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1890

TESTIMONIALS

IN FAVOUR OF

W. J. ASHLEY M.A.

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO :

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

A CANDIDATE

FOR THE

DRUMMOND PROFESSORSHIP OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.



TO THE ELECTORS TO THE DRUMMOND PROFESSORSHIP.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN :

I beg to offer myself as a candidate for the Professorship of Political Economy in the University of Oxford.

I entered Balliol College with a History Scholarship in 1878, took a First-Class in the Honour School of Modern History in 1881, and received the Lothian Prize in 1882. In February, 1885, I was elected to a tutorial Fellowship at Lincoln College, and soon afterwards was also appointed Lecturer in History in Corpus Christi College. Resigning this position in order to be able to devote my time more exclusively to economic studies, I was appointed Professor of Political Economy and Constitutional History in the University of Toronto in 1888 ; and by the subsequent appointment of an assistant I have recently been enabled to give my whole attention to Economics.

I began the study of Political Economy under the late Arnold Toynbee, whose *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution of the 18th Century* I afterwards assisted in preparing for publication. I began to lecture on Political Economy in 1884 ; and after my appointment at Lincoln I lectured upon it each year ; in one course stating and criticising Modern Economic Theory, and in another following Economic History and Theory in their relation to one another from mediæval to modern times. I may add that from 1886 to 1888 I acted as Secretary to the Oxford Economic Society ; and that in 1887 and 1888 I examined in the Pass School of Political Economy.

Since my arrival at Toronto I have had the task of organizing the new Department of Political Science, a Department which has grown rapidly, and now numbers more than 100 students ; and I have lectured on (1) Elementary Political Economy, (2) The History of Economic Theory ; (3) The History of Economic Development ; (4) Modern Finance. In dealing with the last mentioned

subject I have had an opportunity to acquaint myself with the main features of Canadian and American Taxation, Tariffs, Currency, Banking, and similar subjects. I have also undertaken the editorship of the *Toronto University Studies in Political Science*, of which the first, on *The Ontario Township*, has already appeared. For a further account of my work here I beg to refer you to the subjoined letters from the Chancellor and President of the University, the Minister of Education, the Manager of the Bank of Commerce, and from one of my pupils.

My own researches have hitherto been mainly in the field of Economic History. In 1887 the American Economic Association published my *Early History of the English Woollen Industry*. In 1888 appeared the first volume of my *Introduction to Economic History and Theory*, which I now beg to lay before you, together with the letters concerning it from English and foreign authorities printed below.

There are two directions in which, as it appears to me, it is most desirable to promote economic study in Oxford. Of these one is Public Finance ; it might not be impossible to secure for men who are about to enter into public life, the civil service, or the higher branches of business, a training similar to that provided by some foreign Universities. The other is the history of Economic Phenomena, and of the parallel growth of Economic Theory. While recognizing the value of recent work in the further analysis of theory, there is, I think, reason to believe that the most fruitful field for economic work at the present time in Oxford is the historical. An effort in this direction would be in sympathy with one of the strongest intellectual forces in the University, and it might reasonably be expected to enlist the interest of students in the School of Modern History.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

The University of Toronto,

W. J. ASHLEY.

November 20, 1890.

*From the HON. EDWARD BLAKE, LL.D., Q.C., M.P.,
Chancellor of the University of Toronto, [Minister with-
out Portfolio 1873-1874, Minister of Justice 1875-1877,
President of the Council 1877-1878 : Premier of Ontario
1871-1874.]*

Toronto, Nov. 14, 1890.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR ASHLEY.

I am very sorry in the interests of the University of Toronto to receive your letter announcing your candidature for the Chair of Political Economy at Oxford. But it is most natural that you should desire to return in that capacity to your own University; and we must not selfishly stand in your way.

Other duties, as you know, have prevented my acquisition of any detailed or minute knowledge of the working of the department in Toronto. But, as Chancellor of the University, I have of course had some opportunity of gathering the opinion of University circles on the subject. And the impression I have derived from the consensus of that opinion is that you have had great success in the arduous task of establishing the new department in which you are Professor; that you have dealt judiciously with the special difficulties surrounding you growing out of the present tariff policy of Canada; that you have proved yourself capable not merely of imparting information, but of exciting the zeal and interest of your students, and developing their powers of reasoning and research; and in a word that you have shewn yourself so fit for the position that your withdrawal from it would be deeply regretted by those interested in the institution.

Faithfully yours,

EDWARD BLAKE.

*From the HON. G. W. ROSS, L.L.D., Minister of Education
for the Province of Ontario.*

Education Department.

17th November, 1890.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR ASHLEY,

I regret very much to learn from your note of the 13th inst., that there is even a remote possibility of your severing your connection with the University of Toronto. Your appointment to the staff was made under somewhat critical circumstances. I was then organizing a department of political science in the earnest hope that I would be able to afford to the undergraduates of our University a comprehensive course of training in economics and political philosophy, which would fit them for dealing with the many social and constitutional problems which require particular attention in a rapidly expanding country like Canada. You were selected to fill that position from a large list of applicants ; and the responsibility of organizing the department and directing towards it the attention of the undergraduates of the University was committed to your hands. To say that you have succeeded even beyond my most sanguine expectations, is to express very feebly the satisfaction which I feel, after an experience of three years of the manner in which you have filled your chair. If I were to particularize as to your success, I would say that you have aroused an unusual degree of enthusiasm in the study of all social and constitutional questions ; and best of all you have stimulated many to make original research into economic problems of the most interesting and important character. The readiness with which you acquired a knowledge of Canadian history ; of the social condition of our people ; of the development of our institutions, and the various problems which we have solved or attempted to solve of an economic character, has surprised many of us. Besides I have noticed with much pleasure the interest which you took in educational matters not immediately

connected with your professional duties, and the kindly efforts put forth by you to bring the advantages of an elementary education to the homes of those who from poverty or vice seemed to be indifferent to the obligations of citizenship.

I cannot, therefore, in view of our personal and official relation, but reiterate my regret at even the possibility of your retirement from the Chair of Economics and Political Science ; and I am quite sure that were the opportunity offered, every professor and undergraduate of the University would give expression to a similar sentiment.

Yours truly,

G. W. ROSS.

*From SIR DANIEL WILSON, LL.D., President of the
University of Toronto.*

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave very respectfully to submit to you a statement on behalf of Professor W. J. Ashley, as a candidate for the Chair of Political Economy. Professor Ashley was appointed to the Chair of Political Economy and Constitutional History in the University of Toronto, in 1888, and has won the most favourable opinion of the authorities by his devotion to his duties, and by his success as a teacher.

On his arrival in Canada, Professor Ashley had entrusted to him the responsible task of organizing a new Department ; in the accomplishment of which he has successfully encountered the special difficulties of a subject closely related to the questions of party politics.

As a teacher, Professor Ashley has been highly successful in stimulating the more advanced students to study matters of public policy from a scientific point of view. Coming as a stranger here, he has shown quick aptitude in mastering in their special Canadian aspects, the comprehensive subjects of currency and banking, taxation, public debts, and public works. He has already conciliated the favour of bankers and business men ; and awakened in them a conviction of the practical value of higher education.

By his courtesy, no less than his devotion to the work of his professorship, Professor Ashley has commended himself to his colleagues no less than to his students. While heartily desiring his success in every object of honourable ambition, I should greatly regret the loss of his services as a member of the Faculty of this University.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

DANIEL WILSON.

Toronto, 13th Nov., 1890.

From J. M. McEVOY, ESQ., B.A., Fellow in Political Science in the University of Toronto.

GENTLEMEN,

During my undergraduate course in Toronto University the work which I made my specialty was done chiefly under the guidance of Professor W. Ashley. His assistance, direction, and sympathy were most valuable to me, and to all the men of the Political Science Department. He was able to inspire his classes with a strong desire for original research as well as a surprising diligence and honesty in accomplishing that work. By his lectures and through the Seminary he succeeded in driving all the rancor of political party feeling, which is so prevalent here, from the minds of his students, and in getting them to bring to the study of all political questions calm and unbiassed judgment. The scientific and unprejudiced manner in which he has taught a number of young Canadians to view political questions is sure to have an important beneficial influence upon the development of political opinion in this country.

The various courses of lectures which he has delivered, were of great value and assistance to me. His lectures on the growth of economic theory were especially useful. The connection which he was able to establish between the economic condition of the various countries where economic theories have arisen, and the theories which were then and there propounded, made a remarkable impression on the minds of his students. We were brought to look at the whole subject of Political Economy from a new and much more practical standpoint. The very natural result of such teaching was that nearly every man who took the lectures began to look about him and consider our own theories of politics, industry and trade, and to bring his judgment to bear on the urgent question whether they are or are not in keeping with our present circumstances.

This spirit of enquiry received great encouragement and direction from him in the "Political Science Seminary" which was established by him, and the example of which is being followed in the other Departments of our own University as well as in at least one other University in the Dominion. In this 'Seminary,' students were assigned subjects into which they were induced to make, under his guidance, original research and to prepare papers embodying the result of their work. It is generally felt by the members of the class with which I graduated that as large advantages were reaped from what we learned of the manner in which original work in economics can and should be done through the direction of Prof. Ashley in this Seminary, as were received through any other medium of University training.

His lectures on Public Finance were very helpful. In these he laid down and sustained what he considered to be the principles which should govern the administration of national and local public finance. The lectures were prepared with immediate reference to our Dominion, Provincial, and Municipal financial management, but the general principles were first worked out and then applied to our peculiar circumstances. He was able to compass the difficult task of thus discussing burning questions of public finance without exciting the slightest party feeling.

He is a man of strong character and personal magnetism which have had an influence upon me and others of the younger graduates, for which we are extremely grateful.

J. M. McEVOY.

*From B. E. WALKER, ESQ., General Manager of the
Canadian Bank of Commerce.*

The Canadian Bank of Commerce,
15th November, 1890.

I was fortunate enough to become acquainted with Mr. Ashley soon after his arrival in Toronto, and I have been very pleased to notice that in considering the many features in connection with business, politics, education, social and economic conditions, etc., in Canada, he has been quite free from the bias which might be expected in one whose stock of ascertained facts had been acquired elsewhere. He has appeared only anxious to learn the real significance of new facts, no matter how inconsistent with previously recorded experience; and his zeal, openness of mind, and readiness to grasp the political, financial, and business problems we have to deal with, have been warmly appreciated by all Canadians who know him.

But we value, if possible, more highly still the strong sense Mr. Ashley has shewn of the necessity of closer relations between the University and the business world. His earnest work in this direction has already produced practical results, and is certain to increase largely the usefulness of the University of Toronto.

B. WALKER.

*From DR. KARL KNIES, Professor of Political Economy
in the University of Heidelberg.*

Heidelberg, 2 November, 1890.

WERTESTER HERR COLLEGE.

Auf Ihre gefällige Zuschrift vom 16 October möchte ich sofort erwiedern, dass es mich sehr freuen würde, wenn man Ihnen den durch den Tod Thorold Rogers' erledigten Lehrstuhl für politische Oekonomie übertragen würde. Ich bin überzeugt, man würde diese Wahl nicht zu bereuen haben. Ein guter Professor muss ein guter Lehrer und ein tüchtiger Forscher und Producent in seiner Wissenschaft sein. Nach meiner Erinnerung an die persönliche Begegnung mit Ihnen zweifle ich nicht an Ihrer Lehrgabe. Und die beiden, in meinem Besitz befindlichen Druckschriften, der erste Band Ihrer "Introduction to English economic history and theory," und die in den Publications of the American economic Association—Sept., 1887—veröffentlichte "Early history of the English woollen industry," geben ja doch ein schönes Zeugnis von dem Werte und der gesunden Richtung Ihrer wissenschaftlichen Production. Lassen Sie mich deshalb mit dem Ausdruck der Hoffnung schliessen, dass Sie Ihren dauernden Wohnsitz in das Europäische England verlegen können, und mich von dort aus bald wieder einmal mit einem persönlichen Besuche erfreuen werden.

Hochachtungsvoll ergebenst,

KARL KNIES.

From DR. GUSTAV SCHMOLLER, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Berlin; Member of the Prussian Staatsrath.

Berlin, Wormserstrasse 13.
den 29th October, 1890.

Herr Prof. W. J. Ashley, ist mir persönlich zwar gar nicht, wohl aber durch seine Arbeiten aus dem Gebiete der englischen Wirthschaftsgeschichte bekannt. Ich schätze sie um so höher, je mehr England auf diesem Gebiete neuerdings weit hinter den andern Kulterstaaten zurückgeblieben ist. Selbst die Arbeiten von Rogers leiden daran dass sie nur Sammlungen zur historischen Statistik, nicht Darstellungen der historischen Entwicklung volkswirtschaftlicher Einrichtungen sind. Ich hoffe, dass Mr. Ashley derjenige sein wird, der diese nicht bloß für England, sondern für die Wissenschaft der ganzen Welt empfindliche Lücke ausfüllen wird; er besitzt dazu diejenige historische und volkswirtschaftliche methodische Schulung, den kombinatorischen Geist, den Fleiss, die Kenntniss der Leistungen anderer Länder welche unumgänglich nothwendig sind um auf diesem Gebiete Grosses zu leisten.

G. SCHMOLLER.

From DR. LUJO BRENTANO, *Professor of Political Economy in the University of Leipzig.*

Leipzig, Bismarckstrasse 6,
November 2nd, 1890.

DEAR PROFESSOR ASHLEY,

As I hear from you, that you intend to become a candidate for the chair of Political Economy at Oxford, which has just been rendered vacant by the death of Thorold Rogers, I should like to express to you my good wishes for your success.

When I was in England (1868), a young man of 23-24 years, there was nobody in England who knew anything about English Economic History. It was then that I was pressed to write the essay on the history of guilds, which served as introduction to my book on Trades Unions.

Since then there has come an economico-historical school into existence; and though I certainly know the faults in the said essay better than those who nowadays assail it whilst making other faults than mine, it was always a special pleasure to me to think that that essay might have contributed to give rise to the existence of the said school in England. Mr. Ludlow told me that he had given various of my books to Mr. Toynbee, when he was residing at Wimbledon, and I was gratified to find many of my views in the book which was published after Toynbee's death.

Now, as you are Toynbee's disciple, I have always rejoiced to be in some way in a bond of parental relationship to you too, and have followed with great pleasure the progress which you have made in your books.

If that essay on guilds was to be written nowadays, you English certainly would not have need to apply to a foreign lad of 24. Now you have Mr. Cunningham and yourself.

Of course you do not suppose that I quite agree with you in all the views which you have brought forward in your *Economical History*. But that would not be a fair test. Just as I have changed very many of the views which I

had when writing that essay on guilds, you will yourself on a subject, the investigation of which is so young, change your present views when you are growing older. But I acknowledge to have learned much from your works, and I acknowledge that you have investigated the questions in a true scientific spirit, and with the proper methods. At the same time I was gratified to find in your writings the elevated views which distinguished Toynbee.

Now as I know of no disciple of Toynbee's who has come to such eminence by his writings as you have, I think the University of Oxford which cherishes the memory of that excellent man, cannot but give to your claim a fair consideration.

I should be exceedingly happy to see you there as Professor. Indeed England must get you back, as she has not too many who are able to do the scientific work in Economic History which has so long been neglected.

Most truly yours,

L. BRENTANO.

From M. EMILE DE LAVELEYE, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Liège; Corresponding Member of the Institute de France.

J'ESTIME que M. Ashley, actuellement professeur d'Economie Politique à l'Université de Toronto a tous les titres pour occuper la place laissée vacante par la mort du regretté Thorold Rogers. Ses études l'ont porté dans la voie où s'est engagée l'Economie Politique depuis quelques années, et où Rogers a rendu de si grands services à la Science, à savoir les Principes Economiques considerés au point de vue de l'histoire. Il me parait qu'un semblable enseignement est tout spécialement indiqué pour l'université d'Oxford où l'étude de l'histoire a toujours eu tant d'éclat.

Outre une étude historique sur le développement de certaines industries en Angleterre, publiée précédemment, M. Ashley a communiqué à la dernière Session de la British Association à Leeds un travail tres remarqué ayant pour titre *Agricultural changes in England during the period 1450-1650*, complétant les admirables chapitres de Rogers sur le même sujet.

À Toronto il s'est occupé (indépendamment d'un cours élémentaire) de l'histoire des doctrines économiques et du développement des Finances.

Chose excellente et qui manque, je pense, à Oxford, il a fondé et dirigé un Séminaire d'économie politique à l'exemple de ce qui s'est fait en Allemagne et aussi avec tant de succès à la Johns Hopkins University de Baltimore. On y réunit des jeunes gens qui ont le goût de l'étude, et ils travaillent sous l'oeil et avec l'aide du maître à des compositions et dissertations; ce qui constitue une préparation infiniment supérieure à celle que peut donner un cours. C'est une transformation complète dans le méthode de l'enseignement; mais pour l'appliquer avec fruit il faut que le Professeur y ait été lui-même initié déjà, ce qui est le cas pour M. Ashley.

EMILE DE LAVELEYE.

Argenteau, 29 Oct., 1890.

From the JAHRBUCH FÜR GESETZGEBUNG UND VOLKSWIRTSCHAFT *im Deutschen Reich.* New Series XIII., Part I., p. 424, in a Review by Dr. K. Oldenberg of the 'Economic History.'

..... "Der Titel sagt, das Buch wolle eine "Einführung" geben; und diese Aufgabe erfüllt es in mustergiltiger Weise. Der Verfasser beherrscht nicht nur Quellen und Litteratur seiner mannigfachen Themata vollkommen, sondern weiss auch den verwickelten Stoff übersichtlich und klar, das wichtige und charakteristische treffend, in gefälliger Form darzustellen. Der Leser vertraut bald mit einem gewissen Behagen den eigenen Gedankengang seiner autoritativen Führung an, ohne viel korrigiren zu müssen. In der Hauptsache scheint Ashley nicht originale Forschungsergebnisse vorzutragen; aber er durchdringt die fremden Gedanken mit wissenschaftlichem Verständniss, hat überall die Quellen selbst geprüft, und vielfach im einzelnen neue Gesichtspunkte aufgebracht oder einen neuen Beleg gefunden. Zwischen divergirenden Meinungen pflegt er zu vermitteln, und auf diese Art den Leser mit den Vorzügen beider bekannt zu machen; so ist das Buch eine fast ideal zu nennende Kodifikation der neueren Forschungen."

*From DR. GUSTAV COHN, Professor of Political Economy
in the University of Göttingen.*

Göttingen, Nov. 1, 1890.

DEAR PROFESSOR ASHLEY.

It is with much pleasure that I comply with your request to state the most favorable impression received from your writings, and—as far as your publications show—from the work you are doing in the University of Toronto.

I share your opinion that to bring Economics into sympathy with the study of History is a good means of reviving the study of Economics, and of giving it a place of importance as an academic discipline.

I have no doubt but you will be able to fill the vacant chair of political economy in the University of Oxford, in case it should be offered to you, in an excellent way, and to give a new impetus to the study of Economics in Oxford.

Yours truly,

G. COHN.

From the JAHRBÜCHER FÜR NATIONALÖKONOMIE UND STATISTIK, vol. xviii., p. 672, in a review by Dr. BÖHMBAWERK, late Professor of Political Economy in the University of Innsbrück, and now of the Austrian Ministry of Finance.

..... Eine andere Frucht der neuen Schule ist Ashley's "Einführung in die englische Wirthschaftsgeschichte und Theorie." Bis vor Kurzem haben überwiegend deutsche Forscher die englische Wirthschaftsgeschichte geschrieben. Es ist eben so angemessen als erfreulich dass der heimische Stoff nunmehr auch von heimischen Forschern bearbeitet wird, und dies in ungemein tüchtiger Weise

From FREDERICK SEEBOHM, ESQ.

The Hermitage, Hitchin,
2 November, 1890.

DEAR SIR,

I think the modest character of your little volumes need not prevent you relying to some extent upon them. I think they have been deservedly appreciated.

Your view that at Oxford economic work should be chiefly in the direction of social history and of economic theory in its historial development, rather than in purely scientific or speculative economics commends itself to my judgment.

That you are "junior" is by no means against you, and I am sure that your approaching economics and economic history with an open mind instead of having to spend your time in defending what you wrote twenty years ago is all to the good also.

But while I say all this, I feel that my knowledge of Oxford and Oxford men is so small that it would be quite wrong of me to express an opinion as to the relative merits of one that I know something of as against others that I do not know. Indeed I do not in the least know who the other candidates may be.

That your appointment to the vacant professorship would end in much good work being done all who know your work will be, I think, confident.

Yours sincerely,

F. SEEBOHM.

*From F. W. MAITLAND, ESQ., M.A., Professor of English
Law in the University of Cambridge.*

The West Lodge,
Downing College, Cambridge,
29th Oct., 1890.

DEAR PROFESSOR ASHLEY.

I very heartily wish you success in your candidature for the chair at Oxford. Your appointment would be a great encouragement to students of economic history, a branch of learning which still has to struggle for adequate recognition. I feel that it would be absurd were I to write a formal testimonial in your favour, as there are many things which a professor of Political Economy must teach of which I know less than nothing. Still if you think that there would be the least use in my testifying to the value of your book to students of mediaeval life and mediaeval law, you are at liberty to send this letter to the electors. I have often to recommend your book as containing the best sketch of the manorial system as it really was, an admirable statement of the practical meaning that our old land law had for those who lived under it. The use that you have made of first hand evidence concerning the condition of the peasantry of the middle ages seems to me thoroughly sound, and I have long hoped that the little book was the precursor of a larger treatise.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

F. W. MAITLAND.

From AUGUSTUS JESSOPP, D.D.

Professor W. J. Ashley informs me that he intends to offer himself as a Candidate for the Chair of Political Economy now vacant in the University of Oxford, and asks me to express my opinion of his fitness for such a post.

I should rejoice to see Mr. Ashley elected to this Professorship, because he appears to me a thoughtful and laborious student who has marked out for himself an original line, and has given promise of being able to lift the Science of Political Economy from the arid region of mere statistics to a higher level, and correlate it with the Sciences of History and Ethics.

As the master of a brilliant style—as a sagacious interpreter of great movements in the past which throw light upon some difficult questions of taxation and finance in the present—as a patient and philosophic enquirer in whom the judicial faculty is strong enough to keep in check the passion for theory—Mr. Ashley has already won his spurs ; but he has a career before him.

An enthusiast with immense power of work, Mr. Ashley, if he be elected to this Professorship, cannot fail to exercise a powerful influence upon Oxford studies ; and he is not unlikely, sooner or later, to gather round him a School of Economists with whose researches the historians of the future will have to reckon.

AUGUSTUS JESSOPP.

Scarning, 2nd November, 1890.

From DR. E. R. A. SELIGMAN, Professor of Political Economy in Columbia College, New York. One of the Editors of the Political Science Quarterly.

Columbia College,
New York, Nov. 15, 1890.

MY DEAR ASHLEY.

I understand that you intend to put yourself forward as a candidate for the Oxford professorship. I sincerely hope that you may be successful. I shall be glad if any words of mine will be of any help. Your work certainly entitles you to the place. I know of no English economist, likely to be a candidate, who possesses the same qualifications. The essays which you wrote for our Political Science Quarterly attracted wide attention, and my colleagues agree with me in thinking that they are among the very ablest contributions made to our pages. Your Economic History marks, I think, a distinctly new departure in the history of English economics. Whatever progress economic science has made in the past few decades is due primarily to the work of the historical and comparative school, and I think it no flattery to say that you are by all means the ablest representative of that school among English economists.

Your history of the Woollen Industry published by our American Economic Association received most favourable notices both here and abroad, especially in Germany and Italy. It is, I think, almost the only English work in the history of economics at all comparable to the recent productions of the Germans. You have the immense advantage of being a thorough student of economics, as well as of history; and you possess, more than most of your English compeers, the faculty of turning your economic training to the investigation of practical problems of the day. Valuable as the recent work of the English economists undoubtedly is, it seems almost completely to lack any representative of that element which has done so much

to give fresh life and interest to economic study in the rest of Europe ; the element, namely, which is represented by the historical school. What is needed in England to make the future of the science worthy of its glorious past is an infusion of this new blood of the historical school, and I sincerely hope that Oxford will promote the study of economics by honoring itself and honoring you.

We Americans shall be sorry to lose so powerful an assistant from our ranks ; but if it will serve as an impetus to the progress of economic thought in England, and to the more active and fruitful cooperation of the economists of both countries, as it surely must, no one will rejoice more heartily than

Yours sincerely,

EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.

*From DR. LUIGI COSSA, Professor of Political Economy
in the University of Pavia.*

Université de Pavia, Italie,
10 Novembre, 1890.

MONSIEUR ET TRÈS HONORÉ COLLÈGUE.

C'est avec le plus grand plaisir, et pourtant avec la plus scrupuleuse impartialité, que, suivant votre désir, je vous autorise à communiquer à qui vous croirez convenable, que je fais grand cas du complexe de vos travaux scientifiques sur l'économie politique, et particulièrement de ceux sur la *Early History of the English Woollen Industry*, et du 1^r volume de votre *English Economic History and Theory*, dont j'attends avec la plus vive impatience la continuation. Je suis d'opinion que le profondeur de votre doctrine, la diligence de vos recherches, le bonté de votre critique, et la clarté élégante de l'exposition vous rendent très digne d'occuper à l'Université d'Oxford la chaire restée vacante par le mort du Prof. J. E. Thorold Rogers, dont vous imitez l'ardeur pour les recherches sur l'histoire économique de votre patrie.

Agréez, mon cher Collègue, l'assurance de mon amitié.

LUIGI COSSA.

*From M. PAUL VINOGRADOFF, Professor of History in
the University of Moscow.*

Moscow, November 1, 1890.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad to be of any service to you, and should be proud if my appreciation could help you in attaining a position for which you are undoubtedly the fittest person. I hope the lines I send you may not come too late to be presented.

Yours truly,

P. VINOGRADOFF.

Professor W. J. Ashley's work in the line of economic and social history deserves high praise, and gives great promise. The monograph on the *English Woollen industry* arrives at important results by means of an original and careful investigation. As to the volume on *English Economic History*, its well-known success is not only due, in my opinion, to a very remarkable gift of clear and convincing exposition; but also to the thoughtful way in which the much-debated questions as to medieval arrangements have been treated. Mr. Ashley intends to give only a general outline of the subject; and still he has succeeded in making his book much more than a compilation, or a popular statement of other people's ideas. The key to the achievement seems to lie in the fact that the conflicting theories of Nasse, Seebohon, and Rogers have been digested into a general form which gives them unity and completeness. Breadth of view is certainly required to make such an attempt at all successful; and the author's well-grounded information as to continental literature may have contributed powerfully to enlarge his conceptions.

PAUL VINOGRADOFF.

