A PLEA

FOR

EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC DUTY.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN,

JUNE 27, 1878.

BY

GEORGE V. N. LOTHROP, LL. D.

ANN ARBOR, MICH.:
PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS.
1878.

Bentley Historical
Library
University of Michigan

ANN ARBOR PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY.

A PLEA

FOR

EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC DUTY.

With sincere reluctance, with only the plea of the persuasion of friends, and my own sympathy with this occasion, do I attempt to fill this place to-day.

The occasion must suggest what I shall say to you. We now stand at a parting of the ways. The conditions have changed here and observances must change with them. This place of learning has become less the College and more truly the University. It now puts on, as it were, its robes of manhood. It recognizes that to-day it represents a stage of riper education and scholarship, which must be symbolized in its annual festival. Hence, while the college of the undergraduate is still here in larger scope and promise than ever before, yet this place of learning is no longer exclusively his, nor even principally his. It has passed to a larger and maturer constituency. It is a center to which converges the ripest and highest scholarship of a large, wealthy and cultivated community. And henceforth this day must be no local occasion, but the Olympic of one of the great seats of learning of the Republic. And on this day, with its annual return, shall its scholars, its scientists, its artists, and artisans, its professional men, and perchance its prophets and poets, gather here to take account of whatever new has been accomplished in science, in letters, in polity, in art, and in all that concerns the State, or the whole commonwealth of man.

Standing here to-day, with such realities and such auguries, we can perhaps best weigh their significance by a rapid glance at the past. We may, indeed, be sure that what we thus enjoy

is by no accident, or mere chance. All sound moral growths have an honest and instructive history.

Thirty-three years ago this month, the University of Michigan—a University only in name—asserted its entrance into a large sisterhood of colleges, by sending forth eleven young men bearing its diplomas. It bore the name of the State, but that name then gave no renown. The State was young and poor. It was raw from the wilderness. Save along the old French border, there was hardly a field in which the blackened stumps did not witness the new clearing. Its whole population was hardly 250,000. Its metropolis had only about 13,000. It had no accumulated wealth. It had few who claimed to be scholars, and very few who aimed at scholarship as a pursuit. No men ever saw more clearly that their work was to subdue the wilderness, and to found the homes which should lead in the future civilization.

Yet let no one think that these vigorous pioneers—founders of a new State—were strangers either to letters or to science. Their lineage was that of the best races of the globe. The greater part were children of the American free school; a system which somehow educates beyond its few books of instruction, and thus broadens its own pathway. Many were of that stock, which, with inspired hope and courage, had founded Harvard, and Yale, and Dartmouth. And, acting from a principle so native that it seemed almost like instinct, our farmer statesmen, when founding their State, founded also their seat of advanced learning, and wedded the two in indissoluble union.

We well know what some of the leading actors in this work hoped, and what some thought they foresaw. But it is not so easy to say what was the general hope and foresight. It is certain, however, that it was expected—and perhaps this was the common thought—that the College would furnish here at home an opportunity for a fair College education, and so become of great local usefulness. This was a reasonable hope. This was surely enough to justify what was done. More than this might well seem but the fire and ardor of the enthusiast.

As we look back on the history of any great enterprise, it is never easy to tell how much is due to the wisdom of the plan, and how much to the spirit and genius of the actors. The clear and concise Compact of the Mayflower seemed to the wise and learned of that day much inferior to the elaborate Constitution of Locke. And the blood of the Cavalier was held of more generous strain than that of the Pilgrim. But how vast the difference in the outcome! There is probably always something in the surroundings which throws its decisive weight into the scale.

Our fathers had this advantage. The field was one which not only inspired hope, but almost predicted success.

I have said that many of our pioneers were of the heroic blood that founded Harvard, and Yale, and Dartmouth. Already the best genius of that blood had impressed itself on the Northwest. In advance of the coming millions, it had, as it were, shaped the earth and the heavens of the sleeping empire.

It was a graduate of Harvard, who, in 1787, when framing the Great Charter of the Northwest, had consecrated it irrevocably to Human Freedom, to Religion, Learning, and Free Thought.

It was the proud boast of Themistocles that he knew how to make of a small city a great State. Greater than his was the wisdom and prescience of Nathan Dane, who knew how to take pledges of the future, and to snatch from the wilderness an inviolable Republic of Free Labor and Free Thought.

And here it seems not irrelevant to say that this one act is the most dominant one in our whole history, since the landing of the Pilgrims. It is the act that became decisive in the Great Rebellion. Without it, so far as human judgment can discern, the victory of Free Labor would have become impossible.

The influence of this act upon education in Michigan is what specially concerns us here to-day.

The care of education enjoined by the Ordinance of '87 seems to have fallen like a ray of light on the soil of Michigan,

kindling a fire which has never gone out. It begot and guided a policy which has been respected from the earliest history of the territory. I cannot state this matter so well as by adopting the judicially accurate words of Judge Campbell: "This early recognition of the necessity of schools and colleges, enforced in the form of a perpetual compact between the Government and the people and States in the Territory, has been a source and stimulus of intelligence, the importance of which cannot be estimated. The duty of the State to educate her children generously and thoroughly can never be disregarded, without violating the pledges on which the rights of the State and Territory were created." Pol. Hist., 221.

These are weighty and true words.

In the act of 1805, organizing the Territory of Michigan, a grant was made by Congress of a section of land in aid of a University. The appropriation of the sixteenth section of every township in aid of common schools, was made earlier.

In 1817, the aim for higher education took form in the extravagant scheme of Judge Woodward. Yet this scheme was not fruitless. It served as the nurse of such schools as were then most needed, while it kept in view what was beyond. In fact it was the birth of that corporate life which survives here in the University of to-day.

In 1835, the Territory came to its manhood in the State. By the same step it rose to higher efforts in behalf of education.

In our first Constitution a special article was devoted to education. No article of that instrument was more carefully considered, more wisely framed, or more cordially assented to. It laid broad and deep foundations on which our whole system of education has been built, on which it stands in wholesome vigor to-day, and on which it may safely stand forever. The system did not outrun present wants, but was capable of any enlargement required by any wants of the future. It cared equally for the education of the common school and the University. It wisely adjusted them as parts of a great whole, and as equally necessary to the best well-being of the State. It

was made the duty of the legislature to establish township libraries; to maintain common schools; to promote by all suitable means, intellectual, scientifical, and agricultural improvement; to promote literature, arts, and sciences through a University; and to keep forever inviolable the common school and University funds.

I say again, no men ever built more wisely for the future State. They deserve perpetual remembrance and honor. Nor are their monuments wanting. The district school houses which stud the State like stars, our noble graded schools, and this University, the jewelled crown of our civilization, shall bear imperishable testimony in their honor.

It was under such influences, on a soil thus fertilized and quickened, that the University began its work. In 1845, as we have seen, it began to yield its fruit. I have said that it is not easy to say what was the general expectation. But the actual result within a few years, was a surprise and a joy. So rapid was the increase in the collegiate department that the next steps were easy. In 1850, the Medical College began its work, and, nine years later, the institution of the Law School put into activity the three general departments of the University.

The thought that I have aimed to bring out is, that the University is the result of no accident, but the offspring of a wise and thoughtful policy. In attainment and result it may exceed all that sober reason could have foreseen; but its growth and greatness are certainly in the exact line of its founders. And here, in thankfulness and congratulation for what has already come; for the pure spring of learning set flowing here for all; for the swelling stream of instructed young men and women yearly sent forth with influence and power; for the accomplished instructors whose teachings are gladly sought and heard in other colleges; for the words written and spoken here, which are cited in courts and senates with as much respect as those of Grotius and Blackstone, and for the scientific scholarship which has inscribed the name of the Univer-

sity imperishably among the Asteroids;* in pride and congratulation for this already done, but with renewed hope and enthusiasm for the future, it were perhaps well to leave it. We might say that never was wisdom better justified of her children; and that, in the splendid exemplification of to-day, all argument ends.

But still we cannot close our ears to objections sometimes heard, and it may be best briefly to consider them.

It is said the result is all well, but it were better attained by other agencies and other methods. It is sometimes said it is a business that should be remitted to private hands, or perhaps to religious bodies; that it is not the office of the civil power to provide for higher education, but only for common schools; and that it is only for the latter that taxation can justly be imposed.

In reply, first, it is clear these objections run counter to our historical policy; but still, if they are sound they ought to prevail. Are they sound?

In this discussion let us exclude everything not really in dispute.

We do not oppose any education whatever, whether at private hands or by religious bodies. They sail with us the same seas, by the same courses, and with the same lading, only in different measure. The more of private education the better. But we all too well know, that such agencies lack means, certainty and universality. All private enterprise is limited by its private and special end. It has no spur and no obligation beyond. And at last, as a promotive for education it must partially fail, if not saved by public aid. And so even this returns to the State.

We are sometimes pointed to some of the great eastern colleges as private institutions. The assumption is not correct. Their management, it is true, is more or less withdrawn from direct State control. But it will be found that they have been care-

* It may be interesting to many to know that Prof. James C. Watson, the discoverer of no less than twenty-five of the minor planets, is not only a professor in the University but one of its graduates, of the class of 1857.

fully nurtured and fostered by public aid, until by accumulated capital and endowments, a liberal portion of the general wealth has become appropriated for their permanent support.

Whether this is really a duty of the State is best seen when we get a right idea of what the State is.

In modern intelligent communities, the State becomes more and more but the organized will of the people. It exists because there is a civil life of society, as truly as there is individual life. This civil life which we call the body politic, or the State, is not a mere convenience, but a necessity. It encloses the individual not as a prison, but as a shelter. Civilization can exist and grow only in and under law, which is the organism of civil life. The *laisser faire*, or let alone doctrine, is a delusion. It is not true that that country is best governed that is governed least. The quality of rule is the test. That country is best governed that has the best laws, few or many, and the best administration of them.

The State and the man cannot be set apart. The perfect life of each is necessary to the perfect life of both.

If society can exist only under law, the best form of society can only continue and grow under the best laws.

But society is made up of individuals, and such as are its citizens, so is the State. The free State can have no guaranty of its own life, save in the intelligence of its citizens. The corporate and individual life must be of the same kind. The one cannot ascend while the other sinks. The life of the State must be fed by the life of the citizen.

While I assert this as universally true, it is absolutely true of that form which we call a republic. This form is "of the people, by the people, and for the people." As water cannot rise above the level of its source, so this form of civil rule cannot rise above the best intelligence of its people, nor exist longer than it receives vital power and force from the people.

Does it not follow plainly, that it is a condition of the survival of a free State that intelligence shall be secured to the citizen? But as the individual passes away, and his off-

spring takes his place, the process must be continuous. And this process is education.

And here, perhaps, I ought to say, what might better have been said before, that by education I do not mean merely instruction in physical laws. These are not all that there is, either in the external world or in man. It is his moral or ethical nature that is sovereign in man and in Christian society. No education would be worthy of the name which should overlook this. Instruction is necessary here, that we may intelligently comprehend the claims and duties that subsist between us and government, society, neighborhood, family and religion. It then comes to this, as the sum of our political wisdom: The free State is essential to the best condition of the people, and an educated people is indispensable to the existence of the free State.

Does it not then follow that it is the duty of the State to see that its citizens should be educated? It is a duty primary and fundamental. It is a duty that cannot be delegated. For, as we have seen, other agencies lack means and motive, certainty and universality of operation. The power of the State is alone large enough to encircle all of its citizens; it alone can provide and maintain the machinery of complete education, and it alone can see that, to the proper extent, it reaches all.

But the objector still insists that, conceding that this duty rests on the public, as to common schools, the duty stops there.

The objection, fairly stated, is that the common school is the only one that can or will be used by pupils at large, and therefore taxation should go no further. To do more than this, it is said, is to favor some at the expense of others. This is wrong, it is said, because one man is as good as another. As to that, one might answer with Beecher: "That depends on who the other man is." As to the public, he is best who serves best. I am by no means so good as another who serves society and humanity better than I do or can. That other is the one

that society can least spare. My limits are not to be imposed on another who can lift up, where I can only weigh down.

In truth, when we analyze it, any objection against the higher schools is an objection against all schools. For, first, there is no natural limit to the common school. It may be one where only the merest elements are taught. On the other hand, the advanced common school of Prussia, of Massachusetts, or of Michigan, offers a comparatively liberal education. The common school, then, conforms to conditions of time and place, and is a varying utility and power. Still, in the heart of every common school system, the objectionable inequality exists. The wants and attainments of all p upils are not the same The first operation of the rule that would limit education to such education as is accepted by all, would degrade our existing schools, and forever bar all progress.

The simple words of the Mayflower Compact, which declare as the object and end of the State, to frame just and equal laws for the public good, contain the marrow of all sound political philosophy. Civil rights should indeed be equal; and the greatest of all these rights, both in the interest of the State and the individual, is that the opportunity should be equally open to every man and woman to make the most of his or her gifts.

Men are not, in intellectual gifts, a level plane. The needs, powers and aspirations of the mass cannot be the measure for all. No community can be completely served or saved by the dead level. The best average intelligence needs impregnation from the superior intelligence of the best minds. The highest thought is necessary for the maturity of the common thought. It is the light and warmth of the pre-eminent minds, which, shining down into the midst of us, and infusing the common mind, ripen the great harvests of civilization and progress.

Nor can the influence of leading minds ever be dispensed with or supplied by common instruction. Though to the poet it has seemed that

"The individual withers, and the world is more and more,"

yet, I think this is more apparent than real; that it is because the general surface has risen, and not because gifted individual life is less powerful or less needed.

Nor is partial growth enough. The State needs all the gifts and powers of all her children. She needs the whole of every man; the whole that his expanded powers can make him. She must therefore hold open to all men and women the door by which they can come to their full estate.

And why should not a man's education be the concern of the State? We now know that his physical condition is a matter the State must inspect and guard. Air must not only be free; it must be pure. Alleys and living-houses must not breed typhus or small-pox. Food shall not be adulterated. Water shall not be drawn from wells poisoned by steepings from city refuse, but must be brought from nature's pure springs and reservoirs. Yet we live not by bread alone.

Vice and ignorance are great social and political sores. They subsist and grow at the public cost. It is better to prevent than to pay. What builds so many barriers against vice and crime, or provides so many means of rescue as education?

Education does not draw the man within himself. Its function is to open to him a better understanding of all his relations in life. It enlarges his powers. It instructs him as to his duties. It unfolds to him his rights, and it arms him for further defence.

It is true that the highest education will be sought only by a few comparatively. Only a few will thirst for it. Only a few are competent to acquire and use it. But of those who do so will be those whom the world most needs. Yet, because there will be comparatively few who seek and use it, it does not thereby become a class privilege. Genius and mental gifts are not hereditary. The divine spark drops into the homeliest cottages, and into the obscurest corners; and for such the world's welfare demands that the door should be kept wide open. What I claim as just and equal in this behalf is, that, as the State is interested in the full mental growth of every child who seeks knowledge, it shall afford to every child

full opportunity to acquire it. It is equal, because equally open to all. It is just, because it promotes the power and the welfare of all.

I have said that learning is no class privilege; that it is no selfish possession. I gladly borrow the words of a scholarly statesman, uttered last week in another place: "What you gain," said he, "to adorn and feed your mind, you gain for all around you. When you use your property, you take away its use from all others; when you use your knowledge, you can only do so by giving it out to the community in which you live."*

This diffusible quality of the use of knowledge is what gives places of learning their great power in the world. And in our system of government it is what makes them so productive of good citizenship.

We have seen that the objector's sole ground is, that, because his children do not want the higher education, he ought not to be taxed for others. The objection might be unanswerable, if the question were as narrow as he sees it. A wiser and deeper view would answer him out of the very warp and woof of his own daily life. He would know that the fruits of knowledge become the common heritage. He would know that they are indeed twice blessed—blessed to him who gives, and him who takes. He would know that taxes to promote useful knowledge are indeed golden grain, from which comes the best bread of his living. He would know that his family are better housed, better clothed and better taught; that his reaper has replaced the sickle and cradle; that his thresher has superseded the flail; that his plough is better fashioned; that he is better treated in sickness; that he is better vindicated and defended in the courts, better ministered to in the church, and better represented in the Senate, because somebody's culture has been carried above the level. The dweller farthest inland cannot afford to put out the lamp lighted for the ship. The broad highway is built, not wholly at the cost of those who ride or carry, but that it may be a way for general business,

*Governor Seymour.

commerce and defence. The same truth meets us at every step. We contribute to many things in which we take no share except in the general good that results. Indeed, the idea on which many public institutions rest is, that the service which they render is one which reaches the mass of private persons, only as they share in the public welfare.

The simple truth then is, that the educatson of the common school, and that of schools of higher learning, do not stand apart. They are really but parts of one system. One heart animates both; one vital current flows through both. Whatever injures either impairs the whole. Each pledges the health and usefulness of the other. And I again praise the wisdom of our early Statesmen, who, upon the broad base of an advanced system of common schools, reared this University to stand as a great beacon, streaming to our farthest horizon, with the purest and brighest light of learning.

I have thus far only spoken of education as necessary to the safety of the State. Let us, for a few moments, look at it as it bears on the power of the State.

"Knowledge is itself power" is the well known aphorism. It is as true of nations as of individuals. Lord Bacon, its author, one of the wisest of thinkers and observers, has also declared that it "is manifest that the Romans never ascended to the height of empire till they had ascended to the height of other arts." And some here will recall those noble passages in which he celebrates, amidst the decay of everything else, the fertility and immortality of learning. "But the images," says he, "of men's wits and knowledges remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time, and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images, because they generate still, and cast their seeds in the minds of others, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages. So that, if the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions, in participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages, so dis-

tant, to participate of the wisdom, illuminations and inventions the one of the other."

If learning can thus borrow the wisdom, illuminations and inventions of all ages, can thus cast its seeds into the minds of men, provoking and causing infinite actions and operations, it may be, indeed, truly said that "Knowledge is itself power."

There is a striking passage in Butler's Analogy, of the power of virtue. He supposes a community, or State, perfectly virtuous for a succession of ages, and shows how naturally it would rise to pre-eminence in moral and material power. "It would plainly," he says, "be superior to all others, and the world must come gradually under its empire; not by means of ceaseless violence, but partly by what must be allowed to be just conquest, and partly by other kingdoms submitting themselves voluntarily to it through a course of ages, and claiming its protection, one after another, in successive exigencies." This is a charming picture, but I think not overdrawn. Perfect virtue is the fine fruit of perfect knowledge and wisdom. And were it possible to secure perfect knowledge and wisdom, in civil rule, we should thereby lay the foundation of universal and eternal empire.

We may not hope for perfect knowledge or wisdom, but knowledge is the path to wisdom and power. In the modern State, power sides with those who have the highest knowledge. The people, who, by their skill and insight, command the trade, commerce, and production of the world, command the world itself. The quiet, but far-seeing, power that dwells at St. Stephen's, or in Threadneedle street, is infinitely greater than the broad brute empire of the Czar. The rule follows down to the citizen and the soldier. The musket and bayonet is powerful just in proportion to the intelligence that guides it. Look at the late great wars in Western Europe. Of the French army it is said that only 43 per cent. could write, while of the German army 98 per cent. could write. This has led a great orator to say: "In the great conflict between Germany and Austria it was the German school house which destroyed the

Austrian military forces. In the conflict between Germany and France it was again the school house which overthrew France."

And yet it was not for want of lavish expenditure that the French armies failed. It is said that 90 per cent. of all her revenues is spent by France on her armaments, while only 4 per cent. is spent on education. Let France give 20 per cent. to instruction, and not only in war, but, far better, in peace, she may hope to see her eagles mount to the zenith.

The same truth has been taught in our own home experience. At the outset of the Rebellion the South sneered at the North as an emasculated race of tillers, traders and artisans. In peaceful pursuits, the taste for arms, and their use, had died out, and with these, it was thought, manly courage had also died. And on the surface it so looked. There was no love of arms, no pride in military display. A meagre militia fanned the ashes where no real fire remained. It so happened that during the year before the war, I saw a good deal of Southern men. It was in vain that I remonstrated that it would not do to disparage the physical courage and aptitude for arms of any race of educated men. The proof, however, came swiftly. The instructed head and skilled hand showed themselves as much at home on the field as in the factory.* The school houses again wrote their lesson of mastery—a lesson usually taught in love, charity and beneficence—but written this time in fire and blood!

But this overmastering power of knowledge and intelligence was still more impressively taught. Of the bravery and patriotic fire of the North, I never had a doubt. What oppressed me was the apparent difficulty of subduing and holding in subjection a territory so vast and so varied as the South, and inhabited by a proud and spirited people. I recalled

---

*When Baltimore was seized by a rebel mob, at the outbreak of the war, and the Massachusetts volunteers were obliged to approach Washington by way of Annapolis, they found the railroad destroyed, the track torn up, and the engines dismantled. At Gen. Butler's call, there stepped from the ranks, workmen skilled in every department of machinery and railroad work, and the railroad and its equipment was restored almost as fast as the troops could march.

all I knew of history and it answered with little hope. I remembered that Washington, when pressed hardest, had resolved, if need be, to retire to the fastnesses of the Alleghanies, convinced that he could there keep alive the fires of independence against the whole power of the British crown. As the forces of the world then were, he was right. Yet, ninety years later, the North hemmed in, as with a girdle of fire, that vast Southern land, and then, with lightning and steam furrowed and scourged it from center to circumference. It was the victory, not of mere men, but of the schools, not of brute force and courage, but of these spiritualized and crowned with thought and knowledge. Neither Grant, nor Sherman, nor Farragut were our greatest leaders. For above them, leading our leaders, were Fulton and Stephenson, Morse and Ericsson, marshalling the irresistible forces and enginery of this warfare—the steamers, the railway, the telegraph, and the ironclad. These were the forces that saved this Union, and the victory of the Union was the victory of the highest thought and science of modern times.

I cannot pursue these thoughts. I must, however, add that, while it is clear that education arms and qualifies a people for the highest triumphs and successes in war, this is not the highest stage of its power. War, at best, is the offspring of the old barbarism from which we slowly emerge. The promise of peace on earth will surely be fulfilled. In the eye of Infinite Reason I doubt not, that the skill and heroism that has covered any inhospitable land with refined and happy homes, or has whitened rocky and cold seas with a hardy, chivalrous, and nourishing commerce, shines with a glory greater than rests on any battlefield on earth. The policy that shall rear statesmen to whom peace and right is the supreme interest of the State; to whom national injustice is the highest national dishonor; to whom any victory is but spoil unless it vindicates the right; to whom politics are a science above the arts of the demagogue; who can secure the steady reign of the natural laws of public finance and economy, and dispel the sophisms and delusions that often wreck and always threaten legitimate business; who can so arrange the order of capital

and labor that harmony and co-operation shall supersede menace; who can lighten the necessity of toil to the limits of wholesome industry; who can teach society how to eradicate disease, or to curb its ravages; and who can broaden the pathway to culture to serve the needs and wants of all, is, I profoundly believe, better than a system that breeds generals, though as great as Cæsar or Napoleon.

There is another field which the line of our thought tempts us to enter, but where we must be content with the merest glance.

The demand for material work in the world is not diminished by the forces that science has brought under man's dominion. Newton is said to have described his own discoveries as but a child's gathering of curious shells on the seashore. Such I think is the feeling of every true explorer. Nature still abounds in forces not yet subdued to human use. We know not what may now stand waiting at the door. Edison has lately startled us with a new world, the possibilities of which no one can yet define.

Nature certainly has neither weariness nor poverty. It is only a question whether we can bring under our dominion her boundless powers and fertility. Is it too much to hope that we may yet attain such mastery, that the abundance which nature often throws down with prodigal hands, shall be made certain and constant at our bidding? If this can be secured, is it too much to hope that human wisdom can devise such wise order of distribution that want and poverty shall cease, and the shameful selfishness of inordinate accumulations become impossible? I confess that I have sometimes thought that along this path would be found the solution of social problems, which now grow more and more onerous and menacing. At any rate, whatever may be the solution, I am sure it must be found by the movement of society in an ascending and not in a descending plane. And this movement calls for the best minds and the largest men that the best education can give to the world.

But time will not permit me to pursue this further.

To sum up here, our propositions are:

1. That education is the duty of the free State, because necessary to its safety.

2. That the higher education is but a necessary part of any sufficient system of education.

3. That, historically, Michigan is pledged to provide for and maintain this complete system of education.

4. That it enhances the power and the welfare of the State in peace and in war.

5. That only by this means can we hope for that conquest over the forces of nature so necessary for the safety of society.

6. This University is not only the consummation of what has been done, but the promise of what shall be done by Michigan in the great duty of offering her children the privileges of the most liberal instruction.

And here let us turn back a little in our path.

We have seen how rapid the University was in its development. In the fall of 1850, the Medical School was opened, to be followed, nine years later, with the Law School. In 1851, there were 159 students; in 1860, 519; in five years more the number had risen to 1,000; and in 1872, to over 1,200. As they were gathered from many States, it is apparent how the circle of its fame and influence had widened.

How is it now equipped for its future work? How is it furnished with teachers, books, collections, apparatus, laboratories, and the other means which measure its teaching power?

It has an active corps of about 75 teachers.

The library contains in all about 33,000 volumes.

There is a valuable museum of Anatomy and Materia Medica:

An ample and growing Geological collection:

A Zoölogical collection, said in some respects to be superior to any other in this country:

Creditable collections of Botany, Archæology, and Art:

A most thoroughly equipped general Laboratory, with three other special Laboratories:

A fine Astronomical Observatory:

And, finally, hospitals for clinical study and practice.

This, of course, is the briefest outline of the institution of learning to which we pay honor to-day. In three short decades it has done its work so well that it has won a name that, I think, the people "will not willingly let die." It exists in no hostile jealousy, but in generous sympathy and emulation for whatever is best done elsewhere.

But it may be asked, does not this impose a heavy burthen of taxation?

Even were it so, would this be a fatal objection? Would not the just inquiry be, is it fairly worth its cost. There are few great blessings which come without cost. Nature is the only free almoner; to write and to read even, does not come by nature, whatever any Dogberry may say.

Let us count the cost. First, however, we must put one side the University fund, for the revenue from this is its own.

In 1838, to launch the University, the State made a loan of $100,000, which seems to have been all repaid. I think no other money aid was granted till 1867, when an annuity of $15,000 was voted by the Legislature. In 1873, by the grant of a tax of the one-twentieth of one mill, the amount was raised to about $31,000. In 1875, special appropriations of about $20,000 a year were added for new schools of instruction, and also a specific grant of about $26,000 for improvements on the University property. In 1877, further appropriations were made of $27,000 for that year, and $22,500 for the year 1878.

It gives me pleasure to recite this generous public aid. But surely this is not a burthen. It is but a pittance from the great wealth of the people; it is but a trifling share of the public revenue, and every dollar is certainly thrice repaid.

The equalized assessment roll of the State fixes the taxable property of the State at this time at $630,000,000. The real value of this property can hardly be less than three times that sum. But suppose it be $1,500,000,000. A tax of one-thirtieth of one mill would give $50,000, or an annuity about equal to the largest annual aid ever granted to the University.

It should shame us to call this a burthen. It is but the

sowing of a handful of seed, that we may gather the full sheaves of a precious harvest. Let us reflect on the broad stream of wholesome influence carried hence yearly by accomplished and aspiring young men. Are we proud of our wise and intelligent public opinion? Is it not largely moulded and purified by men trained here? Are we proud of the charity and humane providence of our institutions? Is not their best guide and defence the liberal learning of this place? Do all our varying religious creeds, casting out uncharitableness, unite to sweeten society? Is not much of this due to the tolerant and catholic spirit, which reigns like a benediction here? Does every calling, every industry, every art among us, feel the power of knowldge? Is it not because they are raised and led by standards held up here? Do we count the things that give us renown abroad? What of Michigan is so well and widely known as this University?

This is what has been done, and is to-day doing, through this University. And the changes lately announced here in the methods of instruction seem to me most wise. They open to each student the path to which his tastes and gifts invite him, and take from him the fetters of the old class routine. They will give, it seems to me, the impulse of a freer life and of increased power.

It should be our aim that this house of learning should, indeed, be set on a hill, that its light cannot be hid. Its doors should be wide open to the four sides of heaven, that whoso will may enter, and find the help of knowledge. I would that there should be no young man or young woman in the State, who shall really desire an education in any useful secular science, calling, art, or industry, who may not find here the amplest instruction.

It is sometimes complained that youth from other States flock hither for education. For my part, I rejoice that it is so. What splendid testimony to the work done here! What though they return to their own homes. They do not rob us by what they carry away. They are but ships, to use the imagery of Lord Bacon, which carry riches and commodities,

and consociate remote regions in the participation of fruits. Wherever they go, they go, not only better equipped for good and true service for mankind, but also as heralds of the learning and power of this University.

Indeed, I can conceive no nobler destiny for this University than that it should rise to such true eminence, as to draw votaries from the wide world; that it should hold its lamp of learning, so high, so bright, so full, that scholars from all lands should come hither to share its beams.

> "Hither, as to their fountains, other stars
> Repairing, in their golden urns draw light."

It was once gallantly said of a noble and inspiring woman, that to have loved her was to a worthy man a liberal education. So would I have it here. I would have such power dwell here, that to have studied in its halls, and breathed its atmosphere, should ennoble with a broader and higher life.

GENTLEMEN REGENTS! My final word is to you.

In the care of this University, the care of maintaining and advancing the highest forms of education in Michigan is entrusted to your hands. No more sacred trust can ever be given you. I invoke for it your utmost fidelity and wisdom. Let no personal or selfish interest divide your counsels, or betray your judgments. Let those who were its founders, and those who have been its guardians in the past, be your models. Let not one jot or tittle fail of the high hope and noble spirit with which the University was founded. Give generous sympathy and help to the lofty aims which now possess it. Let it keep full step with the best thought, enlightenment and progress of the world. Jealously guard and maintain it as a great school for true science, knowledge, and virtue, a nurse and monitor of free ideas and enlightened citizenship, and Michigan will for ever cherish it as its chief ornament and defence—*decus et tutamen.*