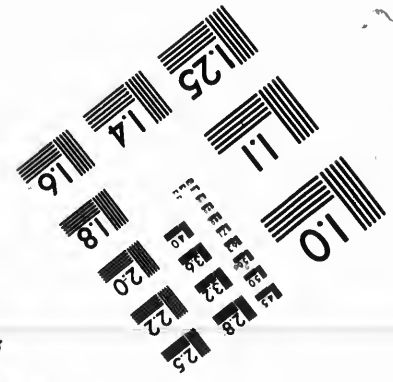
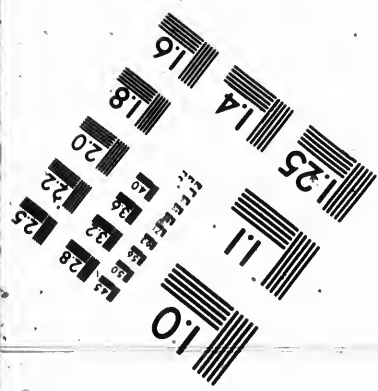
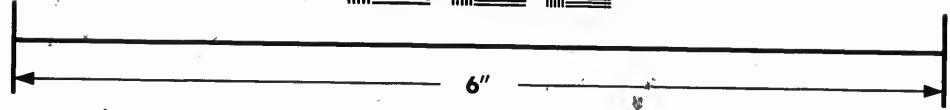
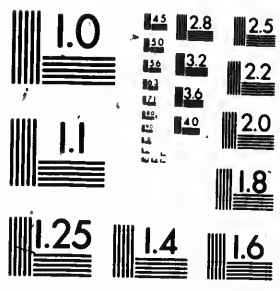


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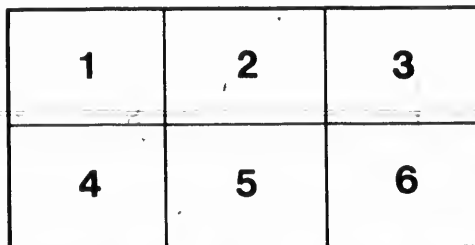
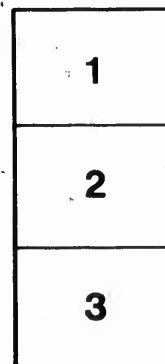
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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN LOWER CANADA. 2/

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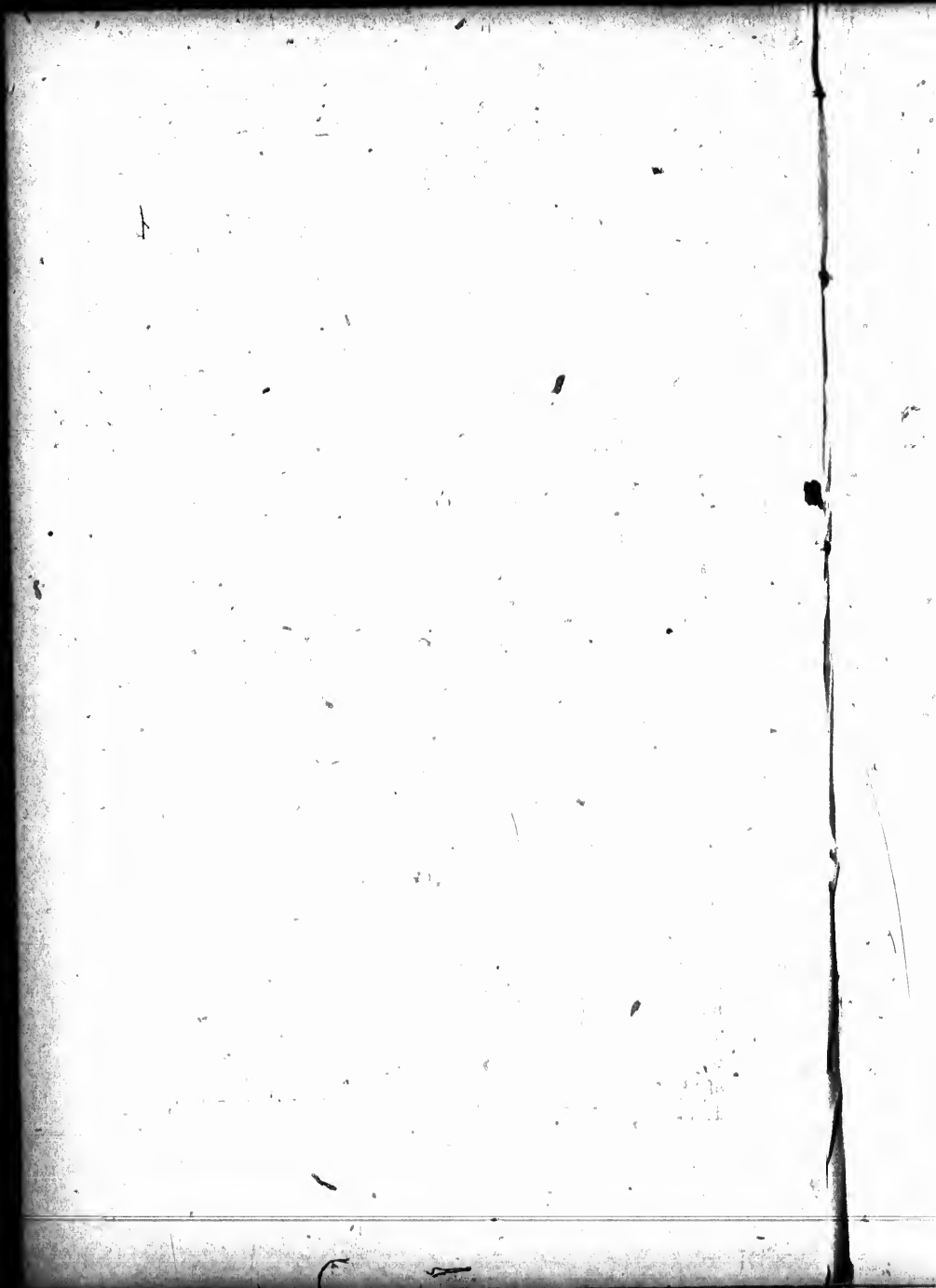
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ADDRESS.

Nothing is more apparent to any reflecting mind than the fact that, in Canada, and particularly in Lower Canada, there is a want of a just appreciation of the importance of academic education. A great majority of the early settlers of this part of the Province were men of enterprise, men of stout hearts and brawny arms, able and willing to contend with the hard necessities of a new country, but poor men; men who were forced to exercise all their physical and mental powers to eke out a livelihood in their forest homes. Their education was little else than what the necessities of their condition compelled them to learn. The numberless wants of a new country, the absence of all the facilities and conveniences of more advanced state of the arts of living, rendered reflection absolutely necessary. The consequence was the mind was not suffered to rust and decay, but ever preserved a keen edge. Inventive talent was brought into requisition, for without contrivance, living was entirely impracticable. A man who has the courage to withdraw from the haunts of society into the forest, far distant from mills, from marts, from places where mechanical skill and a division of labor has attained a degree of perfection, finds himself in a new world of action. He finds obstacles at every turn which his unassisted skill must surmount. He must do a thousand things which in other circumstances by an exchange of labor or property he could procure done for him. He has to do almost every thing in another way from that to which he has

been accustomed, and with other instrumentalities. He is, in fact, reduced to the alternative, to think, devise, originate and execute, or abandon his undertaking in despair. Hence we find the inhabitants of a new country possessed of great vigor of mind and unusual aptitude for excellence in all the manual arts. The causes, however, which induced this result naturally tend to beget indifference to education in its ordinary and more legitimate acceptation. The early inhabitants of these townships, amongst their other privations, were compelled to forego the privilege of even an elementary education for their children, from the absence of the facilities for obtaining it. First, from necessity having learned to live without it, they became too indifferent to its importance. It cannot be a matter of surprise under these circumstances that when the primitive hardships have partially abated, and poverty and want have given place to a measure of competency, there is among the people too great apathy in seeking for their children a good education. Our society in this particular needs to be reformed. Upon this great matter the people need to be indoctrinated. To do it requires great patience, continued effort and unwavering faith in its final achievements. Every literary and scientific institution seems here an exotic, to which the soil and climate are unpropitious. This will not, must not always remain thus. The radical evil lay, not so much in the imperfection of the appliances or the inability of the people as in the want of a sustaining, sympathizing public sentiment. The aim of collegiate education here should not be merely to qualify men for the professions, leaving the great body of society with a meagre elementary education. The people need to learn and feel that education is important everywhere, and is becoming more and more important as rapid scientific discoveries render the mechanism of society more complicated. We want not merely learned divines, learned doctors, learned lawyers, and learned professors. We want a host of learned teachers, learned engineers, learned artisans, capable of applying the discovered truths of science to practical mechanics, learned agriculturists, competent to render practical the discoveries in agricultural chemistry and geology. These cannot be produced by magic. Learning cannot be obtained by purchase,

by inheritance, or by letters patent. It is the meed or patient and long continued toil. When the sentiment prevails among our people, that the attainment of a high order of education by a large proportion of the aggregate of society, is necessary to meet the exigencies of the age in which we live, our collegiate institutions will thrive; until this state of things is induced, their support will be meagre and their prosperity rather in hope than realization. The progress, however, although slow will be real. The influence which they are enabled to exert upon society as from year to year they send forth more or less of educated men will be reciprocally beneficial to themselves. The advantage which a thoroughly educated man in any sphere of life, has over the man of limited attainments is very soon seen and felt by those around him. The facilities which a disciplined mind gives its possessor for the investigation of any subject and for the expression of his ideas, necessarily give to him a commanding influence. There have been many self-taught men who have left their mark upon society, but they are the rare exceptions. Because they are exceptions they are pointed at, and their fame in many instances exceeds their merits. The existence of self-educated men who distinguish themselves, proves the necessity, not the futility of colleges and universities. We do not draw our inferences from exceptional cases, but from the rule which gives rise to the exceptions. Because some two or three geniuses in an age astonish the world with the brilliancy of their powers and a fund of knowledge obtained almost by intuition, we are not to infer that all our children will be geniuses. If a person has power to discipline his own mind, he is a great man; he is one of ten thousand. How many students are there, who if deprived of the daily routine of studies, the incitements of ambition, and the stimulus which the method of the lecture room and recitation room affords, would voluntarily progress from day to day, and educate themselves? There is no physical impossibility in the way. Books of science, literature and art are open before them and invite their attention, but the mind naturally shrinks from the task. There is an inertia to be overcome by the wholesome discipline of the school. There must be a constraint put upon the student to work. There are

many disadvantages suffered by those who take a by-road to knowledge. There is want of method in their education—want of completeness and harmony in its parts. Such men generally follow the science to which their tastes more particularly direct them, to the neglect of other branches. Knowing much of one thing, they are apt to underrate other departments of knowledge. They are also too much inclined to believe themselves masters of what they know very little, and while actually learned in some particular sphere, are exceedingly pedantic in others. A thorough academic education affords the very best artificial help to our rational powers. There are men who under any influences will not have common sense. There are mental idiosyncrasies which no education can remedy. They are as incurable as the King's Evil. As a general rule, the man whose mind has been judiciously disciplined, is prepared to see truth, and evolve it from the chaos of truth and error in the world. Education obtained through its legitimate channels has with it the scholarly habit which is a passport among *literati* everywhere. Self-made men even, when possessed of great attainments, are frequently unable to cast off the garb of ignorance. Their thoughts are too often expressed in ungrammatical language, and their enunciation, accent and quantity are rather barbarous than classic. A pure style, a pure vernacular tongue, and a propriety of expression are as desirable to the scholar as polished manners are to the gentleman. All these advantages possessed by the educated man, soon become the object of admiration, and then of ambition, in society. It is wonderful to see how silently, yet how rapidly such influences permeate society, and gradually elevate public opinion.

The views of this age, particularly upon this continent, are eminently utilitarian. Every subject is weighed by troy weight. To determine how far any particular course of action is desirable or expedient, first it must be settled, what are the gains in actual, tangible, current coin to be derived from it. The value of an education is in a great measure estimated by the same criterion. Men who have sons, in considering whether they will give one or more an education, first consider how much available capital an education will be to a young man. Writers upon law in discours-

ing of property, tell us of certain species of property that is inappreciable, for the loss of which the possessor cannot be fully indemnified. The old homestead that has been held by the same family for generations, around which many pleasing memories linger, to the last representatives of the race is above appreciation. Keepsakes are prized not from their intrinsic worth, but as tokens of affection. Education is the highest style of capital. It cannot have a marketable, exchangeable value like houses and stocks. It is too mean an estimate for so high a possession. There are men who would not think of educating their sons unless it could be demonstrated to them how much available, tangible worth such education would give them. The same spirit that would thus reason upon the benefits of education would put a property value upon the lives and health of children, and the best solace you could offer a parent who has lost the son of promise—who has no higher views of life and its ends than the acquisition of property, would be the suggestion that the boy was a delicate lad, and had he lived, he might not have been able to earn wages. The practical objects of education are not, however, to be overlooked either by teacher or parent. Very few of the scholars of this country can expect to spend their lives in strictly literary pursuits or in scientific researches. Their academic education must be preparatory to some pursuit in some of the departments of active life. Entirely to ignore the wants of society in our educational economy would be exceedingly unwise. Our educational interests naturally divide themselves into three grades: Elementary or Common Schools, Academies or Grammar Schools, (holding an intermediate position,) and Colleges. Each of these three institutions has its demands upon the others. The action of each must have a direct bearing upon the others. Their interests as respects society are co-ordinate. In speaking of this part of the subject, my own views may perhaps differ from some who hear me. It is my conviction that one prominent design of our Colleges should be to prepare teachers for our Academies and higher schools. Our Common Schools can never attain anything like perfection till our Academies are supplied with masters, not merely possessed of educational attainments, but of skill in train-

ing teachers for the elementary schools. This may be regarded as more legitimately the province of Normal Schools. In a more advanced state of society this might to a certain extent be true; but our Normal School, however successful, can never meet our educational wants. The result with us will be that our intermediate academic schools must be supplied from abroad or at home, or our Common Schools must languish. It is of the highest importance that those who are entrusted with our academies should be educated in our own Colleges. It would tend to produce harmony in the modes of teaching. It would allay prejudice, and more than all, it would produce a sympathy between the different departments of education, and strengthen and build up the whole fabric. It would make all members of society feel that they had an immediate, home interest in our Colleges. It requires great knowledge of human nature and freedom from prejudice to become a successful and useful schoolmaster in another country, and under different institutions from those in which he was bred. It requires discernment of the genius and circumstances of the people. It must be seen here that the education acquired needs to be used at the earliest opportunity, that when one has gone a little way on the road to knowledge, he must go back for a little to give a helping hand to a brother or a friend. The means are stinted, and a return must be realized without too long credit. The art must be discovered of giving to those who can from their circumstances only have a limited education, the most advantage from the time they can devote to study. My corollary from this is, that our Colleges, amongst other useful men, should send forth good teachers. They will be found the best benefactors for their *alma mater*. They will be like true sons of faithful parents,—at once their pride and support. Among us the office of teacher has not the honor to which it is justly entitled. When in the minds of the public it is made an object worth obtaining, a prize worthy the ambition of the best minds, and its emoluments are raised above starving point, we shall have good teachers. It ought to have its rank among the professions, the fifth estate, if you please; but were I to give it rank according to merit, I would place it inferior to none. In fact, society is made up of useful

avocations, and all men who act their part well in their own sphere in a certain sense, deserve equal honor, but the responsibilities devolving upon teachers, and the varied attainments they ought to possess, should give the office a high place in the organism of society. If it be one object of our Colleges to supply to the public the higher class of teachers, the interest to sustain the Colleges will be at once visible. They would become the perennial fountains from which the rivulets and rills would be supplied. Any cause which would tend to dry up the fountains would be sensitively watched as withering the general interests of education.

These remarks, if to any extent just, can only apply to our English educational institutions; because the French Canadians have their own system of academic institutions, which they will not be induced to depart from. Among our English collegiate institutions, I can see no occasion for hostility or rivalry other than a commendable rivalry on the part of each to render itself worthy of public sympathy and patronage. If any where low jealousies can find no resting place, it is in academic halls. In all the avocations of men, in business life, self-interest predominates, and more or less of disagreeable contention must arise from the imperfection of our nature. All who incline, may travel the great highway to knowledge without jostling or interfering with others. However much is learned, the source is not impoverished. The fountains of learning are inexhaustible. There need be no stint or parsimony here. The more a man acquires, if he has the heart of a true man, the greater will be his desire to communicate to others. The pioneers in any enterprise have many obstacles to encounter. They need to be men of fortitude and heroic endurance, prepared "to labor and wait." The world looks on with great indifference, and seldom applauds till the battle is gained, and the triumph achieved. All our educational institutions are yet in their infancy, and they must be prepared to encounter difficulties, and to outlive the apathy and indifference with which they are now regarded. Three distinguished colleges of New England—Harvard, Yale, and Dartmouth—were founded in weakness, and for many years maintained an existence amid discour-

agements that would have conquered men who were not possessed of unflinching energy. I find, on reference to the triennial catalogue of the last of the above named colleges, that in 1771 the Bachelor's degree was conferred upon four graduates. In 1772, upon only two; in 1773, upon six; and through the first fifteen years of its existence the average number did not exceed ten. There have been in the same college within fifteen years past, as many as 85 graduates in a year, and there are seldom less than fifty. The funds raised in England, and partly through the aid of the Earl of Dartmouth, to found Moor's Charity School, which gradually grew into a college under Royal charter, amounted to only £7000. These, and kindred colleges in New England, have become a part of the frame-work of society there. Their anniversaries are heralded by all the newspapers of the day, and are graced with the presence of the best men and most learned men. The most accomplished orators, both lay and clerical, consider it the highest honor to be conferred upon them to be chosen to address the alumni on these occasions. These colleges have been and are the bulwarks of all that is great and excellent, not merely in New England, but in the whole American States. Much has been said in favor of the common school system of New England; but the common school system has only obtained its fame, and retained its position, as the natural result of the prosperity of these colleges. Look at present at the city schools in Boston, Lowell, Manchester and Springfield; and these are only similar to others, in other like New England cities. The teachers are graduates of New England colleges. Not the indifferent, third-rate students but the first scholars. And these schools turn out the most finished classical scholars for the colleges. Things are tending to the same result in Upper Canada. In Toronto the city schools are becoming the very best schools to prepare young men for the colleges or Universities. So it is at Belleville. And, *en passant*, I will take the liberty to say that the educational system of Upper Canada is fast ripening to a degree of perfection that will not be surpassed on this continent. We hear a great deal said of race, as if a certain race had in it the elements of progress, that develop as naturally as the physical proportions of the body. To my

mind, race is simply the humanizing, elevating effect of the education of generations, which gives to a people a habit of progress. Let education flag, and the race, from generation to generation, will deteriorate in its elements of excellence, just as surely and as rapidly as, by the contrary cause, it has risen to fame. We are told that the Anglo-Saxon race has an inherent superiority, and its pushing, progressing tendencies are made the subject of declamation on all occasions, when the ambitious representatives of the race are congregated. There may be something in the theory of a natural, inherent superiority of the race of men over another; but this fact is very noticeable, that sometimes the second and almost the third generation of a family who settles in a foreign country, and mixes in foreign society, loses its identity, and becomes entirely merged into the society of which it forms part, and is undistinguishable from the rest. What makes a great nation is, in the main, its wise institutions. This is in no respect so true as in matters of education. When the higher academic institutions of a country thrive in harmony with the humbler educational instrumentalities, we find great enlightenment among the people. It is the policy of some countries to educate only a privileged class, and the seats of learning are isolated from the people. The people look upon them with a kind of superstitious awe, but entirely out of the reach of their sympathies. Now and then a man of more means than those around him, seeks a collegiate education for his son, to put him away up, far above the heads of the common people. When such a state of things exists, the great blessings of general education are unknown. The thinking of the mass is all done by the few, and the great body of society are deprived not merely of the personal delights, but of all intelligent appreciation of the advantages and power of education. The spirit of our Colleges ought to be sympathetic with that of the people. A wound to the former should be felt by the latter. When this is attained, the influence of Colleges is far more extensive than what is the legitimate result of its teachings. Intelligent men, who have not the actual discipline of a liberal education, who have very little science or learning, gather liberal ideas and mental enlargement from contact with educated men, whom

they recognize as equals in all things except superior acquirements. Prejudice is rendered less bitter. There is less superstition among the populace; less inclination to absurd theories; less devotion to the isms of the day. Quackery in all its forms finds less countenance. It is painfully ludicrous to observe the charlatanry that is palmed off upon the ignorant for explanations of natural phenomena. An indifferent cobbler dubs himself professor of phrenology, psychology, biology, or pathology, and perhaps of all these with several other hard words of which he has equal knowledge,—and he straightway perambulates the country to instruct the gaping multitude for a consideration. The papers are filled with his tawdry advertisements, and he is often thronged with listeners while he discourses intense nonsense. If such men could see themselves as others see them, they would surely forbear. They would not so seriously burlesque the sciences. The prevalence of sound views of education, would tend to check such unseemly and fantastic comedies upon popular lecturing. If men can directly or indirectly obtain information enough to realize how little they know, they will never set themselves up as teachers of others on such exceedingly small literary capital. Where true science sheds its light, these false glares disappear just as *ignes fatui* vanish before the light of day.

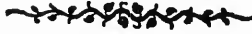
Our Colleges have the difficulty of limited resources with which to contend. Like everything else in a young country, they must have their period of gradual development. The number of professors must be small. Libraries are small, and the facilities of apparatus for the illustration of the practical sciences are meagre. To persons unaccustomed to the necessities of academic institutions, it appears that they need to be manned in proportion to the number of students. There can be no greater fallacy. It requires all the varied learning to instruct one student in all the branches forming a complete education that it would for a hundred. The greater can be the division of labor, the more nearly will the system approach perfection. In the infant condition of our Colleges a complete division of labor is impracticable, and every professor is under the necessity of perfecting himself as far as possible in many, instead of one department. This is only in

keeping with everything in a young country. Men in all the concerns of life have to resort to various devices to supply the deficiencies which in an older society are not felt. A person must not only be prepared to multiply himself, but to have as many diversified attainments as he assumes different individualities. If we undertake to put on the garments of old countries upon new societies, there will be found as great a disparity and unsuitableness as the infant's wearing the habiliments of manhood. We must apply to all these things common sense, which Coleridge calls the genius of humanity.

A College under the supervision of one religious denomination, entirely independent of legislative control, appears to me the best calculated to attain excellence and to benefit society. I see no objection, but great propriety, in Government's affording assistance to our Colleges, if thereby they are not brought under legal responsibility to government. Many object to grants to what are termed Sectarian Schools and Colleges on the ground that the benefits of such grants are participated in by only a few. If our Colleges are what they ought to be, this cannot be true. The aim of a College should be to expend its funds in the most judicious manner for the education of the greatest number possible. This done, surely society has its return of an investment of the most profitable character.

If it be merely the object of a College to amass funds, to educate a mere class who have no influence in society except strictly professional or clerical,—if in fact, the funds obtained are rather used to enlarge and strengthen an ecclesiastical system to which all educational wants are made subservient, than simply to educate, these objections have great weight. Such educational economy, however, is contrary to the spirit of English institutions and Protestant education. Their object is to lay the foundations for large general education. The more the leaven penetrates the mass, the greater the success. Religion presides over such Colleges as the guardian of the morals and habits of the students. Its high ennobling principles of morality are inculcated more as a perfect system of ethics than as the creed of a church. While the various religious opinions of students may not be interfered

with, there is a wholesome recognition of the connexion of religion with learning. There is more self-reliance and unity of action in Colleges under the entire control of individual denominations, than when they are subject to state interference or the conflicting interests of different religious creeds. It may appear paradoxical, but I think too, there is more liberality. There is less temptation to urge offensively the peculiarities of religious tenets. It is in such Colleges, impressed with the full import of their high mission, true to themselves and society, that rests the hope of the people.



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