

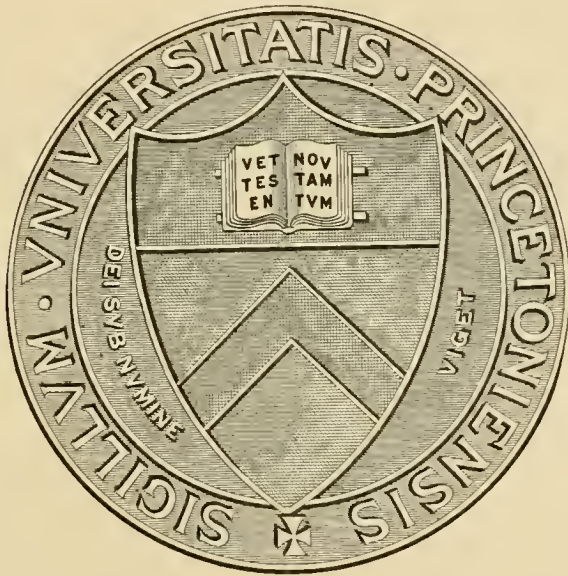


MEMORIAL BOOK

OF

THE SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE FOUNDING OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY AND OF THE CEREMONIES INAUGURATING

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



PUBLISHED FOR
THE TRUSTEES OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK
MDCCCXCVIII

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a command. We are, however, much gratified that we meet this morning in the favoring presence of the Chief Magistrate of our country. It would have pleased us to honor ourselves in honoring him, and in so doing to bear public testimony to our high appreciation of his public services and strong, patriotic position in this, the hour of his nation's trial. We thank him with full and overflowing hearts to-day for leaving the cares of executive business in order that he may grace our academic festival, and we thank him for the willingness that he has expressed in response to our urgent invitation to say a few words on this occasion which inaugurates Princeton University.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I have the great honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

When President Cleveland arose the entire audience rose to greet him, and burst into enthusiastic and deafening applause. The Princeton cheer, with the conclusion "Cleveland, Cleveland, Cleveland," rang with perfect solidity and unanimity of sound from gallery and house alike. Ladies clapped their hands and waved their handkerchiefs. The ovation continued until the President was manifestly touched and gratified. Finally, when the orchestra drowned the cheering with a few strains of "Hail Columbia," in the midst of breathless silence he read slowly and impressively the following words :

MR. PRESIDENT AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

As those in different occupations and with different training each see most plainly in the same landscape view those features which are the most nearly related to their several habitual environments, so, in our contemplation of an event or an occasion, each individual

especially observes and appreciates, in the light his mode of thought supplies, such of its features and incidents as are most in harmony with his mental situation.

To-day, while all of us warmly share the general enthusiasm and felicitation which pervade this assemblage, I am sure its various suggestions and meanings assume a prominence in our respective fields of mental vision dependent upon their relation to our experience and condition. Those charged with the management and direction of the educational advantages of this noble institution most plainly see, with well-earned satisfaction, proofs of its growth and usefulness, and its enhanced opportunities for doing good. The graduate of Princeton sees first the evidence of a greater glory and prestige that have come to his Alma Mater, and the added honor thence reflected upon himself, while those still within her student halls see most prominently the promise of an increased dignity which awaits their graduation from Princeton University.

But there are others here, not of the family of Princeton, who see with an interest not to be outdone the signs of her triumphs on the fields of higher education, and the part she has taken during her long and glorious career in the elevation and betterment of a great people. Among these I take an humble place, and as I yield to the influences of this occasion, I cannot resist the train of thought which especially reminds me of the promise of national safety, and the guaranty of the permanence of our free institutions, which may and ought to radiate from the universities and colleges scattered throughout our land.

Obviously a government resting upon the will and universal suffrage of the people has no anchorage except in the people's intelligence. While the advantages of a

collegiate education are by no means necessary to good citizenship, yet the college graduate, found everywhere, cannot smother his opportunities to teach his fellow-countrymen and influence them for good, nor hide his talents in a napkin, without recreancy to a trust.

In a nation like ours, charged with the care of numerous and widely varied interests, a spirit of conservatism and toleration is absolutely essential. A collegiate training, the study of principles unvexed by distracting and misleading influences, and a correct apprehension of the theories upon which our republic is established, ought to constitute the college graduate a constant monitor, warning against popular rashness and excess.

The character of our institutions and our national self-interest require that a feeling of sincere brotherhood and a disposition to unite in mutual endeavor should pervade our people. Our scheme of government in its beginning was based upon this sentiment, and its interruption has never failed, and can never fail, to grievously menace our national health. Who can better caution against passion and bitterness than those who know by thought and study their baneful consequences, and who are themselves within the noble brotherhood of higher education?

There are natural laws and economic truths which command implicit obedience, and which should unalterably fix the bounds of wholesome popular discussion and the limits of political strife. The knowledge gained in our universities and colleges would be sadly deficient if its beneficiaries were unable to recognize and point out to their fellow-citizens these truths and natural laws, and to teach the mischievous futility of their non-observance or attempted violation.

The activity of our people, and their restless desire to gather to themselves especial benefits and advantages, lead to the growth of an unconfessed tendency to regard their government as the giver of private gifts, and to look upon the agencies for its administration as the distributors of official places and preferment. Those who in university or college have had an opportunity to study the mission of our institutions, and who in the light of history have learned the danger to a people from their neglect of the patriotic care they owe the national life entrusted to their keeping, should be well fitted to constantly admonish their fellow-citizens that the usefulness and beneficence of their plan of government can only be preserved through their unselfish and loving support, and their contented willingness to accept in full return the peace, protection, and opportunity which it impartially bestows.

Not more surely do the rules of honesty and good faith fix the standard of individual character in a community than do these same rules determine the character and standing of a nation in the world of civilization. Neither the glitter of its power, nor the tinsel of its commercial prosperity, nor the gaudy show of its people's wealth, can conceal the cankering rust of national dishonesty, and cover the meanness of national bad faith. A constant stream of thoughtful, educated men should come from our universities and colleges preaching national honor and integrity, and teaching that a belief in the necessity of national obedience to the laws of God is not born of superstition.

I do not forget the practical necessity of political parties, nor do I deny their desirability. I recognize wholesome differences of opinion touching legitimate governmental policies, and would by no means control

or limit the utmost freedom in their discussion. I have only attempted to suggest the important patriotic service which our institutions of higher education and their graduates are fitted to render to our people, in the enforcement of those immutable truths and fundamental principles which are related to our national condition, but should never be dragged into the field of political strife, nor impressed into the service of partisan contention.

When the excitement of party warfare presses dangerously near our national safeguards, I would have the intelligent conservatism of our universities and colleges warn the contestants in impressive tones against the perils of a breach impossible to repair.

When popular discontent and passion are stimulated by the arts of designing partisans to a pitch perilously near to class hatred or sectional anger, I would have our universities and colleges sound the alarm in the name of American brotherhood and fraternal dependence.

When the attempt is made to delude the people into the belief that their suffrages can change the operation of natural laws, I would have our universities and colleges proclaim that those laws are inexorable and far removed from political control.

When selfish interest seeks undue private benefit through governmental aid, and public places are claimed as rewards of party service, I would have our universities and colleges persuade the people to a relinquishment of the demand for party spoils and exhort them to a disinterested and patriotic love of their government for its own sake, and because in its true adjustment and unperverted operation it secures to every citizen his just share of the safety and prosperity it holds in store for all.

When a design is apparent to lure the people from

their honest thoughts, and to blind their eyes to the sad plight of national dishonor and bad faith, I would have Princeton University, panoplied in her patriotic traditions and glorious memories, and joined by all the other universities and colleges of our land, cry out against the infliction of this treacherous and fatal wound.

I would have the influence of these institutions on the side of religion and morality. I would have those they send out among the people not ashamed to acknowledge God, and to proclaim His interposition in the affairs of men, enjoining such obedience to His laws as makes manifest the path of national perpetuity and prosperity.

I hasten to concede the good already accomplished by our educated men in purifying and steadying political sentiment, but I hope I may be allowed to intimate my belief that their work in these directions would be easier and more useful if it were less spasmodic and occasional. The disposition of our people is such that, while they may be inclined to distrust those who only on rare occasions come among them from an exclusiveness savoring of assumed superiority, they readily listen to those who exhibit a real fellowship and a friendly and habitual interest in all that concerns the common welfare. Such a condition of intimacy would, I believe, not only improve the general political atmosphere, but would vastly increase the influence of our universities and colleges in their efforts to prevent popular delusions or correct them before they reach an acute and dangerous stage. I am certain, therefore, that a more constant and active participation in political affairs on the part of our men of education would be of the greatest possible value to our country.

It is exceedingly unfortunate that politics should be regarded in any quarter as an unclean thing, to be

avoided by those claiming to be educated or respectable. It would be strange, indeed, if anything related to the administration of our government or the welfare of our nation should be essentially degrading. I believe it is not a superstitious sentiment that leads to the conviction that God has watched over our national life from its beginning. Who will say that the things worthy of God's regard and fostering care are unworthy of the touch of the wisest and best of men?

I would have those sent out by our universities and colleges not only the counsellors of their fellow-countrymen, but the tribunes of the people—fully appreciating every condition that presses upon their daily life, sympathetic in every untoward situation, quick and earnest in every effort to advance their happiness and welfare, and prompt and sturdy in the defence of all their rights.

I have but imperfectly expressed the thoughts to which I have not been able to deny utterance on an occasion so full of glad significance, and so pervaded by the atmosphere of patriotic aspiration. Born of these surroundings, the hope cannot be vain that the time is at hand when all our countrymen will more deeply appreciate the blessings of American citizenship, when their disinterested love of their government will be quickened, when fanaticism and passion shall be banished from the field of politics, and when all our people, discarding every difference of condition or opportunity, will be seen under the banner of American brotherhood, marching steadily and unfalteringly on towards the bright heights of our national destiny.

As no address more suited to the hour and the audience could possibly have been made, so no speaker could have found more attentive and sympathetic listeners; and if the

welcome they gave to the President was enthusiastic, their reception of his words was overwhelming. Round after round of cheering rose from the great assemblage of college graduates. Every variety of Princeton cheer rent the air. To each salvo was added "Cleveland, Cleveland, Cleveland," and finally three cheers were given for Mrs. Cleveland. The orchestra and organ at last managed to make themselves heard through the thundering volleys of cheers. As they played the well-known music of "America," the vast throng, which had been standing through the cheering, with one voice took up the national hymn with the deepest patriotic fervor:

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

My native country,—thee,
Land of the noble, free,
Thy name I love ;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,—
My heart with rapture thrills,
Like that above.

Our fathers' God,—to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing ;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light,—
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King.