

from the past in the speculations and the experience of those that have gone before us, much also remains to be discovered—more remains to be wisely and efficiently applied. I believe that a perfect system of training never will be discovered until a perfect philosophy of mind shall have been evolved. We must understand the laws of that wonderfully complex being, who is to be trained to the doctrine of his full and glorious development, ere we shall be prepared to present rules for that development in perfection. The labours of this Association will be valuable just in proportion as we come in the capacity of learners. If we come imagining that we have discovered the last secret of teaching, full of the vain-glorious thought that to us it has been given to utter the last words on this subject, then I conceive that the ~~making~~ ^{making} will be likely to be verified in our case, that pride goeth before a fall. If there is one subject in which the deliberations of men should be cautious, the character of the resolves and the spirit of their inquiries free from dogmatism, it is the subject of education. Contemporaneous with this time of meeting, there is another great congress assembled, well entitled to the consideration of civilized man all over the globe. I speak of those representatives of industry—of those productive arts which are the arts of peace—that are now gathered in the commercial emporium of Europe. The Temple of Janus is once more closed; the clamor of arms—at least for a short time—has ceased; and we are permitted to conduct our peaceful deliberations in the midst of a world at peace. I trust that the connection between education and the arts of peace will become more apparent, and that the great truth which is illustrated by all past experience, will be recognized by every parent and every teacher—that education is naturally allied to peace, and that war is the foe to mental improvement, in the old and the young alike. What we want, then, my friends, in this day of industrial and scientific congresses, is to cement, closer and closer, the bands which bind us, of education, to science on the one hand; and to the arts of peace on the other. We should show that the schoolhouse is the proper avenue to improvement in all the industrial arts, and that through which the young aspirant must pass, if he would become a discoverer of the truths of science. And how much might be done to kindle, in the minds of pupils, a love for truth—a love so large, so rich, so pure, that when that pupil goes forth into the arena of life, he may go as a learner of truth, through all of that life which Providence assigns him; so that, fired with an unflinching love for truth, he may learn more of it than has been given to others before him to know; so that he may give to the world some new truth, or clothe some old one in language and imagery so new and captivating, that the world will not willingly let it die. We stand here, then, to-day, my friends, in what may be considered a great moral and social centre. We plant ourselves here, and instal ourselves in the full possession of our responsibilities and privileges as an Association, that we may proclaim to the world the catholic character of the auspices under which we live—catholic, not merely in regard to territory, or to civil and political relations, but in regard to principles—in regard to systems—in regard to institutions—in regard to men. This is an American Association for the advancement of Education; for the advancement, permit me to say, of universal education; education in all its stages, from the humblest rudiments to the highest attainments—from the humblest seminary, called by the name of the District School, to the greatest of our universities and colleges. We know here no privileged classes—we know here no prescribed systems or institutions. We would give to every principle which appears upon the great stage of education, a full and impartial hearing. We would judge every system by its fruits, and as those fruits have approved themselves to the enlightened judgment of mankind, should we say it must stand or fall. It is a mistake to suppose that this Association contemplates merely what is called popular education, by that magnificent system of public instruction which is fostered by the State. The education which we desire to promote, is the education which lays its deep foundation in the family, which is carried forward in the common school and in the college. The only basis is a basis broad enough and large enough to comprehend every institution which has received the approbation of mankind. We meet to proclaim the progressive spirit of the age. Where are you sitting, my friends? Where am I standing? Where, fifty years before this time, no friend of human rights, no friend of education, addressed the large assembly. We are met here, to-day, where, only fifty years ago, there was almost a path-

less wilderness; where the Indian canoe and the Indian wigwam, or the solitary hut of the trapper, were the only objects which betokened the presence of man. Where are we now? Upon the borders of a State which did not then contain forty thousand people, but which has now two millions of souls. We are now in this beautiful city—this city of cities—with its twice ten thousand souls. Then, he who stood in Cleveland felt himself upon the furthest—the utmost borders of western civilization. And now, where is the man who can put his finger upon the map, and indicate the extreme western line which has been reached, or shall be reached, in our progressive march? How wonderful the progress during these few brief years! We have come here with this institution, that we may proclaim that those who founded it, founded it with hearts beating high and warm with the spirit of progress. But permit me to remind you, further, that we stand here, as on an appropriate spot, to vindicate our interest also in the cause of conservatism. What is this beautiful town? What this mighty commonwealth, this great republic, or this confederation of republics? Is it the creation of the last few years? Is it a creation that started into being by its own fiat, or has it come down to us as a precious legacy from the past? Does it appear from history that the United States is a country without an origin, a child without parents? There is no civilization of that kind—there are no blessings of that kind. There is no nation, kindred, or people that can lift up their heads to high heaven, and proclaim their independence of the men and the nations that went before them. They may rather say, with all humility and with all pride, that they are what the past of the world has made them. We boast the energies of the people among whom we live. We can trace them back to our sires, and to our father lands. Our pledge, our security for the glorious future, which we trust is opening before us, is, that we sprung from distinguished ancestry, and that our limbs are strong with the moral political strength that has been breathed into us from generation to generation. We come not ignoring the past, and contemning the labors of those who have gone before us in the work of education. When I look to Greece and Rome, and see what was taught in their Schools—what the masterpieces that emanated from the hands of their poets and orators, their sculptors and architects, their historians and philosophers—I cannot think that those schools were without merit, or that it becomes us to think or speak of them with disrespect. Be it ours rather to combine the results bequeathed to us by our predecessors, with improvements which shall demonstrate that we are entitled to be named and remembered as their not unworthy sons and heirs. The time is at hand when the records of the future will be made up—when the annals of those years that may succeed our present meeting will be registered. How will those annals appear as regards this Association? What shall be said, at the distance of ten, twenty, or thirty years of the promises and pretensions of this infant Association? Shall its history then be written over its tomb, or shall it be written upon a column, high and bright, standing with its head towards heaven, proclaiming that it still lives to serve and bless the world? Whether this proud destiny shall attend, it lies henceforth with you; with those who have forwarded and come here to instal this Association; with those who shall lead it on through its infant years; with the friends of education throughout the country; with the professors and the presidents of our colleges; with the men, good and true, who have devoted their lives, through twenty and thirty years, to the cause of education. These are the men whom we wish to meet here. And if they come not to our help, we will lay, in the day of our failure—if that day arrive—we will then lay the reproach of that failure at their door. With regard to those that are here, much will depend upon the dignity, the calmness, and the earnestness with which they deliberate. We can never confer too much, but we may resolve unwisely. We may act hastily; we may not recognize that propensity of the American mind which violates that homely proverb, "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead." An infirmity of the American character is to go ahead first, and then find out you are wrong. It has been the infirmity of the associations for the promotion of education. They have been formed without numbers; without numbers they have lingered out a short and fitful life, and have then expired. *Illium fuit*—(Troy was). They were begun with great promises—they were miserable in their performance. Is this to be the history of this Association? I trust in God not. I should be sorry to have assisted in giving birth to such an institution. If we