

ADDRESS BY GEN. C. E. HOVEY.

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE NORMAL UNIVERSITY:

We are here in obedience to a much honored custom, for the purpose of celebrating the completion of the first quarter-century of the Normal University; and I recognize the fact that I owe the honor of occupying the platform to-night to my early connection with the institution and a presumed acquaintance with the ideas on which it was founded.

It is no secret that this Normal School has achieved very considerable reputation in its department of labor. It is as well known in Washington as in Chicago. State lines have not walled in its fame, and I doubt whether Illinois can point to another institution which has done her more honor, except, always, her common schools. It, however, is one of these. The same men founded both, and maintained the right to support both at the public charge. They held that the Normal School was simply the head common school of the State.

I have thought I could not do better, on the present occasion, than to invite you to go back with me to the time when these measures, the establishment of free schools and a Normal School, were under consideration, and to introduce you to the men and ideas of that time. I admit the principle they contended about—the right to tax the whole property of the State in support of schools for the free education of every child in her borders—is no longer in issue. It has gone into your statutes and constitution, and gone there to stay. Indeed, he would be a brave man who should propose to take it out.

Similar laws, or laws for a similar purpose, more or less effective, are now on the statute books of every State and every territory of the United States of North America. By what right are they there? What right has government to take the property of one man to educate the children of another? Is not property an absolute natural right, as much as life, or liberty? When and how did government acquire the right to seize upon the property of the citizens for the support of schools—to take, by taxation, the earnings of the industrious and frugal to educate the children of the idle and thrifless?

At the time to which I invite your attention, a respectable body of the people of the State held that government had no such right, and they stoutly resisted; by words and votes, those who put forward the claim. They insisted that taxation for the support of common schools, if not tyranny, was at least an invasion of the rights of property, not warranted by anything in the social compact, and they challenged those who held the contrary opinion to an examination of fundamental principles of civil government. They pointed out the clause in the State constitution which declares "that a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles of civil government is absolutely necessary to

preserve the blessings of liberty," and they invoked those principles in aid of their side of the question. Of course, the friends of free schools had no alternative but to accept the challenge, and for a quarter of a century the contest went on.

In 1825, the Legislature, under the lead of some far-seeing statesman, passed a school law, setting out with a preamble:

"To enjoy our rights and liberties, we must understand them; their security and protection ought to be the first object of a free people; and it is a well-established fact that no nation has ever continued long in the enjoyment of civil and political freedom which was not both virtuous and enlightened; and, believing that the advancement of literature always has been and ever will be the means of developing more fully the rights of man, that the mind of every citizen in a republic is the common property of society, and constitutes the basis of its strength and happiness; therefore, be it enacted, etc."

That is pretty good doctrine, even now. The law, that followed this preamble, established a system of common schools, and authorized a majority of the legal voters in any school district to levy a tax for the support of a school in that district. It was a local matter, and depended on the voluntary action of the voters. But it recognized a principle—the right of a people in neighborhoods to tax themselves for the support of free schools in such neighborhoods.

The next Legislature, 1827, amended this law, and provided that "No person shall hereafter be taxed for the support of any free school in this State, unless by his or her own free will and consent, first had and obtained, in writing." Here was a flat denial of the right of taxation for free schools. As amended, the tax section of the school law amounted to little more than a legislative permission "to pass around the hat." Of course, the legislation of 1827 was the death of taxation for school purposes, and it maintained a place on the statute book for many years. In process of time and changes it finally disappeared, but not until 1855 did the contrary principle take its place. Then was passed the first rough draft of the present free-school law. A two-mill tax was levied on "each dollar's valuation of all the taxable property in the State" for the use and support of common schools. In 1857, under leadership of a man who is no stranger to these halls, this law was revised and its provisions harmonized. I shall read from his speech, on reporting the bill to the House, before I get through.

From 1825 to 1855, or 1827 to 1857, if you prefer, the discussion among the people as to their right, in their collective capacity as a government, to impose a tax for the support of schools, went on. It was a memorable debate. I am sorry so little of it is now available. The most of it, so far as I know, and some of the best of it, was never in print. It was carried on in cabins, in shops, in town-halls,

in churches, in school houses, on the stump and in the capitol. I remember its substance very well.

I should say in passing, that the plan of my address to-night excludes the idea of originality. I am inviting you to listen to the story as told by other men in other days, and in so far as I am compelled to vary from this rule, and to use my own words, it will be done sparingly and with ~~some~~ knowledge that I am, to that extent, detracting from the historic value of the narrative. I am compelled, however, to begin the subject with some sketches in my own language. Here is one, wherein the right of taxation-for education is deduced from the nature and objects of the social compact. I give it in outline only:

The purpose of all human government is protection. Every man has an absolute natural right to life, and liberty, and such property as he has earned or otherwise honestly acquired; and he may properly defend these against all comers. If anybody attempts to murder him he may strike back, and if, in so doing, he kills his assailant, he is held blameless. In the absence of outside aid he must maintain his rights himself, or lose them. But he may combine with others for protection, thereby forming what is called the social compact; and this combination, or compact, or government, may undertake to protect each of its members from being murdered, or enslaved, or robbed; and it may do this by any appropriate means; for instance, it may establish courts, build jails, employ judges and sheriffs and policemen. These are held to be appropriate means the world over, but they cost money, and, as their purpose and effect is to protect all alike, all may properly be required to share in the expense of supporting them, each according to his ability. This is taxation. Nobody denies its propriety. It grows out of the necessities of the case. If men were angels the case would be different, and taxation might probably be less. But these repressive agencies are not believed to be the only means adapted to the protection of society. The inventive genius of mankind has been at work to discover others less repulsive. Of course, if other means or agencies or institutions can be found which tend to protect society, they will stand on the same ground as to their right to be supported by taxation that courts and jails do.

Assuming this theory to be correct, philanthropists have undertaken to find some such other means. Observation and experiment began a long time ago. It was discovered and recorded in a very old book that a child trained up in the way he should go, would go that way. It was ascertained that the patrons of jails and prisons were generally illiterate. Acting on these hints, wise men began to devise means for training children, and abolishing illiteracy. Colleges and universities were founded, and finally, after centuries of trial and experiment, the common schools. They are proposed as a

substitute for the machinery of force, except as to the hopelessly incorrigible. Their effect is to do away with, or greatly abridge, the need of repressive agencies; and just so far as they do this, they protect society. The system is one of prevention. It undertakes to afford everybody's children an opportunity for elementary instruction and thereby help them to become good citizens, and to make free government possible. Such is an outline of the argument.

It assumed, of course, a variety of forms of statement. I remember one which struck me at the time as a little peculiar, but it was really grounded on the idea just stated. Perhaps I had better stop long enough to give this statement, as a further sample of the way the thinkers of the past generation reasoned about this matter of taxation for promoting the general welfare and the general safety. The statement to which I refer was about as follows:

The great Oxford professor, Dr. Blackstone, speaking of the absolute natural rights of man, groups them all together, under the general term, liberty. Now, liberty is the idol of mankind. Whoever can find out a means of promoting it is sure to be honored as a benefactor. For a thousand years the races to which we belong have been devising, and testing, and fighting for institutions which they believed would tend to secure for them and their posterity this supreme good. They began to formulate principles of government in the interest of liberty as far back as the middle of the eleventh century, when Henry II assembled a great council at Clarendon, and brought forward therein ordinances defining and limiting ecclesiastical authority. Half a century later, they made the plains of Runnymede forever famous as the place where the great charter of England was promulgated by King John, in the presence of the barons who had drawn it up, and a vast multitude of people.

This declaration was intended to define and protect the civil liberties of Englishmen. Its twenty-ninth chapter is regarded as the corner stone of the British constitution, and provides that no free man shall be taken, or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his property, or liberties, or outlawed, or punished in any other way, unless by the judgment of his equals or the law of the land.* Fitzwalter and the old barons did not declare for wild, unregulated liberty. They did not undertake to say that nobody should be imprisoned, or dispossessed of property or life. That was not their idea of liberty at Runnymede. But they did declare, and made their king agree, that none of these things should be done except in pursuance of law and the verdict of a jury. That was their idea of liberty six hundred years ago. It has not been much improved upon since.

Their great charter, amended and enlarged, was again promulgated in the reign of Charles I, and again on the accession of William

*"Nullus liber homo captatur, vel imprisonetur, de libero tenemento suo, vel libertatibus vel liberis consuetudinibus suis, aut utlagetur aut exulitur, aut aliquo modo destruator, nec super eum mittimus, nisi, per legali iudicium parium suorum, vel per legem terrae."

and Mary, about 1688. In all these cases the people had been obliged to recover their liberties "by intrepid councils, or by force of arms," and they undertook, by formal declarations, to construct a barrier against future encroachments.

The institution they invented and chiefly relied upon for the protection of their civil liberties has come to be known as the common law; the old barons called it the law of the land. It made use of courts and all the officers and incidents necessary to ascertain and punish violence and fraud, and to settle disputes. They held it to be no invasion of the rights of property to compel every man, according to his means, to contribute to the support of these instrumentalities, and they were right. These agents were and are necessary for liberty and safety. But it can hardly be said that they are the only ones. There may be others. The test is protection to liberty. The machinery of the common law was devised to maintain liberty among men. The machinery of the common schools does the same thing. Both stand on the same ground. It will be seen that the soundness of this view hinges upon statistics. If it is a fact, and that must be shown by statistics, that the common schools do tend to decrease the enemies of social order, and to increase the number of good citizens, then the reasoning is sound. Z

I have before me a report of Hon. J. C. Dore, first superintendent of schools for Chicago, made about the time of the passage of the free school law, which furnishes some of these statistics. He says:

"The public has rights as well as individuals, and education is the surest protection to both. It is in a very great degree the prevention of crime. Out of 28,000 convicts in the State of New York during the last ten years, previous to 1853, only one hundred and twenty-eight had received the advantages of a good common school education. More than two hundred uneducated persons became convicts to every one who had received a common school education. In view of these facts, who will hesitate to acknowledge that our public school system is the security of the State, and that the public has a right to demand, and enforce, if need be, the attendance at school of every child of school-going age, until a common school education is insured? Suffering children to grow up in ignorance is doing violence to society. Who can tell how many thousands, pests to society, rendering necessary policemen by day, and sentinels by night, and courts of justice through the year for public protection, would have made inoffensive citizens had they possessed a good public school education? Who can number the murders perpetrated, thefts committed, crimes and misdemeanors of every name and nature, that never would have been, had the guilty availed themselves of the advantages of the public schools? * * * * *

"In a country of free competition and equal rights, where 'every man is heir to the highest honors of the State,' a good education is indispensable to the full enjoyment of those rights. Places of honor, trust, and profit, can be filled only by persons qualified to perform the duties peculiar to such positions. It is in the public schools that the great majority of children and youth are to be educated, if at all. The question then comes home to every patriotic and philanthropic citizen, shall they be educated? * * * * *

"The United States exhibit the relation of public education to free institutions. Their public school systems are the result of the grandest conception of modern times, and may yet make the tour of the world."

So said John C. Dore, nearly thirty years ago, and since that time the system has been spreading. And who shall say that it will not yet make the tour of the world? But I should mislead if I confined myself to a statement of fundamental principles and to the reports of school officers. There was an exceedingly practical side to the debate which cropped out, more particularly in State Legislatures. I am glad to be able to present this phase of the great common school contest in the words of one of its most celebrated combatants. (He did not reside in this State, and the speech from which I quote was a little earlier in date than the chief discussion here, but it covers the same ground.) It was the same contest.)

Pennsylvania had passed a free school law, and the hosts of ignorance had rallied and demanded its repeal. In answer to that demand, Thaddeus Stevens said (I give only a part):

"Mr. Speaker: I will briefly give you the reasons why I shall oppose the repeal of the school law.

"It would seem to be humiliating to be under the necessity, in the nineteenth century, of entering into a formal argument to prove the utility, and, to free governments, the absolute necessity of education. More than two thousand years ago, the Deity who presided over intellectual endowments, ranked highest among the goddesses worshipped by cultivated Pagans. And I will not insult this House, or our constituents, by supposing any course of reasoning necessary to convince *them* of its high importance. If an elective republic is to endure for any great length of time, every elector must have sufficient information, not only to accumulate wealth and take care of his pecuniary concerns, but to direct wisely the Legislature, the ambassadors, and the executive of the nation, for some part of all these things, some agency, in approving or disapproving of them, falls to every freeman. If, then, the permanency of our government depends upon such knowledge, it is the duty of government to see that the means of information be diffused to every citizen. This is a sufficient answer to those who deem education a private and not a public duty—who argue that they are willing to educate their own children, but not their neighbors' children.

“The amendment which is now proposed as a substitute for the school law of last session is, in my opinion, of a most hateful and degrading character. It is a re-enactment of the pauper law of 1809. It proposes that the assessors shall take a census, and make a record of the poor. This shall be revised, and a new record made by the county commissioners, so that the names of those who have the misfortune to be poor men’s children, shall be forever preserved, as a distinct class, in the archives of the country! Sir, hereditary distinctions of rank are sufficiently odious, but that which is founded on poverty is infinitely more so. Such a law should be entitled ‘an act for branding and marking the poor, so that they may be known from the rich and proud.’

“Many complain of this tax, not so much on account of its amount, as because it is for the benefit of others, and not themselves. This is a mistake; it is for their own benefit, inasmuch as it perpetuates the government and ensures the due administration of the laws under which they live, and by which their lives and property are protected.

“This law is often objected to, because its benefits are shared by the children of the profligate spendthrift equally with those of the most industrious and economical habits. It ought to be remembered that the benefit is bestowed, not upon the erring parents, but the innocent children.

“It is said that its advantages will be unjustly and unequally enjoyed, because the industrious, money-making man keeps his whole family constantly employed, and has but little time for them to spend at school, while the idle man has but little employment for his family and they will constantly attend school. I know, sir, that there are some men whose whole souls are completely absorbed in the accumulation of wealth, and whose avarice so increases with success that they look upon their children in no other light than as instruments of gain; that they, as well as the ox and the ass within their gates, are valuable only in proportion to their annual earnings. And, according to the present system, the children of such men are reduced almost to an intellectual level with their co-laborers of the brute creation. The law will be of vast advantage to the offspring of such misers. If they are compelled to pay their taxes to support schools, their very meanness will induce them to send their children to the schools to get the worth of their money.

“In New England, free schools plant the seeds and the desire of knowledge in every mind, without regard to the wealth of the parent or the texture of the pupil’s garments. It is no uncommon occurrence to see the poor man’s son, thus encouraged by wise legislation, far outstrip and bear off the laurels from the less industrious heirs of wealth. Some of the ablest men of the present and past days never could have been educated except for that benevolent system. Not to mention any of the living, it is well known that the architect of an

" immortal name, who 'plucked the lightnings from heaven, and the sceptre from tyrants,' was a child of free schools.

" But we are told that this law is unpopular; that the people desire its repeal. But, sir, much of its unpopularity is chargeable upon the vile arts of unprincipled demagogues. I do not charge this upon any particular party. Unfortunately, almost the only spot on which all parties meet in union is this ground of common infamy. I have seen the present chief magistrate of this commonwealth violently assailed as the projector and father of this law. I am not the eulogist of that gentleman; he has been guilty of many deep political sins; but he deserves the undying gratitude of the people for the steady, untiring zeal which he has manifested in favor of common schools. I trust that the people of this State will never be called on to choose between a supporter and an opposer of free schools. But if it should come to that; if that should be made the turning point on which we are to cast our suffrages; if the opponent of education were my most intimate personal and political friend, and the free school candidate my most obnoxious enemy, I should deem it my duty as a patriot, at this moment of our intellectual crisis, to forget all other considerations, and I should place myself unhesitatingly and cordially in the ranks of him whose banner streams in light.

" It is said that some gentlemen lost their election by being in favor of the school law. I believe that is true of the two highly respected members of the last Legislature from Union County. They were summoned before a county meeting and requested to pledge themselves to vote for its repeal as the price of their reelection. But they were too high-minded and honorable to consent to such degradation. They fell, it is true, in this great struggle between the powers of light and darkness; but they fell, as every Roman mother wished her sons to fall, facing the enemy, with all their wounds in front.

" True it is, that two other gentlemen, and I believe two only, lost their election on account of their votes on that question. I refer to the late members from Berks, who were candidates for reelection; and I regret that gentlemen whom I so highly respect, and whom I take pleasure in ranking among my personal friends, had not possessed a little more nerve to enable them to withstand the assaults which were made upon them; or, if they must be overpowered, to wrap their mantles gracefully around them and yield with dignity. But this, I am aware, requires a high degree of fortitude; and those respected gentlemen, distracted and faltering between the dictates of conscience and the clamor of the populace, at length turned and fled; but duty had detained them so long that they fled too late, and the shaft which had already been winged by ignorance, overtook and pierced them from behind.

" I am happy to say, sir, that a more fortunate fate awaited our

// friends from York. Possessing a keener insight into futurity, and a
 // sharper instinct of danger, they saw the peril at a greater distance,
 // and retreated in time to escape the fury of the storm, and can now
 // safely boast that "discretion is the better part of valor," and that
 // "they fought and ran away," "and lived to fight—on t' other side."
 // Sir, it is to be regretted that any gentleman should have consented
 // to place his election on hostility to general education. But will this
 // Legislature, guardians of the dearest interests of a great common-
 // wealth, consent to surrender the high advantages and brilliant pros-
 // pects which this law promises because it is desired by worthy gentle-
 // men who, in a moment of causeless panic and popular delusion, sailed
 // into power on a Tartarean flood? A flood of ignorance, darker, and
 // to the intelligent mind, more dreadful than that accursed pool at
 // which mortals and immortals tremble! Sir, it seems to me that the
 // liberal and enlightened proceedings of the last Legislature have
 // aroused the demon of ignorance from his slumber; and, maddened
 // at the threatened loss of his murky empire, his discordant howlings
 // are heard in every part of our land.

"The barbarous and disgraceful cry 'that learning makes us
 // worse; that education makes men rogues,' should find no echo within
 // these walls. Those who hold such doctrines anywhere, would be the
 // objects of bitter detestation, if they were not rather the pitiable
 // objects of compassion, for even voluntary fools require our compas-
 // sion, as well as natural idiots.

"In giving this law to posterity, you act the part of the
 // philanthropist and philosopher. Those who would add thereto the
 // glory of the hero, can acquire it here; for in the present state of
 // feeling in Pennsylvania, I am willing to admit that but little less
 // dangerous to the public man is the war-club and battle-axe of savage
 // ignorance, than to the lion-hearted Richard was the keen scimeter of
 // the Saracen. He who would oppose it, either through inability to
 // comprehend the advantages of general education, or from unwilling-
 // ness to bestow them on all his fellow-citizens, even to the lowest and
 // the poorest, or from dread of popular vengeance, seems to me to
 // want either the head of the philosopher, the heart of the philan-
 // thropist, or the nerve of the hero."

Such was the language of the men who fought the great battle of
 free schools. It was the same battle in Illinois as in Pennsylvania,
 and was won in the same way in both States.

Suppose you join me on a trip to Springfield, and having made
 yourselves comfortable in the gallery of the old capitol, as it was
 in February, 1857, turn your attention to the proceedings going on
 in the hall below. A man of medium size, wearing spectacles, rises
 to address the assembled legislators. It is evident that some measure
 of more than usual interest is about to be considered, or that some
 man of more than usual ability is about to speak; probably both.

The members have discontinued their letter-writing and are giving attention:

"Mr. Speaker: As chairman of the House committee on education, it becomes my duty to explain the changes made in the present school law by the joint committee of both houses," began Hon. S. W. Moulton, of Shelby. "I believe I may say with truth that out of the one hundred members of this Legislature, there are none but are in favor of taxation for the support of common schools."

Recollect it is now in 1857. The great struggle of a quarter of a century culminated two years before when the two-mill tax was put upon the statute-book. The questions now at issue have reference to perfecting the law and distributing the fund. Mr. Moulton continues:

"The friends of this bill assume, as the true principles that should govern its distribution (the tax), that two-thirds be distributed upon population equally all over the State, and one third upon territory. Those who oppose this distribution adopt the amendment proposed by the late superintendent, viz.: That the amount of the two-mill tax collected in each county should be repaid to the several counties without regard to population, or other circumstances. This is the statement of the question.

"Mr. Speaker, I presume but little difference of opinion exists as to the true object of the two-mill tax—that of providing means for the education of all the children of the State, and that each child is of right entitled to an equal share of the tax, without regard to condition or locality, or from what particular part of the State it was collected. This principle has its foundation in the fact that every child has an absolute right to an education at the hands of somebody, to an extent that shall properly qualify him to discharge his duties as a citizen. Experience shows that when education is left to the voluntary actions of parents and others, it is greatly neglected, and amounts almost to a failure. Children come into the world in a helpless condition, and remain so for years. They cannot educate themselves any more than they can provide for themselves food and clothing. Hence, the duty and necessity of government, providing by general laws, ample means for their education. This can only be done by taxation; and I hold that, as this tax is collected by the same persons and in the same manner as all other State taxes are, it should be disbursed upon the same principle, without regard to where, from what person, or from what county or locality collected; and that any other principle of disbursement operates unequally and unjustly.

"The tax being collected from all the property of the State, and the object being the education of all the children of the State, it seems to me that it follows as an irresistible conclusion, that each child is entitled to an equal *pro rata* share of all the money

" collected; that if the aggregate amount collected is equal to five
 " dollars for each child, then that is the amount that each child is
 " entitled to, without regard to any other circumstances, and especially
 " whether one county pays more or less than another.

" If property is to educate the children of a State, then the rich
 " counties ought to pay more than the poor counties, because they have
 " more to pay with, just as the rich man pays more than the poor man.
 " No county or individual has an absolute and unlimited control over
 " property. It may be regarded as held in trust for certain purposes.
 " The right of every child in the land to be educated is one of these,
 " and of primary importance, upon which our government stands.
 " This great principle, I trust, will never be subverted and lost sight of
 " by the adoption of the principle that particular localities shall receive
 " back just what they pay, which amounts to no taxation at all."

" Mr. Speaker, I desire only to say a word as to the result of
 " the free school experiment in this State. Two years since the system
 " was adopted, and it went into operation under not very favorable
 " auspices. It was rather a novel thing to many of our citizens, some
 " of them being greatly prejudiced against it; and besides, there were
 " many defects and objectionable things in the old law. But, notwith-
 " standing the many disadvantages of the old law, the expectation of
 " its friends had been more than realized. The people have been
 " aroused from the apathy that enthralled them; they have been
 " brought into direct contact with the system, good or bad, for when a
 " people are taxed for a thing, they become interested in it. The
 " result seems to be that the great mass of the people everywhere are
 " in favor of continuing the two-mill tax, and differ only about the
 " details of the law. It is a remarkable fact, worthy of all remem-
 " brance, that no State or people who have once adopted a free school
 " system ever abandoned it."

The chairman is supported by Dr. Gowdy and others, and
opposed by Mr. Sparks and others, but his bill prevails and "is
passed;" and from that event I date the real beginning of the
grandest institution of the State, her free schools.

You will see that I have now called attention to early legisla-
 tion in the State wherein taxation for the support of schools was
 directly drawn in issue; to the reasoning from fundamental principles
 of civil government by which the friends of free schools undertook to
 justify them; to a report of a school officer, Hon. J. C. Dore,
 twenty-seven years ago; to a speech on the merits of the free school
 system, by Hon. Thaddeus Stevens; and to a speech on perfecting and
 harmonizing our own system, by Hon. S. W. Moulton. This is as
 full and fair a presentation as I am able to make in the time allotted.

I now come to a separate consideration of the head school of the
system, and I can not better introduce the subject than by stating the
idea of a Normal School as understood at the time it was established.

their maintenance at the public charge

Fortunately, I can do so in the words then used. I quote from the *Illinois Teacher*:

"The idea of Normal Schools is a very simple idea. It proceeds
"merely upon the ground that a man may profit by the experience of
"other men, as well as by his own; not by the experience of one
"predecessor alone, but of a whole lineage of them; not by the
"experience of one contemporary alone, but of any contemporaries
"who know more, on any common point between them, than he does.
"Now, the person who denies the utility of Normal Schools, under-
"takes to refute such a proposition. He affirms that one man cannot
"derive knowledge from the experience of others; that Tubal Cain
"made as good household or agricultural implements as can now be
"found in Chicago, reaping machines included. He undertakes to
"show that Fulton's first steamboat, which went from New York to
"Albany at the rate of four and a half miles an hour, was equal to
"those which now shoot, arrow-like, up and down the Mississippi. In
"a word, he denies that experience teaches, and that light enlightens.
"The object of Normal Schools is to teach teachers how to teach."

Such was a teachers' idea of Normal Schools as he wrote it twenty-
five years ago. The Industrial League, an important organization,
took a similar view of professional schools, as appears from its
memorial to the Legislature in 1853. They say: "We, the members
"of the industrial classes are still compelled to work empirically and
"blindly, without needful books, schools or means, by the slow process
"of that individual experience that lives and dies with the man. Our
"professional brethren, through their universities, books and teachers,
"combine and concentrate the practical experience of ages in each
"man's life."

Such was their idea. These people seem to have thought that
one man might learn something from the experience of another, and
one generation from the experience of another generation; and that
it was worth while to gather up these experiences and make them
available. They thought they could do this, as the doctors and
lawyers and ministers had done it; by establishing professional
schools.

The great thinker and orator of that day, on these questions—the man who towered above his fellows like a Colossus—was Professor John B. Turner. His speech to the farmers and mechanics at Granville, in 1851, set in motion a movement which spread and strengthened until finally Congress responded by endowing professional schools for the industrial classes in all the States. From the first, Prof. Turner placed a Normal College at the head of the colleges or departments of his proposed university. The League was a unit on that question. Arny, Murray, Pennell, Kennicott, Rutherford, Minier—all agreed. A committee of the State Senate, to whom was referred their memorial, reported in 1854, I think, that

“in education, as in all other subjects, there are certain truths that
 // are self-evident, or at least so nearly so, that they are admitted as
 // axioms by all men acquainted with the subject. One of these self-
 // evident propositions is, that the teacher must exist before the scholar
 // can be taught. Whoever, therefore, would begin at the foundation
 // of any system of public instruction must provide the means for
 // furnishing a supply of competent teachers; and without these, it is
 // equally self-evident that any system of common school instruction,
 // however wise in its laws or ample in its expenditures, or free and
 // accessible to rich and poor, will prove a useless tax on the one, and
 // a waste of time, if not a nuisance, to the other.”

How much have you improved on these “self-evident” propositions during the last quarter of a century? The statesmen who signed that report were George Gage, John D. Arnold and Joseph Morton.

I have drawn attention to the Industrial League because it had considerable influence in preparing the way for the Normal School. I must, also, refer to some facts about the State school funds. From time to time, as money accrued to these funds from the sale of lands, the Legislature appropriated it to the ordinary expenses of government; and directed the State Treasurer to enter on his books the amount, so appropriated, to the credit of the funds; and thereafter the State paid interest on the amount so taken and used, and applied it to the support of the common schools. There were three of these State school funds, but the interest on the college and on the seminary funds was consolidated with the interest on the common school fund, and disbursed for the support of the common schools.

Against this illegal diversion of the interest on the college and seminary funds, the League was the first to protest. In one of its memorials to the Legislature, it explains how the funds were being frittered away: “The annual interest on the university fund is about
 // nine thousand dollars. If this should be divided between ten or
 // fifteen colleges (as was proposed by some), it would give them only
 // from six hundred to nine hundred dollars each per annum. Divided
 // among one hundred counties (as was proposed by others), it would
 // give them only ninety dollars each for a high school, or other pur-
 // pose. Divided, as it now is, among the million of our people, it gives
 // nine mills, or less than one cent, to each person.”

Plainly the fund was not large enough to be of any great account to the common schools directly; and it was not intended by Congress to be so applied. In the special report to the State Senate, from which I have quoted, this matter was considered and the committee said:

“The universities and higher schools of Europe, and of the
 // older States of this continent, were founded long before any attempt
 // was made at a thorough system of common schools, and through

" them teachers were prepared to descend into, create, and instruct all
 " departments below. If any State ever can secure a good system of
 " common schools, for the people, by any other process, it is certain no
 " one yet has done it, nor is it easy to see or imagine how it can
 " be done.

"In accordance with this view, and in distinct recognition of
 " this great fact, Congress granted to each new State of the west three
 " separate funds,—university, seminary, and common school,—well
 " knowing that the experience of the civilized world demonstrates the
 " need of three departments in education as well as of three depart-
 " ments in the government of a free State.

"It is believed that no State but our own has ever attempted to
 " reverse this decision of law, and our success so far in this enterprise
 " is, to say the least, not very flattering."

So the report was adverse to the practice of applying the
 proceeds of the college and seminary funds to the support of the
 common schools, but it was made too late in the session for action,
 and the matter went over to the next Legislature.

Meanwhile, a new power had been growing up in the State. It
 found public expression through the State Teachers' Association.
 You know the men, Simeon Wright, Newton Bateman, S. M. Etter,
D. S. Wentworth, William H. Wells, B. G. Roots, L. H. Potter,
W. H. Haskell, J. Stone, Jr. I need not read the roll. It is a long
 one, and an honorable one. These men took counsel together at
 Chicago, in December, 1856, as to what had better be done or recom-
 mended. It was at a crisis in the intellectual history of the State.
 The free school law, then lately enacted, was on trial. It was crude
 in many provisions, and had some serious defects, chief of which
 was the total omission to provide any means for keeping up a supply
 of competent teachers, and the *esprit de corps* of the profession.

One result of that conference—that meeting of the Teachers'
Association at Chicago, in 1856—became public a few weeks later, at
 Springfield, where the legislators had assembled. The bill, which
 disclosed the views and wishes of the Chicago conference of teachers,
 was entitled "An Act for the establishment and maintenance of a
Normal University," and it called out a somewhat extended discus-
 sion of the nature and office of Normal Schools, and of their
 practicability and expediency. I have been unable to procure but
 one of the speeches delivered on that occasion, and from that must
 infer the tenor of the others—*ex uno disce omnes*. The speech
 which I have was made by Hon. C. B. Denio, of Jo Daviess:

"Mr. Speaker: "I had not intended to make any remarks on
 " this bill, but since my name appears as one of the corporators, and
 " after the unwarrantable insinuation of the gentleman from Union,
 " that some gentlemen upon this floor are influenced in their support of
 " this measure because their names are included among the corporators,

// I deem it due to myself to state my position to this House, and give a
 // few reasons for the hearty support I shall lend this measure. I
 // happen, unlike the honorable gentleman from Union, to be numbered
 // among those who, in early life, were deprived of the advantages of
 // even a common school education. Had I enjoyed the advantages of
 // that gentleman in my youth, and, sir, had I been favored with the
 // long legislative experience of that gentleman, I might to-day realize
 // less keenly than I do, my inexperience and want of these advan-
 // tages; and, sir, I might be found battling on this floor, side by side
 // with that gentleman, against extending to others those privileges
 // which are the freeman's shield and the safeguard of the State. But,
 // Mr. Speaker, in my time and in that part of the country where I was
 // raised, one might travel a whole day and not find the sign of a
 // school house; or, if he did, it would be only a little log hut, window-
 // less and doorless. But, sir, a new era is dawning. Within two years,
 // and since the passage of the law which the honorable gentleman only
 // a few days ago voted against, school houses have sprung up in every
 // part of the State, and by this time, perhaps, they have one even in
 // Jonesboro.

// "Now, sir, so far as the objection to this application of the
 // interest of these 'sacred' funds is concerned, it seems to me that
 // some gentlemen have all at once become wonderfully fearful that the
 // 'sacred' fund (as they are pleased to call it) will be diverted from its
 // legitimate channel. Why, sir, by reference to the journal of this
 // Legislature some years since, I find that the gentleman from Union,
 // and his political friends were feasting on oysters by appropriations
 // from this same 'sacred' fund! And now, because it is proposed,
 // after the lapse of nearly fifty years, to turn the interest of these funds
 // to their legitimate course, the gentleman holds up his hands in holy
 // horror.

// "Mr. Dougherty: Can the gentleman from Jo Daviess state the
 // amount belonging to these funds appropriated at any one time by
 // the State?

// "Mr. Denio: I will answer the gentleman by saying that,
 // whether I can state the exact amount taken at any one time or not,
 // does not matter, so far as the fact is concerned that the State has used
 // up all these sacred funds, and grudgingly paid into the common
 // school fund six per cent. only. And who are the gentlemen in this
 // House mostly implicated in this matter? If you will go with me to
 // the office below (the office of the Secretary of State was under the
 // hall of the House) you will see by the names that the persons who
 // are now so fearful that the school fund will be diverted from its
 // legitimate direction, were in former years willing to pay themselves
 // out of that fund; and chose to do so rather than take the responsi-
 // bility of taxing the people. I suppose they acted in view of the fact
 // that the little boys and girls could not vote, and their fathers could.

"What does this bill do? Sir, it proposes to educate teachers for the people's colleges. For these schools we must have teachers, and I think we should have western teachers, educated here at home. True, Governor Slade has done well in sending westward young women who not only make good teachers, but good wives. But I am not disposed to depend forever on such efforts. It is due to the State of Illinois that she take a nobler stand, and provide the means for educating her own young men and women to become teachers.

"The gentleman says we can not educate enough teachers to satisfy one-tenth of the wants of the State. I have not the slightest hope that this school can furnish a teacher for every school in the State; but it can and will, in a few years, furnish one, perhaps two, for every county. Their knowledge will become available to other teachers, and in this way the Normal School will multiply its usefulness.

"But," says my friend from Union, "there is no guaranty that these men will continue to teach after they are prepared in this school." In reply to this I have only to say that that will depend entirely on whether or not we are willing to pay them a reasonable compensation.

"Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised that the speech just delivered by my friend from Coles should for a moment have disturbed or alarmed the friends of the bill before the House. It is true, he has made a speech against the bill; but this, to me, is a promise of a good time coming. I argue from the fact that he has spoken against the bill, that we may depend upon his vote with us for the bill. This has been the gentleman's way of doing business all winter. He has always convinced himself while speaking that he was wrong, and then voted against his own speech. I am not looking for a departure from his usual practice. I expect his vote for the measure."

I have a dim recollection that the gentleman from Jo Daviess once told me that the gentleman from Coles went back on him, and ruined his reputation as a prophet, by voting against the bill.

"There are certain reasons," continued Mr. Denio, "why I wish to see this bill become a law. It is not in all respects the thing I am in favor of, or have been in favor of. I have been, and am now, of the opinion that something like an Industrial University, on the plan of Prof. Turner, was demanded and should be adopted; and, acting on that opinion, I introduced the following resolution into the Legislature, in February, 1853, and it was adopted unanimously by that body:

"Resolved, by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein, That our senators in Congress be instructed, and our representatives be requested, to use their best exertions to procure the passage of a law of Congress, donating to each State in the Union

“an amount of public lands not less in value than five hundred thousand dollars, for the endowment of a system of Industrial Universities, one in each State, for the more liberal and practical education of our industrial classes and their teachers.

“This resolution was presented to Congress by Hon. E. B. Washburn, of my district, and the lands were asked for, but nothing has yet been done.”

I call attention to the dates. Prof. Turner outlined his plan for a University in 1851. In 1853, February 8, the State Legislature took action. These were the first steps taken anywhere, so far as I know, to procure an endowment by Congress for Industrial Universities in the several States.

“At that time, 1853, it was thought best to take a part of the University and Seminary funds to start such an institution. But there were too many ‘old fogies’ in the Legislature, and too many men in Congress who preferred to attend to the interests of railroad companies rather than the interests of the people and their education. So nothing was done. We now have a chance to do something to promote the welfare of the common schools, by furnishing them with competent teachers, educated at home. I shall give the measure my hearty support.”

So spoke Denio. I have the speech of no other member, and did not, myself, hear the debate; but I understood, at the time, that it took a wide range, covering the theory of professional schools as well as the manner and means of their establishment and maintenance.

On the eighteenth day of February, 1857, this Normal University Act took its place upon the statute book “as an appendix to the school law; and on the fifth day of October following, its first class, or part of it, assembled for the first time. The meeting took place in the third story of a plain brick building, standing a little off from the principal street in Bloomington, and known as Major’s Hall. This hall had, theretofore, become historic as the birth place of a powerful political party in the State; and, more particularly, as the place where the grandest man of modern times had delivered an oration in behalf of liberty. It now became the scene of another event, quite unlike the former in outward demonstrations, but destined, I think, to be remembered as long.

Had you been there on that October morning, five and twenty years ago, you would have seen ten young men and seventeen young women grouped together on the benches, looking inquiringly towards Ira Moore and the principal sitting on the platform. That and there was the beginning. The names of those young people, or of some of them, head the column of your alumni. The two men on the platform saw, or thought they saw, in the faces before them a promise of coming honor to the institution. They believed in its

growth, not as a sudden creation of a magic palace, but as the slow-coming result of hard work on a good plan. I think I may say, they, and their associates, were much in earnest. They had faith. Theirs was the glowing expectancy with which Romulus and Remus began to build, about the shepherds' huts upon the seven hills near the Tiber, the walls which afterwards sheltered imperial Rome.

In the quarter of a century of its existence, by the silent processes of a natural evolution, the Normal University has grown to be an important radiating centre of educational thought. Its graduates have gone abroad over the State, but loyally return from time to time to pay their tribute of affection and esteem. For them and for myself, I tender that tribute to-night.

ADDRESS OF RICHARD EDWARDS, LL. D.

When men are to be urged forward to the achievement of some high purpose, when the deeds under discussion are as yet unperformed, he who addresses a public assembly has need of skill in arranging his facts, and eloquence in uttering them. At such a time, the purpose of the speaker is to arouse his hearers into the right kind of activity, to awaken within them the required enthusiasm. But this is not our task to-day. Not of the future, but of the past, are we to speak on this anniversary. We need the spirit and bearing, not of the ecstatic seer, peering into the hidden depths of the time to come, but of the calm and truthful historian, reviewing the records of years gone by. And it is a positive luxury to feel that for once we are not to address ourselves to legislators, from whom an appropriation is expected, nor to a crowd of indifferent people whose torpid interest in education, or at least in the Normal University, it is necessary to kindle into life. Not that we have cause to complain of the way in which the appeals of the past have been met, either by citizens or law-makers. Both have dealt generously with this institution in the quarter century which ends to-day. Its friends have been grandly true to it, both in Springfield and throughout the State. But there is a refreshing sense of relief in the thought that we are discussing things accomplished, and not things hoped for. And the aim of this paper shall be to present as plain and impartial a statement as possible of the most significant facts in the history of the institution during the period—nearly fourteen years—of the writer's connection therewith.

That connection began on the seventeenth day of March, 1862, when I took the place on the faculty which had just been vacated by Mr. John Hull. My duty was to hear the classes in mathematics, and to give instruction in the Theory and Art of Teaching. At this time, Mr. Perkins Bass, a member of the Board of Education, was acting