

ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

104

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Commissioner of Education



P. 31-26563

1911—1912

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STATE OF NEW YORK
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY

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ALL PEOPLE AND ALL EDUCATION

ALL PEOPLE AND ALL EDUCATION¹

It is a genuine satisfaction to participate in your celebration of the accomplishments of the first twenty-five years in the life of this young university. As universities go, Temple University is yet very young. I have wandered about the halls of universities that have been six hundred or eight hundred years in the building. The oldest of our American universities is looking forward to its three hundredth anniversary. It certainly takes time to develop a great university, but we in America have a way of building universities more rapidly than they do in other lands or than they used to do in this country. That fact finds splendid illustration in the growth of this institution. Our celebration will not recall history and tradition very much; it will not be very boastful of gray-headed "old grads" gone to the United States Senate or Supreme Court; it will not be a solemn festival where old men have all the good seats and indulge in reminiscences; but it will be a sort of hilarious expression of the energy, the accomplishments, the hopes, and the determination of youth. While I am no longer a young man as years go, I am bound to say that this kind of a celebration is not without exceedingly attractive features.

Temple University is not only young; it is democratic. It is not exclusive socially or educationally. It gives warm welcome to all who can do its work. It recognizes the fact that work done gives the best promise of the power to do, and it therefore regards records and certificates; but it does not believe, or even half-way believe, that the people of the United States are to be classified and one class educated and another not; and it does not believe, or even half-way believe, that all education worth the name is ancient and literary, and that all education that is modern or industrial is hardly worth the having. On the contrary, it believes that every one should have his chance; that the door of opportunity should open to the earnest purpose and to the power to do; and that the education which enters into life and makes life better worth the living is the education that is of the most worth and that most surely concerns American universities.

These two facts, the youth and the democracy of this institu-

¹ Abstract of address given at the silver anniversary and founder's day exercises of Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa., on February 11, 1911.

tion, give the stranger within your gates the theme for his observations upon your silver anniversary.

It is impossible, and it ought to be impossible, that wealth shall be evenly distributed, or at least shall long remain evenly distributed, among men and women. Social and industrial communities with a common treasury in which all the members have equal rights are chimerical and transitory because unjust. The personal equation is a rightful factor in determining individual progress and human situations. That is true of this country above any other country, because here ambitions are always rife, opportunities are always open, and things are always moving, while in other countries the individual status is very fixed, opportunities are very infrequent, and the affairs of the people move slowly and laboriously. Of course the results are in both directions. There are not many of us who have reached middle life or gone beyond it, who have not seen fortunes disappear and names lose their significance, and who have not also seen competencies accumulated and new names made great. It is the result of our natural physical resources, our mingling of different nationalities, our universal ambitions, our religious toleration, our political institutions, and our continued activity. It is so for the first time in human history, and it is right. Genius, gifts, studiousness, learning, craftsmanship, assiduity, probity, and prudence are entitled not only to their accumulations but also to have their accumulations protected. Incapacity and shiftlessness are bound to suffer their inevitable consequences. But in this country every one must have his chance and then he must take the consequences. It is good American doctrine that there shall be equality of legal right, that the common power shall not help one and hinder another, and that upon that basis every one must accept the consequences and keep the peace.

This relates to education as to any other kind of riches; and it has been and is to be more of a matter to work out this principle as to education in America than most people are accustomed to think.

Temple University is not only a new and possibly a somewhat unique university, but it is in a new and somewhat unique country. In situation and relations and purposes and institutions this country is to be distinguished from all other countries. It may not in all things be better than all other countries, but it is certainly in very many things very different from any other country, and of course we believe that it averages a little better than any other.