PRINCIPLES OF MODERN LEGISLATION.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURE.

Professor Jethro Brown began a series of three extension lectures on Tuesday evening on "The underlying principles of legislation." The initial address was of a highly instructive nature, and the subject matter was a large and apposite one. Professor Brown dealt with the principles of "Liberty, old and new." The interpretation of liberty up till the present had varied much in the course of the centuries, and it had been founded on political freedom in the sense of possession of the freedom from slavery, but it was now thought that once the people were given the franchise all good things would follow. The faith which was once so strong must strike one as surprising, and it was only necessary to look at it that century to see how misplaced that faith has been. The second lecture was largely on the character of the individual and the doctrine of the rights of the individual. Briefly, it could be expressed as the doctrine of the absence of interference and the extent of which might be represented by two points of view. The personal liberty of the individual meant free play of individual interests, emancipation from restraint and the working out of one's own idea. From this point of view of the individual, government was the greatest hindrance, freedom among workers, and self-help and self-reliance were encouraged, to ensure a fair field and no favor. This meant that real liberty had been associated with democracy at different periods of the world's history, and it was only necessary to recognize real liberty as a government that did not interfere with people's rights. The course of legislation was often made to suit the interests of other classes, and there was a constant struggle between the conflicting interests of classes. It was of the utmost importance to educate the minds of everyone to help the masses to understand the work of the government and to have a sense of social duty. The principle of educational reform, the duty of the government to protect the individual, and the avoidance of extremes in politics were discussed. The doctrine of self-help and self-realization—freedom to do as one chooses and the responsibility which comes with it—was the essence of modern legislation.

THE TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

One high purpose of the state teachers' annual conference is to mark the progress of popular education. A broad democratic basis renders it imperative that all should have equal opportunities. From a national to a party or a particular one, education, like politics, is in an empirical science. It is a personal equation. Its aims and methods change with times and mores. Every practical reform, such as the new departmental system, must not only originate in a sense of pressing need, but justify itself afterwards in actual experience. Education will never cease to be experimental, because like the quest of the Holy Grail, it is at best the effort to realize a vision glorious—a social ideal whose end is not achievement, but only the testing of the administration is for the experts; policy is for the public. The Teachers' Conference is an experience meeting of administrators whose privilege it is to impress the public with the educational policy is successful in daily practice. From their report the community can determine what improvements are needed, and what methods of harmony, efficiency, or waste of energy shall appear, the duty of the Minister as the people's representative will be to provide an effective machinery for the advancement of whatever exists for the child—not for the teachers—the school could not exist.