions located in other portions of the country and in scholarship, they can claim superiority to many of them. A stranger coming recently into the life of the University of North Dakota was impressed with the high character of the morals of the student body and the diligent and studious atmosphere that pervaded it. When these are the two impressive characteristics of a body of students, the result can hardly be otherwise than that a high average of scholarship will prevail. This fact is the state of things at the University is proven by the fact that three of the graduates have led their classes in the medical departments of two such institutions as the Boston University and Toronto University, and two have led their classes while pursuing studies, in professional departments of two of the best known universities of this country. Two years ago, a member of the class of '93 was appointed to a fellowship in Columbia college (five hundred dollars and free tuition) which is an honor as high as can be conferred upon any college graduate in America.

Last year, in the darkest hour of trial the university has ever known, when the result of the governor's veto of the appropriation seemed to mean an inevitable closed door against all of the university, one ray of comfort appeared in the fact that the Universities of Chicago and Minnesota offered to receive those students who should be able to go so far from home, and to give the work done at the University of North Dakota the same credit as is given the work of their own institutions. This was the most satisfactory proof of the quality of the work done at the university. Later, came the very gratifying evidence of the appreciation of the people of the state who so generously came to the assistance of the head of their educational system, and this fall comes another assurance of confidence in the largely increased attendance. These tokens of the large degree of confidence reposed in the university by its patrons, inspires the desire in the university authorities to make the institution fully worthy of the extraordinary zeal its best friends—the citizens of the state.

The four courses of study in the university are so formulated as to admit of a wide range of choice—a plan followed by all of the foremost American institutions. These courses are the old classical, the Latin-science, the science and, according to the state constitution, the normal course. All of these may be completed in four years and the normal course in two. The idea in the arrangement of these courses is first, to give a broad general education that the youth may be prepared to take their places as useful citizens; and, second, to furnish, if desired, a degree of specialization which may be followed, in any of the professional branches, by post-graduate work.

The instruction given in all branches is supplemented by courses of reading provided by a carefully selected library of some five thousand volumes.

The museum is used in conjunction with scientific studies and furnishes valuable material for work in geology, zoology, botany and physiology.

The equipment of the laboratories is, as far as it goes, of the most modern and approved fashion, and gives to the proposed pharmacist, chemist, electrician, physician or botanist a fine foundation on which to build in the pursuit of his special profession.

A gymnasium furnishes the proper amount of exercise and development for the physical man, while the dumb bells and Indian clubs which are skillfully swung by the young women during their physical culture exercises, perform their part in making "lovely woman" a useful as well as an ornamental member of society.

During the bracing, beautiful weather that precedes the far-famed Dakota season of blizzards, the in-door sports are neglected for the still more healthful outdoor tennis, foot ball croquet and bicycle riding. In the winter term, a rink is made with the aid of Jack Frost, and the fine skating which is thus furnished is enjoyed by both the young women and young men students.

It is claimed by the students of three of the oldest colleges of this country, Harvard, Yale and Princeton, that the students of the Western state universities miss that delightful social experience which is so pleasant a part of college life and which is only possible where a dormitory system exists.

In this respect, the University of North Dakota differs from many of her Western sisters and bears closer resemblance to her Eastern sisters. Because of its location about two miles from the center of Grand Forks, it was necessary to establish two dormitories in connection with the university, and as a result the students and a portion of the faculty who reside on the grounds, form a little social world of their own, which has a delightful element in it which is lacking in more populous colleges are deprived—the companionship of ladies.

On Saturday nights some sort of pleasant social entertainment is provided for the enjoyment of all and on these evenings guests are given a cordial welcome. Young men and women sit together at meals, and young men are allowed to call, during seasons at the young women's dormitory. On social occasions, the distinctions of teacher and pupil, senior and freshman, old and new student, are put in abeyance and the meeting is as friend with friend.

In the regulations of the Leland Stanford, Jr., University of California is a rule expressed in regard to any religious instruction which ought to prevail in all state universities. It is said to be the duty of the trustees "to prohibit sectarian instruction, but to have taught in the university the immortality of the soul, the existence of an all-wise creator and that obedience to his laws is the highest duty of man." Mr. and Mrs. Stanford further make the following special mention: "While it is our desire that there shall be no sectarian teaching in this institution, it is very far from our thoughts to exclude divine service."

Institutions supported by both Catholic and Protestant citizens of a state have no right to teach the doctrines of the one over the tenets of the other, but discuss, in instructive lectures, does not by any necessity mean lack of Christian teaching. A course of instruction in the Bible, as mapped out generally by the arranged Sunday school lessons, is given Sunday evenings by one of the professors, who is one of the best Bible students in the West. Christian organizations are actively maintained and a healthy Christian sentiment prevails among the members of the instructional force, nearly all of whom are members of evangelical churches.

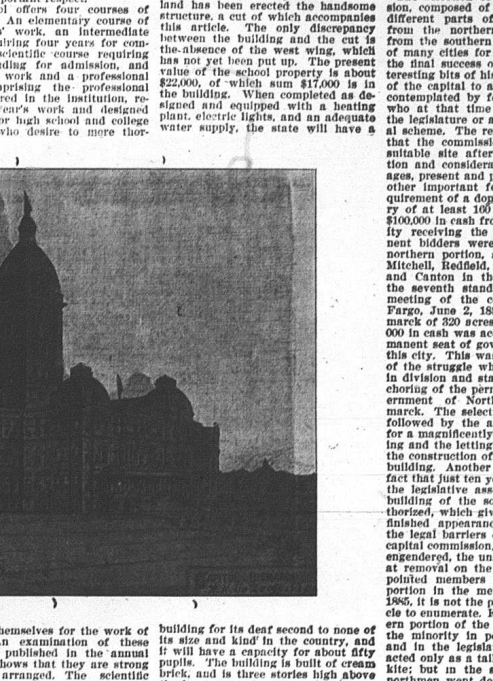
After all, may we not believe the true essence of the Christ-doctrine to be that it matters not so much whether we are marshalled under the scarlet in signal of Catholicism, the blue of Presbyterianism or the soft-tinted standard of the Quaker faith, if over and above all floats the "blood-stained banner of the Cross."

VALLEY CITY NORMAL SCHOOL.

Conspicuous among the institutions that are helping to develop the higher life of the growing young commonwealth of North Dakota is the State Normal School at Valley City. It is just now entering upon its fourth year of work, but in the short time of its existence it has proven its right to be and in point of attendance and solidity of work done, ranks high among the educational institutions of the Northwest.

The State Normal School at Valley City was located by the constitutional convention of North Dakota, and 50,000 acres of land were set apart and appropriated for this school. March 9, 1890, an act was approved providing for the government of the Normal Schools. The school was first opened October 13, 1890, and for nearly a year was supported by the generous contributions of public spirited citizens of Valley City. March 2, 1891, an act was approved, providing for the construction and temporary maintenance of the school, and the sum of $5,000 was appropriated for the purpose. March 7, of the same year, another act was approved, providing for the erection, management and maintenance of the normal schools of the state. This act authorized the issuance of bonds to the amount of $20,000 for the erection of suitable buildings and the purchase of grounds. Acting under authority of this act, the governor appointed a board of management to have charge of the affairs of the institution. The school opened its doors September 28, 1891, in a building rented for the purpose. During this year 86 students were enrolled. The next school year opened September 27, 1892, with the faculty increased, and closed June 9th, showing an attendance for the year of 143. December 6th of this year the beautiful building now occupied was formally dedicated and occupied. The third year opened September 26, 1893, with a still larger faculty and an increased attendance. Three members were enrolled in the senior class and graduated June 7, 1894—the total attendance in all departments being 255, 140 of whom were registered in the normal department. The fourth year began September 25, 1894, with a faculty of eight and a senior class of eleven. The total attendance for the year was 264, 164 of whom were in the normal department.

The school is located at Valley City, the county seat of Barnes county, one of the largest and most important agricultural counties of the state. Valley City is a thrifty town of 2,000 inhabitants at the junction of the



Northern Pacific and the Sault Ste. Marie railroads, and is therefore easy of access from all parts of the state. The city has a complete system of water works and sewerage. It has well kept streets and walks and fine public buildings. It is located in a natural amphitheatre, formed in the bluffs by a bend of the Sheyenne river. It is a beautiful valley, surrounded by wooded hills, whose natural foliage is a fitting ornament to the river, which gracefully winds its way along the eastern, southern and part of the western sides of the city. The city of the state can boast so beautiful, so picturesque, so healthful a location as Valley City. The high wooded bluffs protect from the prairie winds, the climate is mild and the surroundings beautiful. Valley Park, the property of the city, located in a horse-shoe bend of the river, within the city limits, is a natural forest of many acres, laid out with winding walks and drives.

The state normal school building is one of the finest in the state, located in the south part of the city, only four blocks from the center. It is built of red pressed brick and trimmed with brown sandstone from West Superior. The interior is beautifully finished in natural Georgia pine and floored with Washington fir. It is thoroughly finished throughout and exterior and interior are both artistic and pleasing. It is commodious and well provided with conveniences for the successful prosecution of school work. It is excellently lighted and heated and ventilated by four of Fuller & Warren's largest and most modern furnaces. Every recitation room is surrounded on all sides by blackboard surface, and the rooms are furnished with the Minneapolis school desks.

On the first floor are found the principal's office, which is a cozy room tastefully furnished in oak. Connected with the office is the recitation room. Off the main corridor is found the science department, occupying two rooms, one for recitation and one for laboratory. In these rooms are found all the machines and materials necessary to ordinary physical and chemical experimentation, and geographical, astronomical and scientific charts, globes, etc., etc. Back of these is a large, well lighted room used for penmanship and drawing. Two rooms on this floor are used for the school of practice, one by the primary department and one by the second grade. The other practice school departments are provided with everything used in our best graded schools.

On the second floor is found the large room used as library, reading room and museum. Here is found a large table abundantly supplied with all the leading periodicals and reference books. The library cases contain several hundred volumes of carefully selected books, including Webster's and the Century dictionaries, Chambers' and Larousse's cyclopedias, geographical, biographical and scientific dictionaries, hand books, atlases, etc. The museum is not large, but already displays many hundred specimens of historical and scientific interest. The general assembly room is found on this floor also. It is 65x40 feet with twenty-two foot ceiling. It is handsome, spacious and perfect in acoustic properties. In one end is the rostrum, furnished in the usual way, while the body of the room is seated with school desks, so that each student has an individual desk which he occupies at all general exercises. The mathematical and literary departments each occupy rooms on this floor, and with one room devoted to the use of the practice school completes the number.

In the basements are found the clook rooms, the Fuller & Warren system of dry closets, four large furnaces, two fuel rooms, one ash room and one room designed as a gymnasium for the young men.

The campus consists of eighteen acres with a front on the Sheyenne river and extending to the top of the high bluffs in the rear of the building. It is covered with a natural forest, in which are found all the trees indigious to our northern climate. From the windows of the second floor an extended view may be had of the entire city and valley in which it is located. In the bluffs in the rear of the building is a spring of the purest sparkling soft water, which supplies the school. No institution in the state has so perfect a location and such beautiful natural surroundings, and it may be doubted whether any in the Northwest excels it in this important respect.

The school offers four courses of study, viz.: a elementary course of three years' work, an intermediate course, requiring four years for completion, a scientific course requiring higher standing for admission, and four years' work and a professional course comprising the professional studies offered in the institution, requiring a year's work and designed especially for high school and college graduates who desire to more thoroughly fit themselves for the work of teaching. An examination of these courses, as published in the annual catalogue, shows that they are strong and well arranged. The scientific course will bear comparison with our best college courses for thoroughness and completeness.

The aim of this institution, as succinctly expressed in the act providing for its organization and government, chapter 87 of the Laws of North Dakota, 1891, is "to prepare teachers in the science of education and the art of teaching public schools." Unlike most new schools in new communities, this school has never made an attempt to do all things. From the first the intention of the legislature in founding it has been kept steadily in view. The curriculum and regulations of the school are formulated with a direct reference to this primary purpose. The studies are selected with reference to their pedagogical value.

This institution is particularly fortunate in its faculty. The board of trustees recognize the important fact that the instructional force is the element that gives vigor and permanent growth to any institution. Great care has been exercised in the selection of teachers. The best institutions of learning in the country have been freely drawn upon for their best talent. No one is employed who is not a specialist in the department he is to direct, but he must also be a skillful and methodical teacher with a record of successful experience.

—Geo. A. McFarland.

THE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF.

When North Dakota became a state in 1889, the national government granted the school for the deaf, when it should be established, the sum of 40,000 acres of land within the borders of the state. At the constitutional convention of its first meeting in 1889 accepted this gift and located the school for the deaf in Ramsey county at the city of Devils Lake.

Although the time will come when a snug income will be derived from this gift, yet at present the school derives no revenue from it. On the eighteenth of March, 1890, the bill to establish this school became a law. Those who labored to establish this school deserve the thankful prayers of every deaf person in the state present and future for their noble work in starting this philanthropic and humane enterprise.

The early history of this school is but a repetition of the early history of similar schools. It had its ups and downs; friends and foes; successes and failures.

There were obstacles in the way of success that seemed almost insurmountable at times. To-day it may be truthfully said that those who were most bitterly opposed to the school's establishment are numbered among its warmest friends. The first board consisted of the governor of the state, Hon. Alexander Miller, state superintendent of public instruction, Hon. W. J. Clapp, ex-officio; Dr. H. H. Ruger, Mr. H. R. Dickinson and Mr. T. F. Lee. March 2, 1891, the two ex-officio members of the board were replaced by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. George Jeurgens. Aug. 1, 1891, this board appointed Mr. A. R. Spear superintendent of the school, which office he held until May 13, 1895, when he resigned the position. The school opened Sept. 10, 1890, with one pupil. Forty-nine have attended the school since its establishment. The attendance has ever twenty-nine in attendance and at least thirty more who ought to be in the school. From September, 1890, to September, 1893, the school was temporarily located in an old frame building in town.

While there the school suffered many inconveniences and hardships. In March, 1893, Gov. Shortridge appointed the following gentlemen on the board: Messrs. James McCormick, C. H. Springer, O. H. Aaberg, J. S. Conyers and C. D. Mooers. In March, Mr. L. P. Le May was reappointed in place of Mr. Conyers. Upon assuming control, these gentlemen found the school undergoing a siege of sickness as a result of which three deaths had occurred among the pupils. Feeling that the safety of the school demanded it, the board closed the school March 17, 1893. In the meantime a tract of land consisting of fifteen acres about half a mile from town had been generously donated to the state by the Great Northern railroad as a site for a new building, and upon this tract of land has been erected the handsome structure, a cut of which accompanies this article. The only discrepancy between the building and the cut is the absence of the west wing, which has not yet been put up. The present value of the school property is about $22,000, of which sum $17,000 is in the building. When completed as designed and equipped with a heating plant, electric lights and an adequate water supply, the state will have a building for its deaf second to none of its size and kind in the country, and it will have a capacity for about fifty pupils. The building is built of cream brick, and is three stories high above the basement. At present it contains twenty-five rooms. The dining-room, kitchen, laundry, store-room, washroom, printing office and servants' rooms are in the basement. On the first floor are to be found the superintendent's office, reception-room, school-rooms, girls' and boys' study rooms, and teachers' private rooms. The second story contains the superintendent's private apartments, chapel (used at present for girls' dormitory), boys' dormitories and a bed-room for teachers. Two large bath rooms are in the third story, and are intended for hospital purposes. Each child is provided with a single iron bed, together with ample bedding. Pains are taken to furnish the children with ample healthful food. The school has three good cows, which furnish an abundance of pure milk. Stored away in the cellar are over five hundred bushels of potatoes, about ninety bushels of onions, turnips, beets, carrots, and over two hundred and fifty heads of cabbage.

Storm windows have been put on all the windows in the house, and will add greatly to the comfort of those within.

After the resignation of Mr. A. R. Spear, he was succeeded in the vacant position by Mr. D. F. Bangs, who is the present superintendent of the school. Mr. Bangs has lived among the deaf all his life, and comes to his new position with the experience of seven years as a teacher in the Minnesota state school located at Faribault.

There are three teachers at the school, two ladies and one gentleman. All are fitted for their respective lines of work in instructing the deaf. A weekly paper called the North Dakota Banner is printed at the school, and is in every way a credit to the school which it represents. The older boys are taught printing, and the older girls housework and sewing. The school hopes to have other trades established before long.

As regards the methods of instruction in vogue here, the school uses what is known as the combined system, which comprises the various known methods of instructing the deaf, such as sign, manual, oral and aural methods. An articulation department is established, and many of the pupils receive daily instruction in speech, lip-reading and voice culture. In conclusion it can be said that the young state of North Dakota has a school for the deaf which she may well feel proud of, and one which is doing a grand and noble work among a class of afflicted ones. Citizens of the state stopping at the city of Devils Lake and taking the trouble to visit the school will be most cordially welcomed there, and will go away well repaid for their visit.

—D. F. Bangs.

OUR CAPITOL.

The citizens of North Dakota, and especially of Bismarck, the capital city, have always been a hopeful people. In an issue of the Bismarck Tribune dated July 23, 1885—over twenty-two years ago—appeared this prophecy: "We have an abiding faith in the future of Bismarck. We look forward to a day not very far distant, on which the capital commission will be called and the world that Bismarck has become the capital of the State of Dakota." That this prophecy should have been realized just ten years later is a matter of common knowledge. On July 2, 1883, it was proclaimed to the world that Bismarck had become the seat of government of the Territory of Dakota. For twenty-one years the sessions of the legislature were held in the city of Yankton, in private halls and buildings wholly unfit for such purposes, and no move looking to the construction of a capitol building had been made. The ten years following 1883 had been prosperous ones for the territory, especially for that portion of the north in which the extension of railroads had opened up an empire of fertile lands, had dotted, docked, by train loads, and ambitious towns came into existence as if by magic. At last the pride of the people asserted itself against the primitive environments of the capital seat of government at Yankton, and a scheme looking to its removal was inaugurated.

The selection of a capital commission, composed of nine citizens from different parts of the state, three from the northern portion and six from the southern portion—the strife of many cities for capital honors and the final success of Bismarck are important chapters in the history of the capital to a northern city was contemplated by few if any of those who at that time were members of the legislature or active in the removal scheme. The removal act provided that the commission should select a suitable site after careful investigation and consideration of all advantages, present and prospective, and another important feature was the requirement of a donation to the territory of at least 160 acres of land and $100,000 in cash from the city or locality receiving the prize. The prominent bidders were Bismarck, in the northern portion, and Huron, Pierre, Mitchell, Redfield, Ordway, Aberdeen and Canton in the section south of the seventh standard parallel. At a meeting of the commission held in Fargo, June 2, 1883, the bid of Bismarck of 320 acres of land and $100,000 in cash was accepted and the permanent seat of government located in this city. This was the beginning of the struggle which finally resulted in division and statehood and the anchoring of the permanent seat of government of North Dakota at Bismarck. The selection of the site was followed by the acceptance of plans for a magnificently-proportioned building and the letting of the contract for the construction of the center or main building. Another coincidence is the fact that just ten years later, by act of the legislative assembly of 1893, the building of the south wing was authorized, which gives the building the finished appearance it now has. Of the legal barriers encountered by the capital commission, the sectional strife engendered, the unsuccessful attempts at removal on the part of the disappointed members from the southern portion in the memorable session of 1885, it is not the province of this article to enumerate. For years the northern portion of the territory largely in the majority in legislative conventions and in the legislative assembly, had acted only as a tail to South Dakota's kite; but in the session of 1883 the northmen went down to Yankton determined to wage a contest for equal conditions and obtain suitable recognition for their section—at that time without public buildings of any kind and weak in representation. Hon. B. A. Williams of Bismarck was chosen speaker of the lower house, and in the upper branch of twelve members, the north was represented by Hon. George H. Walsh of Grand Forks, Hon. Lewis F. Payne of Bismarck, Hon. Johnson Nickeus of Jamestown. A combination was finally effected that secured for North Dakota a duplication of all the public buildings, and finally the appointment of a commission—in which the northern section was represented by Hon. Alex. McKenzie of Bismarck, Hon. Milo W. Scott of Grand Forks and Hon B. F. Spalding of Fargo—for the removal of the seat of government.

The laying of the corner-stone of the capitol building occurred on the 5th day of September, 1883, and extravagant as the statement may sound, it was witnessed by the most distinguished assemblage of people ever congregated in the United States. The ceremonies were so timed as to receive the assistance of the members of the Henry Villard excursion en route to give the golden spike that marked the completion of the great transcontinental Northern Pacific railroad, and by reason of the presence of Bismarck with the Rufus Hatch party of foreign dignitaries. It was a cosmopolitan crowd, in which the direct representatives of some of the crowned heads of Europe and representative men of this nation stood elbow to elbow with Sitting Bull, Rain-in-the-Face and other representatives of the once powerful Indian nation, which stood before the march of civilization this event emphatically emphasized. There were several cabinet officers, a score or more of United States senators, thirty or forty members of congress, the governors of many states, Gen. U. S. Grant, Carl Schurz, Gen. Sibley, Gen. Terry, Wm. M. Evarts, Walker Blaine, the British minister, L. Sackville West, prominent army officers, representatives of all the leading newspapers of the world, prominent railroad officials, presidents of boards of trade, mayors of the leading cities, capitalists and bankers, members of the English parliament and of the German reichstag,

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