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Greetings from Visiting Academies

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St. Louis Academy

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Davenport Academy of Sciences

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GREETINGS FROM VISITING ACADEMIES.

FROM THE ST. LOUIS ACADEMY, BY L. H. PAMMEL.

The S. Louis Academy of Science, the oldest academy west of the Mississippi, sends greetings to the Iowa Academy, its younger sister. We trust that the Iowa Academy of Science will in the future do as commendable work as it has in the past quarter of a century.

We therefore send congratulations and hope that it may fill a large place in the science of this great commonwealth.

GREETINGS FROM THE DAVENPORT ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, BY C. C. NUTTING.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me peculiar pleasure to be honored with the duty of bearing greetings to the Iowa Academy of Science from what is probably the oldest scientific organization in the State, as well as one of the oldest represented at this table.

Dr. Ward has represented himself as the bearer of good wishes from a comparatively young Academy, the Illinois Academy of Science; but I remember that, as a boy, I used to hear of an Illinois Academy of Sciences that met at Springfield. I suppose that the organization represented by Dr. Ward is a lineal descendent of the one I remember.

The Davenport Academy was organized in the sixties, I believe, and has a long and honorable history. It is unique, in certain respects. For one thing, it was organized and for many years mainly supported through the efforts of a woman and as an expression of a mother's love for her son, and to this woman, Mrs. Putnam, the State of Iowa and the scientific interests of Iowa, owe much.

This organization stands unique, in this State at least, in being an academy of science which exists apart from any college or institution of learning, and it occupies an important place in the civic life of the city of Davenport. It has published many important contributions to knowledge by eminent men, and these publications, in the shape of the Proceedings of the Davenport Academy of Sciences, have been maintained at a high level of excellence for many years and constitute an honorable literary and scientific monument to the founders, officers and members of the Academy.

This Academy has also gathered and cared for collections of inestimable value, particularly in the line of the archaeology and anthropology of Iowa and the Mississippi Valley. These collections can not be duplicated anywhere, and many of the specimens are among the most important evidences of the life and works of prehistoric man that have been found in North America.

I take great pleasure in reporting that the Davenport Academy is now on an excellent basis from both a scientific and financial standpoint, and enjoys a munificent endowment of something like a half a million dollars. Its perpetuity and continued good works are thus assured.

I am commissioned, Mr. President, to bear to the Iowa Academy the cordial greetings and fraternal good wishes from this, the oldest of the scientific organizations here represented. Our wish is that your organization may be abundantly prospered in its mission of increasing the sum of human knowledge, and that your future may be as honorable as your past.

GREETINGS FROM NEBRASKA ACADEMY, BY A. E. SHELDON.

Mr. Toast-Master:

Nebraska owes much of her early settlement and greatness to the state of Iowa. Iowa people crossed the Missouri river in large numbers and participated in our first territorial organizations, electing themselves to office in large numbers and helping organize our infant commonwealth during the first years of our existence. We borrowed the Iowa code as a basis for our own statute law and included in our first constitution the provision in your Iowa constitution, limiting suffrage to free white males twenty-one years of age and above, thereby causing trouble and delay in the admission of Nebraska to full sisterhood in the federal union. Whole townships in Nebraska are settled with Iowa people and in our early years we robbed Iowa educational hen roosts of their choicest poultry for beginnings of our own educational system. So it is with much sense of indebtedness and gratitude that Nebraska brings to the Iowa Academy of Sciences her felicitations upon the completion of a quarter century of useful and happy existence.

On the other hand, Nebraska feels with pardonable pride that she no longer depends upon Iowa for her culture, her wealth or her politics. For some years, Nebraska, as the real leader of American progress and democracy, has been furnishing Iowa as well as other states, with the brains and energy necessary to conduct their affairs. We took Prof. George G. MacLean from the chair of literature in Minnesota University and qualified him by life in our intellectual atmosphere, for the position of President of your Iowa State University. We took Dr. E. A. Ross from the jaws of the plutocrats of Leland-Stanford University of California, gave him a free platform and full scope for his genius and fitted him for a position in the Wisconsin University as one of the leading American sociologists. We took Dr. Henry B. Ward, who sits at my right hand, fresh from the duelling ground of a noted German University and with sixteen years' training, fitted him for the present high position he holds in the University of Illinois. A young man from a neighboring state came to Nebraska with no capital excepting a respectable character and a voice. We fitted him for the high office of President of the United States in less than ten years' time, and on three successive occasions offered him to the people of Iowa as a proper man for President and three times through lack of popular education, the people of Iowa rejected him. You are sorry for it now, but you cannot atone for your past sins. So that today Nebraska, calm and self-confident in her natural leadership, extends to your Academy of Science, not only her felicitations but her full welcome into the great fraternity of fellow-workers in the cause of scientific advancement.

Our congratulation takes a deeper tone than even these present recollections and suggestions. We rejoice with you in a quarter century of notable things achieved and in notable causes longed for. There is no fellowship so strong as the fellowship of the search for truth and in that fellowship we join with you in one universal brotherhood of emulation and love.

GREETINGS FROM THE ILLINOIS ACADEMY, BY HENRY B. WARD.

It is my great privilege this evening as a delegate from the Illinois Academy of Science and from the University of Illinois to bring to the Iowa Academy of Science greetings laden with congratulations for the success of the past and with good wishes for still greater success in the future.

Although the state of Illinois antedates in settlement by more than a century the state in which we are gathered together, yet the Illinois Academy of Science was not founded until December, 1907, and, hardly more than four years old, is thus a mere infant in comparison with the Iowa Academy, today in its vigorous youth as it celebrates its quarter century. And this is the second Iowa Academy for the first was born in 1875 and lapsed in 1884, leaving an unfilled gap of less than three years between it and the present organization. To be sure there was not wanting in the earlier days of Illinois efforts to organize somewhat similar societies. The Illinois Natural History Society, which proclaimed itself to be "for the advancement of science," was organized on June 30, 1858, and even received a charter from the legislature on February 22, 1861. It formed a state museum "for the use and benefit of the state"*. It organized a Natural History Survey and planned to acquire a broad knowledge of the natural history of the state through a splendid series of voluntary commissions for particular fields led by enthusiastic and energetic men interested in the various phases of nature. Furthermore, its first president, Professor J. B. Turner of Jacksonville, famous as a leader** in the movement for industrial education which achieved nation-wide scope and world-wide approval, gave to the young organization direction, energy, and prestige. In spite of its splendid achievements this first society did not succeed in arousing general public support, and a second similar organization found itself equally unable to enlist that general cooperation which is essential to continued success.

It is always a difficult problem to determine the reasons for such different results in similar movements and it is surely an invidious task to institute comparisons. This much, however, is clear: Agriculture in Illinois was profitable; it held a strong but not controlling position in the public mind. Commerce in Illinois had been immensely successful for more than a century since the old traders making use of the waterways of lakes and rivers established trade routes between the north and the south. Manufacturing and industries of various kinds had built up numerous profitable ventures at many points along lakes and rivers. In the presence of these movements for commercial development the energies of the population were so completely called into exercise that education languished. It was not until 1867 that Illinois established its State University, some twenty years later than Iowa had taken this step, and even after its establishment the support and interest bestowed upon the institution were distinctly subordinate to that which was given by less richly endowed communities that surrounded it.

On the other hand, Iowa seems to have laid an early emphasis on education. From Cornell on the east to Tabor on the west a string of colleges demonstrate the ideals and battle for the principles of the early settlers; even if the realization of these hopes has in some cases fallen short of that the founders had

*See Forbes S. A., *History of the Former State Natural History Societies of Illinois*. Trans. Ill. State Acad. Sci., 1908, 1:18.

**See James, E. J. *The Origin of the Land Grant Act of 1862* Univ. Studies, 1910, 4:1-)

dreamed, yet the educational movement has given it strong support in all grades of the educational system.

Without doubt another favorable element is to be found in the establishment and growth of the Davenport Academy which, organized in 1867 and beginning its publications in 1876, had by its success aroused a sentiment among the educated public favorable to such enterprise. The men who came together at the first meeting of the Iowa Academy were intimately familiar with the work of the Davenport Academy and their contact with that institution had inspired them with the spirit of its work and with the helpfulness of its plans. Certainly in the broad development of colleges with their enthusiastic teachers of natural history, in the generous support of the early established State University and its corps of vigorous scientific workers, and finally in the influence that went out from the Davenport Academy, are to be found important factors in bringing about the early organization and vigorous growth of the Iowa Academy of Science.

The original academies of the old world were assemblies of scholars who gathered together collections brought from new and strange lands, and whose meetings dispelled the dogmatism that was born of the isolation of earlier days, while at the same time the personal contact with men and materials aroused enthusiasm and developed the scientific method. The Academy is distinctly the agent of the field and the age in which it is born and serves that time and place best when its attention is devoted most distinctly to the special problems that exist there. The modern academy has found its functions along analagous lines: First, in the preservation of local data*; second, in the stimulus to local study, and, third, in the development of local interest. Because of its early organization the Davenport Academy was able to bring together a priceless collection representing the aboriginal life of the state and the region. Such a collection cannot be duplicated, and in the absence of such an agency would have been in large part at least, forever lost to the world. The Iowa Academy in its publications has an invaluable series of records concerning the natural history of the state during a change so radical that much which existed then has disappeared forever, and some of the things which have come into existence in recent years were entirely unknown in those earlier days. In the series of twenty-five meetings which have been held under its auspices there have been drawn together teachers and workers from over the whole state. This has aroused in them a common interest; it has stimulated others to participate in this work; it has started on a career of scientific usefulness many a student who has been a half interested, or perhaps only a casual, listener in its discussions or reader of its publications. It would be impossible to calculate the full value of such a movement to the state; and unnecessary to justify the need of its continuance.

In closing I may be permitted to indicate one point of great importance which will need added emphasis in the coming years of the history of this Academy. If the local Academy had existed merely for itself, or the state organization had not drawn into its circle those who were connected with other educational institutions, the influence of its work would have been far less. Modern business success has been achieved by efficient organization and combination on a large scale, and it is not too much to hope that in the next quarter of a century

*See Osborn, H., *Local Problems in Science*. Proc. Iowa Acad. for 1888, P. 19.

the organization of scientific work, through scientific workers, may become even more complete and efficient within each state and may extend beyond the limits of the commonwealth, so that the academies of sister states may be brought in closer touch with that which today looks back with pride over a quarter of a century of successful work. We may confidently hope that something of the enthusiasm which has been gained by this work may be transmitted to younger and less experienced organizations, and that through the interchange of ideas, and even of material things, scientific workers in Iowa and in other states may be enabled to do more for their own organizations and their own communities, and thus directly also for the nation at large. In the movement for the conservation of natural resources the Academies are rightful leaders. It rests with them to show the needs and outline the possibilities of the movement. Free from bias and equipped to ascertain the truth, they can lead most effectively in solving this greatest of all problems that confront the Republic. To conduct the campaign they must be organized from center to circumference. To inaugurate this movement for public service in scientific fields devolves upon individual organizations and members.