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THE PREMIER'S ADDRESS AT THE BANQUET

*Given in the City Hall, in October, 1903, in connection
with the Installation Ceremonies.*

Mr. Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen :

I APPRECIATE very much the kindly manner in which you have acknowledged the toast of the Ontario Legislature. The Ontario Legislature has many admirable qualities, which naturally commend themselves to an intelligent audience; among them I might say that it is one of the most evenly balanced Legislatures in the Dominion. Even its failings lean to virtue's side. Its constant anxiety is to provide for the security and comfort of His Majesty's subjects, so far as its jurisdiction extends. For some it provides a University education, and for others a scientific education. Some prefer the comforts of a House of Refuge or of a lunatic asylum to the large liberties which its constitution affords, and where there is such a variety of taste in the community, you can understand how difficult it is to comply with individual preferences. It bears the reputation of being a very economical Legislature, and if it were not, you would naturally ask what would become of the surplus, and where could we find money to sustain the Kingston School of Mines—both objects, traditionally, of the utmost importance.

The Legislature has an honourable record,—if I may be permitted to say so,—in regard to education. Primarily, it aims at providing adequate education for citizenship, irrespective of locality, class or creed. To this end it supports generously a system of Public School education, and the fact that every native born citizen of the Province is able to read and write, proves that its efforts in this direction have not been a failure. It also endeavours to provide for technical education, particularly in its relation to the material development of the Province. Beginning with manual training in our Public Schools, there is a continuous course through High and Technical Schools, rounding off with the course of the School of Science at Toronto or the Mining School of your City. In the higher field of University education, it is not wanting in its bounty. No country can reach eminence, nationally, that does not afford ample facilities for the fullest intellectual development of its citizens. At least since the great Renaissance England and the Continent have their halls of learning in which their students by a ripe scholarship are qualified for the highest position in Church and State.