Our Society has had for several seasons two courses of lectures, technical and popular. The technical lectures are by officers of the Army and Navy and distinguished scientists in different departments of the Government; the popular course by leading exponents of original investigations on subjects pertaining to geographic research.

It is the intention that each speaker in the popular course shall be a recognized authority on the subject treated by him, and are usually illustrated by stereopticon views, which add not only to the interest but to the value of the lectures.

The average attendance at the popular lectures has increased regularly—from 500 in 1893-'94 to 800 in 1894-'95 and to 1,000 in 1895-'96.

The audience is composed of members and their friends, comprising many of the most cultured ladies and gentlemen of Washington, Senators and Representatives, scientists and students.

The popular course of 1896-'97 will show the effects of environment on the development of civilization from the earliest to the most recent times, as illustrated by different peoples and races, and also the geographic agencies and conditions which have shaped human progress, and the forces which, affecting institutions, industries, arts, commerce, and religion, have contributed to the development of the successive stages of civilization passing down the stream of history from one country to another.

We are learning from the investigation of monuments and history the causes which have led to this development. From these sources we believe subjects will be found for a most popular, attractive, and valuable course of lectures.

The first lecture will be of a general character, opening the course and explaining its plan and purpose.

The transition of man from barbarism to partial civilization seems to have originated at about the same time in Assyria and Egypt, and therefore our second lecture will be on one of these countries, preferably Assyria, as its environment is more marked than that of Egypt.

The aborigines, living on the mountains or by the seashore, increased until they outgrew all the natural sources of sustenance and were forced into the rich valleys of the Euphrates, and there, watching the effects of the inundations of the river and urged by want, were taught irrigation and agriculture. In these rich valleys of the Euphrates and Nile are the earliest types of
civilization—if such it can be called—where men lived in hives or flocks, ruled by a despot, “the son of heaven.” In Babylon and Nineveh men and women were first gathered into cities, where though their only writings were cuneiform hieroglyphs, yet by tablets a great library was formed. Here was neither individual liberty nor personal freedom, for there were only two classes, the master and slave.

The third lecture will be upon Syria. Here we have new geographic environment, difference of race, language, institutions, and religion, developing a nationality and history of an essentially different type. The Semites, like the Bedouins, whom they resemble, came from the Desert of Arabia, a country as unlike the valley of the Euphrates as the people of the two countries, bringing with them the idea of the family—the tribe—their religion tending to monotheism. Although their civilization was in some respects and for a long time inferior to that of the Babylonians, yet they had a love of poetry and romance, of freedom and independence unknown in the despotisms of the Euphrates and Nile.

Their chiefs or rulers were patriarchs, like Abraham and Jacob; of nomad clans, wandering over the desert, honest, narrow-minded, with a horror of pagan impurities—religion having a real power over their lives. While they recognized the value of the life of the individual vastly higher than the Assyrian, yet individual or personal liberty, as we understand it, did not exist, as every man belonged to his family and was subject to its head, and every family to its tribe. From these patriarchs came the idea of God, religion, the Jewish Church, then Christianity, which in process of time became the religion of the Roman Empire.

The third lecture will therefore be The Development of Man as illustrated by the habits and institutions of the Jews, derived from Arabia, Egypt, and Syria.

The fourth lecture will be on Tyre and Sidon. Here we find a third condition of environment, mountains behind, the sea in front, working out a different civilization. Life on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean led the inhabitants to find in commerce, prosperity, wealth, and civilization. Their ships followed along the coast, then gradually sailed out into the Mediterranean, on through the Pillars of Hercules, into the Atlantic; north to England; south, through the Red sea, into the Indian ocean, to South Africa, even if they did not circumnavigate that continent. This lecture will show the development of commerce; the origin and growth of colonies, exemplified by Carthage, Sicily, and Spain.

Fifth lecture—Greece. The two great races of the world are the Semitic and the Aryan. Different in their environment as in all other respects—in the one monotheism, in the other unbridled polytheism. The language and environment of the Grecian Aryan were more favorable than those of the Semite in Syria. Their mountains, enclosing numerous small valleys, the islands and seas of Greece, its beautiful climate and luxuriant soil, developed a people in their institutions, their government, arts, and sciences different from any that has existed, either before or since, and gave the world the first idea of personal liberty of the individual man. As no nation ever showed such rapid development, such early maturity, so no people ever had such a rapid decline without any renaissance.

The lecture will show the causes for this wonderful development and early decay.

Sixth lecture—Rome, Mistress of the World. The Seven Hills, one densely wooded, the river Tiber, and the rich valley and plain around made the environment of Rome. These hills secured Romulus and his band of freebooters from attack while they easily invaded the
country of their neighbors. The lecture will show the conditions and causes that led to the expansion of Rome, slowly and steadily extending its dominion from the little village of Rome over Italy and Greece, and finally embracing in its Empire the whole of the known world. Rome, the origin of law, authority, and power, with a dominion so wide and powerful that in any part of the world a man could say with the Apostle Paul, “I am a Roman citizen.” Freeman truly says: “None but those who have grasped the place of Rome in history can ever fully understand the age in which we live.”

Seventh lecture—Constantinople, with its environment, more marked than that of any other city of the world—the city which has been the seat of a government longer than any other that ever existed, with a continuity and concentration of Imperial rule in an Imperial city, without parallel in the history of mankind. Belonging to two continents, mistress of the seas, glorious in its situation, the desired of many nations, we behold conditions of environment which caused its rise to power and influence and its long-continued existence. No story is more interesting than that of Constantinople.

Eighth lecture—Venice and Florence—two cities unlike any other cities of Europe, each supreme within its small territory, owing no fealty to any sovereign, temporal or spiritual, outside its own district, each deriving power and wealth from the control of the sea. Here we find the renaissance of commerce, literature, art, and science, and in their conditions of environment, some of which they found in distant lands; the causes which led to their growth, the expansion of their commerce and wealth, and their territorial possessions. When these are known we understand the part they bore in the enfranchisement of the world from the torpor of the Dark Ages, opening the way to the new world, and all the discoveries of Spain and Portugal.

Ninth lecture—Paris. No city traces its birth and growth more directly to its environment than Paris. A small island in the river Seine, where the church of Notre Dame stands, was the home of the earliest inhabitants of Paris. The island protected them from their neighbors, while the river gave easy communication with the rich and fertile country around it.

The lecture will show the reasons of the growth of that city, its development in art, its success in manufactures, and in all those public works of the hand which give from fifteen to twenty per cent greater value to its products than to those of Germany or England, and has made its peasantry the richest and most comfortable in the world.

It has been our intention to indicate only the general scope of the lectures, leaving to each lecturer perfect freedom to treat it in his own manner, ever bearing in mind the effect of the geographic environment upon the subject, and tracing the development of civilization from one nation to another through the centuries.

WASHINGTON, July, 1896.

GARDINER G. HUBBARD, President.
October 12, I am sure there is no one who can propose to goods a lecture as you can & I think the pro-
gram will interest
for I have sent the
sympathy to a number
of gentlemen asking
names from them for speaker, a speech one was sent to
you. With pleasant
memories I suppose
self will express that I
may refer for
with confidence I am yours truly

F. W. Hubbard
1.5. 7:00 pm

For your information, I have enclosed a copy of the

Progress Report that we will be presenting at the

Board of Directors meeting next week.

Please let me know if you have any questions or

concerns.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Company Name]