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Catalog, 1926 Addresses Delivered At The Memorial Services For Dr. William Wood Parsons

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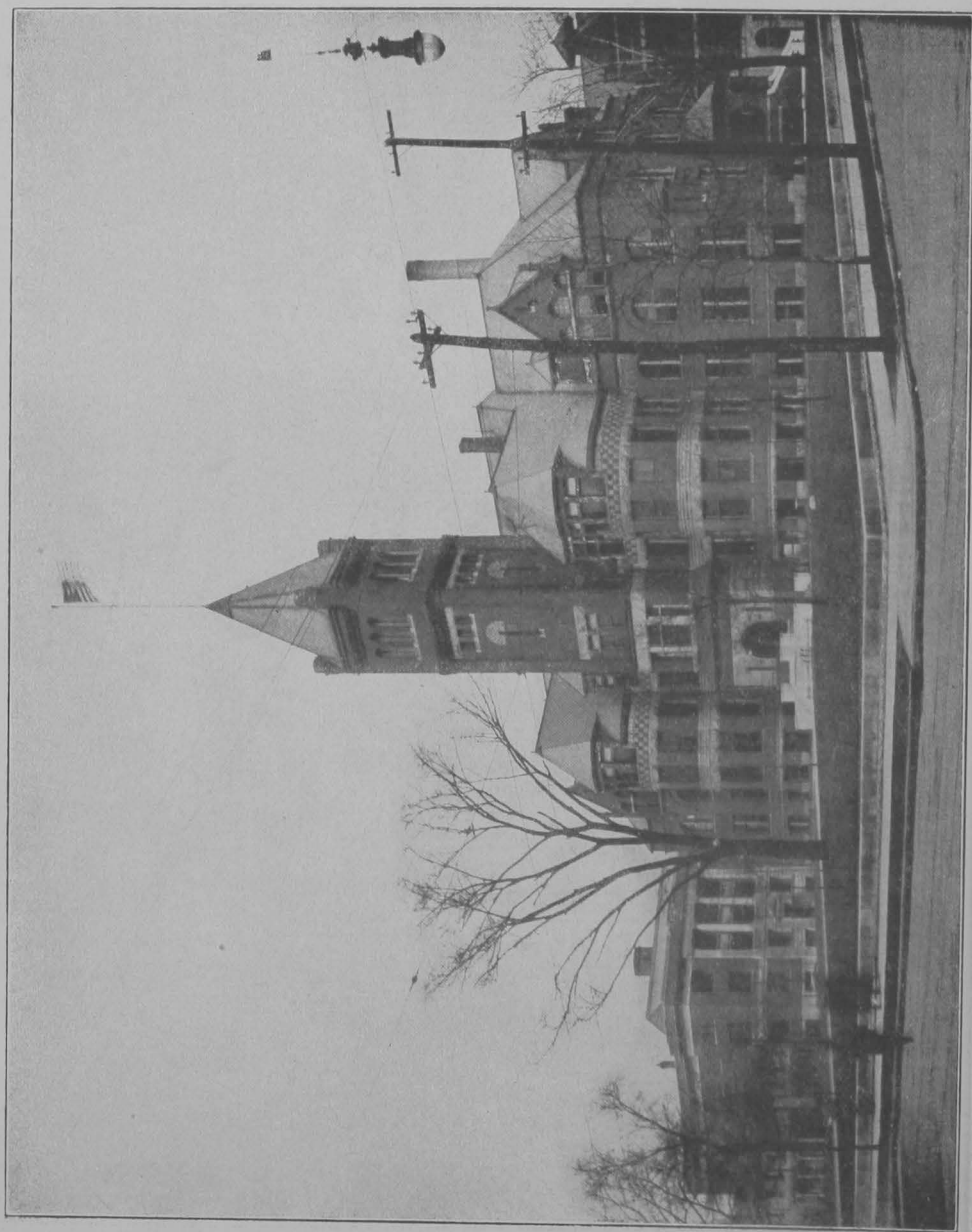


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The Addresses

delivered at the

Memorial Services

for

Dr. William Wood Parsons

Wednesday, November Four
Nineteen Hundred Twenty-Five
Terre Haute

Indiana State Normal School Bulletin
Vol. XIX January, 1926 No. 3

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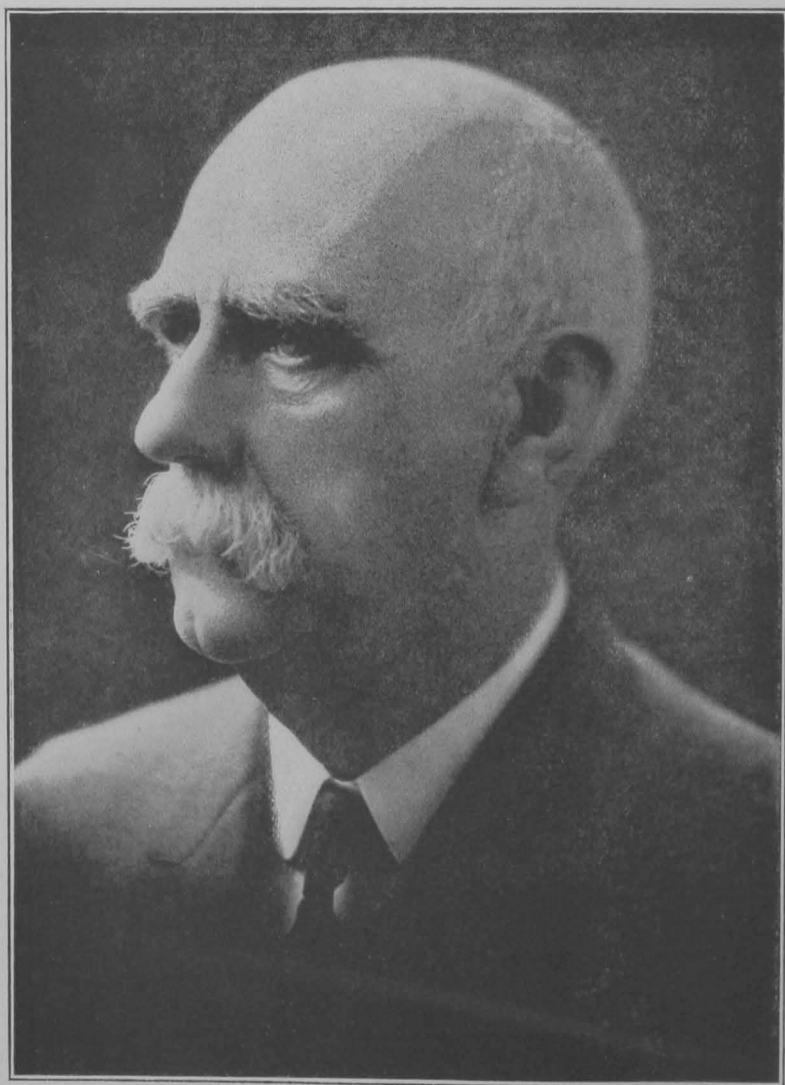
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A Sketch of William Wood Parsons

By Linnaeus Neal Hines

President Indiana State Normal School

William Wood Parsons was born, in Terre Haute, Indiana, on May 18, 1850. His father was Dr. Thomas Parsons, and his mother Elizabeth (Ryman) Parsons. The place of his birth was 602 South Seventh Street, which is within about seven blocks of the place where he died—1444 South Center Street—on September 28, 1925.

President Parsons was seventy-five years, four months and ten days old when he passed into the beyond. Between the years 1850 and 1925 he lived a long and useful life. Practically his whole life was spent within the city of Terre Haute. It rarely happens that any one is born, lives a successful career and dies almost within the sight of his birth place. This was true of President Parsons, and the fact that it was true shows the high qualities of the man, for those who knew him best admired him most, were the readiest to give him full credit for the work he did.

At the age of seven the subject of this sketch started to school in a small brick house known as the Vigo County Seminary, which stood on the ground where the State Normal is now located. He pursued there the rudiments of an education until five years later, or in 1862, when the family moved to a farm in Douglas County, Illinois. There President Parsons attended the district schools in the winter and in the summer worked on the farm until he was ready for high school. He then went to Tuscola, Illinois, from the high school of which city he was graduated at a later date. After leaving high school his attention was given to further education. He returned to Terre Haute and was there when the State Normal was first opened for classes, on January 6, 1870. He often used to laugh in telling of his first appearance at the institution which he was to honor for so many years through his brilliant service as president. Sometimes when his friends would tease him about his always being ahead of time

when he was to go any place he would say that on the first day he came to the Normal he was the first one on hand, arriving about half an hour before the school door was opened. Throughout his life he had the habit of punctuality, a quality greatly to be desired in many people.

The first group of students was a small one, something less than two dozen in number. So far as is now known, President Parsons was the last one of this group to die. All the others had preceded him into the Greater Life.

President Parsons was graduated with the first class from the Normal School, in 1872. Immediately thereafter he began teaching in Tuscola, Illinois. He later became the superintendent of schools at Gosport, Indiana, and then for a short time taught in the Indianapolis schools. All this teaching experience in three different communities covered a period of four years.

On October 12, 1876, he was appointed a teacher in the Normal School by the first president of the institution, William A. Jones. Three years later he was elected teacher of English, to take the place of Mary A. Bruce, who had resigned. In addition to his service as teacher of English, he filled the position of librarian of the institution, a position that at that time yielded a small extra salary for the brilliant young teacher.

On June 30, 1879, President Jones resigned and was succeeded in the presidency by George P. Brown.

President Parsons was elected professor of History and Civil Government and English Composition on July 7, 1881.

In June, 1882, President Brown was granted a leave of absence for two months and Professor Parsons was appointed by the board to attend to the office work during President Brown's absence.

To follow closely the chronological order of things in the professional life of President Parsons, we note that on April 19, 1883, he was elected vice-president of the State Normal and Professor of English.

President George P. Brown resigned from his position in 1885. It did not take the board of trustees and the public long to decide who should have the position left vacant. Peti-

tions were presented to the board by the alumni of the school and by the members of the faculty for the election of President Parsons. A resolution was speedily and unanimously adopted by the board to this end. He was elected on June 12, 1885, and filled the position as president from that date until September 30, 1921, when he laid aside the burdens he had borne so long and entered into a well earned rest. The period of his service was thirty-six years, three months and eighteen days.

President Parsons always gave the fullest measure of devotion to his native state, to the city in which he lived and to the institution over which he presided. Thousands of his former students remember with affection his untiring energy in their behalf, the spirit of friendliness and helpfulness at all times, and his undying faith in the good qualities of the young people with whom he came into contact. Those who were in his classes always speak of his ability as a teacher; those who came into contact with him in regard to the business affairs of the State Normal School had respect for his financial judgment; those who met him as a public speaker on a thousand Indiana platforms knew when they listened to him that they were hearing a master. There never could be any doubt in regard to his ability to impress all with whom he came in contact with the deep idea of what he was and what he could do. The writer well remembers hearing him deliver a lecture many years ago on Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar. This lecture was delivered in Evansville in 1895. More than thirty years have passed since that lecture was delivered but to this day the discussion of the play and the analysis of the characters have not been forgotten. Such was the power of the man in his prime that he commanded the deepest attention of all those whom he addressed or with whom he came into contact.

One of the most interesting incidents in the biography of President Parsons was the series of meetings held at the State Normal in 1910 in commemoration of the twenty-five years of service of Dr. Parsons as president of the institution. The alumni, former students and friends gathered at the Normal in large numbers to pay tribute to the man and his record as a school administrator. Many of the leading educators of the

state and Union had a part in the several programs. President Robert J. Aley, of Butler College, then State Superintendent; Demarchus C. Brown, State Librarian; Dr. Barton W. Evermann, of California; Bishop Edwin Holt Hughes, then President of De Pauw University; Dr. Charles H. Judd, of Chicago University; President W. E. Stone, Purdue University; Governor Thomas R. Marshall, and others came to Terre Haute on that occasion to pay tribute to the President and to his wonderful twenty-five years of administration.

Many gifts were presented to President Parsons at this time, among the most notable of them being a portrait painted by T. C. Steele, a celebrated Indiana artist. This painting was a gift of the alumni body.

Another high spot in the record of President Parsons was his work during the World War. He was tireless in his efforts to provide workers, money and speakers for the cause at home. He spared not himself in any way and gave the full measure of his devotion to his native land.

During his active career many degrees were conferred on President Parsons. Indiana University gave him the degree of master of arts, while De Pauw University and Wabash College conferred on him the degree of doctor of laws.

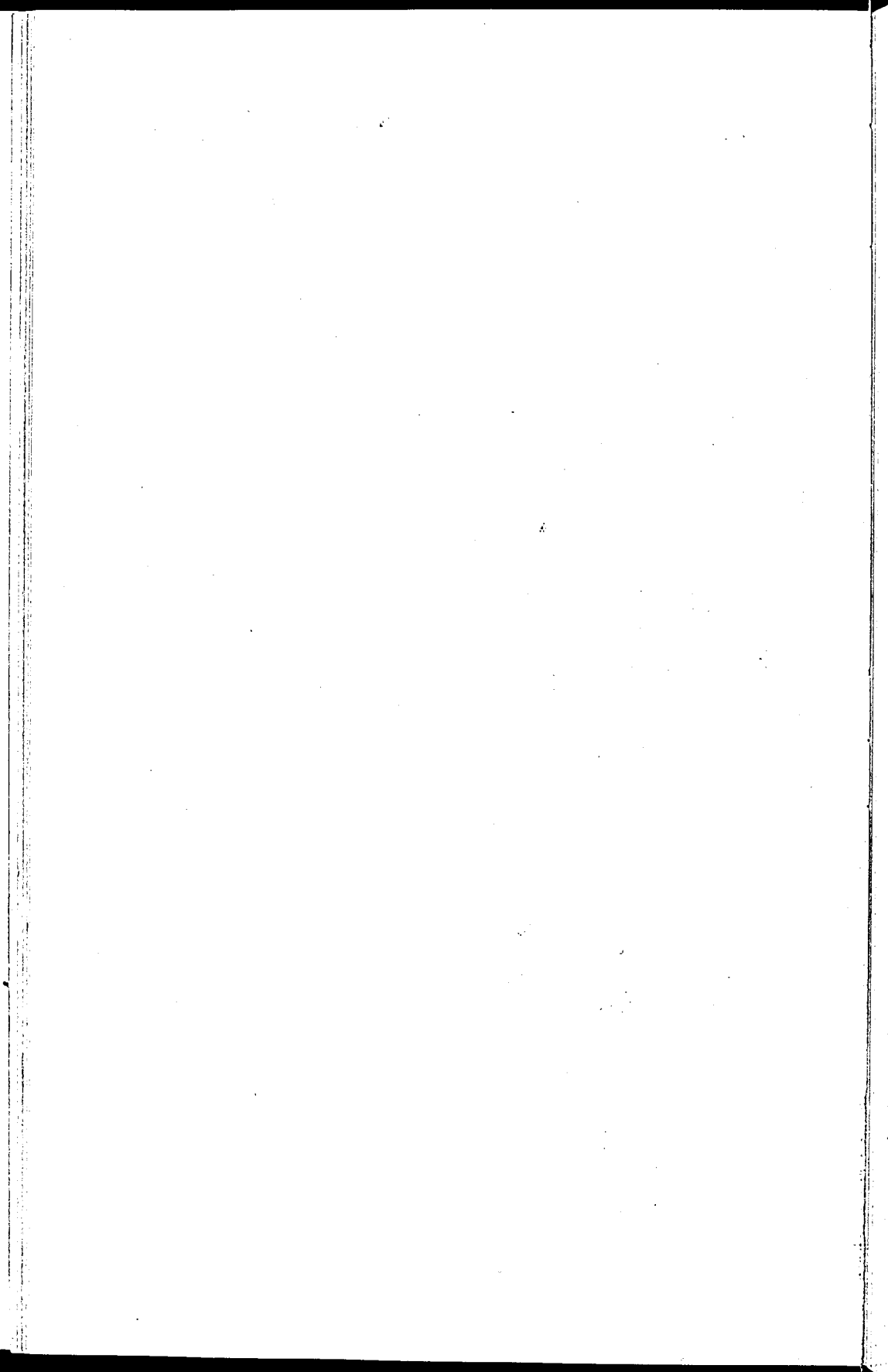
President Parsons was married in December, 1881, to Harriet Emily Wilkes, who was the daughter of a well known Terre Haute family. Mrs. Parsons was educated in Terre Haute and was a graduate of the State Normal. To this union were born two sons. The first one died in infancy and the second, Robert Wilkes Parsons, completed the work in the Normal Training High School and then, in 1910, entered Wabash College, where he finished his work in June, 1914. The young man died at the time of his graduation. His diploma was brought from Wabash College to Terre Haute by President George L. Mackintosh while Robert lay on his death bed. Mrs. Parsons died within a few months after the death of her son.

In 1918 Dr. Parsons was again married, this time to Miss Martina C. Erickson, who was then principal of Monticello Seminary, in Illinois. Miss Erickson had been Dean of Women at the State Normal School. Mrs. Parsons survives

her distinguished husband. His only other living relative is Edward W. Parsons, a nephew, of Atwood, Illinois, now a student in the University of Illinois.

In closing this sketch it is well to quote from the address of Governor Thomas Riley Marshall in behalf of the State Board of Education on the occasion of the celebration of the end of twenty-five years of the presidency of Dr. Parsons:

"I am pleased to say that sitting before you on this platform is one of the State's great teachers. President Parsons has set in motion a tide of truth, patriotism and faith which will in time overflow this State."



IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM WOOD PARSONS

1850-1925

INDIANA STATE NORMAL SCHOOL

Terre Haute, Ind.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER FOUR

NINETEEN HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE

(11)

**THE VALUE OF AN EDUCA-
TION REMAINS LONG AF-
TER THE COST IS FORGOT-
TEN.**

—President W. W. Parsons

MEMORIAL SERVICES

NORMAL HALL

9:30 A. M.

President L. N. Hines, Presiding

Hymn—Be Strong

Octette and Orchestra

Prayer

DR. JOHN E. SULGER

Rector St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Terre Haute

Addresses

For the School

PRESIDENT L. N. HINES

For the Alumni

DR. LOTUS D. COFFMAN

President, University of Minnesota

Minneapolis, Minn.

For the Board of Trustees

THE HONORABLE CHARLES A.

GREATHOUSE

Indianapolis, Indiana

For the Citizens of Terre Haute

MR. PAUL BOGART

President First National Bank

Terre Haute

For the State Board of Education

DR. WILLIAM LOWE BRYAN

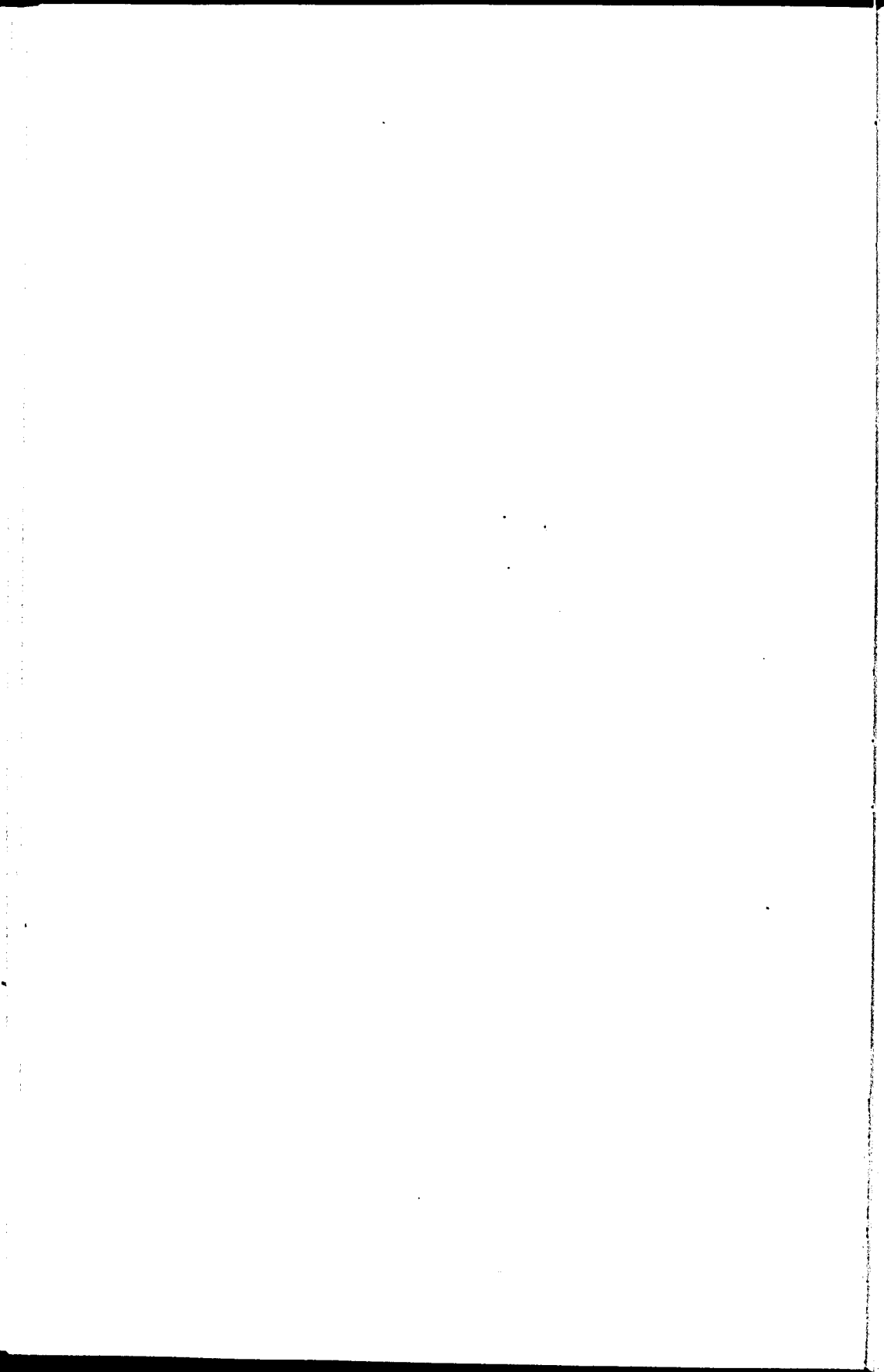
President Indiana University

Bloomington

Benediction

Music—Beautiful Isle of Somewhere

Normal School Orchestra



Prayer

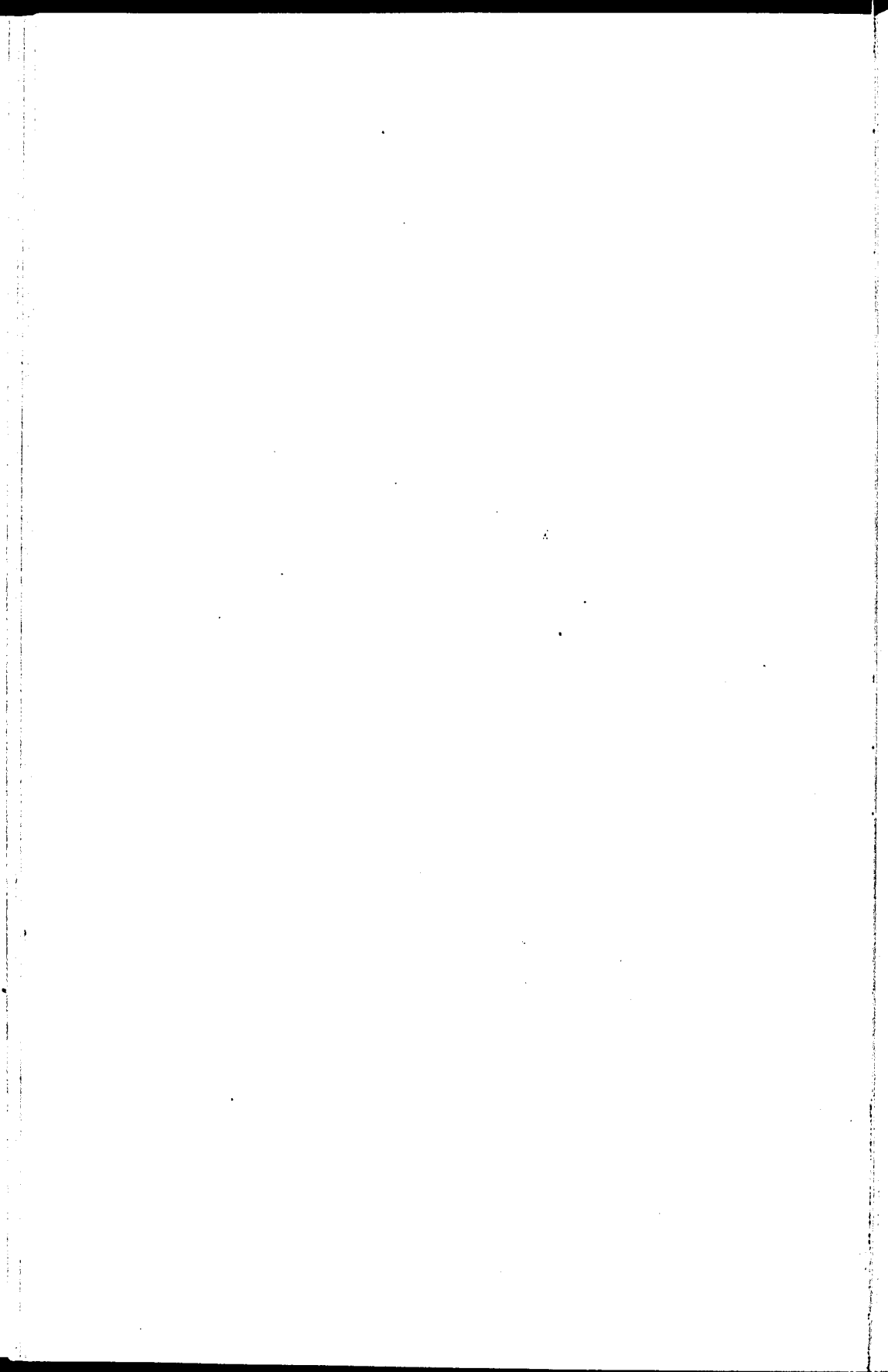
By the Rev. John E. Sulger

Rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Terre Haute

Almighty God and Heavenly Father, we bow before Thee in acknowledgement of Thy goodness and in submission to Thy Will. Be with us today in these Memorial Exercises conducted in Thy Name and presence as we humbly seek, under Thy divine blessing and favor, to do honor and reverence to the name and memory of Thy faithful servant departed, William Wood Parsons, whose monument is this Institution in which we are assembled, and who abides in the affectionate regard and esteem of those among whom he wrought and labored so long and faithfully. Remember him, we pray Thee, and grant that increasing in knowledge and love of Thee, he may go on from strength to strength in the service of Thy Heavenly Kingdom.

We thank Thee, O God, for his strong life, for his devotion to duty, for his high enthusiasms. And we bless Thy holy name for his far reaching influence and compelling example as an exponent of exalted ideals, and of consecration of purpose to noble ends. For this, as well as for the gifts of mind and heart with which he was endowed, for his wide helpfulness, for his unshaken faith, for his personal piety, and for his service to the Community, the State, and the Nation, we ask Thee to accept the tribute of our hearts in deep and devout gratitude.

Upon those to whom he was near and dear, who deeply mourn his loss, we pray Thee to look with compassion and pity. Multiply upon them the blessings of Thy love and comfort, and give them Peace. And we beseech Thee that they and we, who now serve Thee here on Earth, may at last be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light. For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen.



Address

By Linnaeus Neal Hines

President Indiana State Normal School

The Indiana State Normal School today pays tribute to a great leader dead—dead, yes—but living in the hearts of those he left behind. What we say here can make little difference to him who has shut his eyes in the last earthly sleep, but our paying this evidence of respect to him means much to us, for we want, first, to express the gratitude that springs up in our hearts, and, second, we realize that we grow by admiration for those people that are worthy of admiration. Such was our friend, and we pause today to do reverence to his memory in this hall that he knew so well and loved so much, this place where through the years he charmed and instructed the thousands of students who came here to learn from him and his fellow teachers.

President Parsons spoke on this platform for the last time at 9:50 a.m., Monday, May 18, 1925. That was the regular chapel hour and the day was his seventy-fifth birthday. We invited him here as a part of the celebration of the fact that he had reached the end of three-quarters of a century of life. On that occasion, as always, he spoke well. Much of what he said was of a reminiscent nature. What we wanted him to tell was the story of the days that were—days before the State Normal had opened its doors, days when he was a boy in the village of Terre Haute, days when he was a student in this institution, days when the full power of his manhood had come to him and he had entered on his great life work. He seemed to be well, vigorous, buoyant. He had reached seventy-five years and his many friends freely expressed their pleasure over the fact that he was so well and was so likely to be with us for many years to come.

Of course, no one realized when President Parsons had quit speaking on that happy birthday occasion, that he was not to be heard again within these walls. We told him, after that

last speech, that we expected to have at least twenty more birthday celebrations like that in his honor. He smiled, expressed his thanks, and passed out, never to return again to Normal Hall, and to visit the Normal offices only a few times in the few months of life that were left to him.

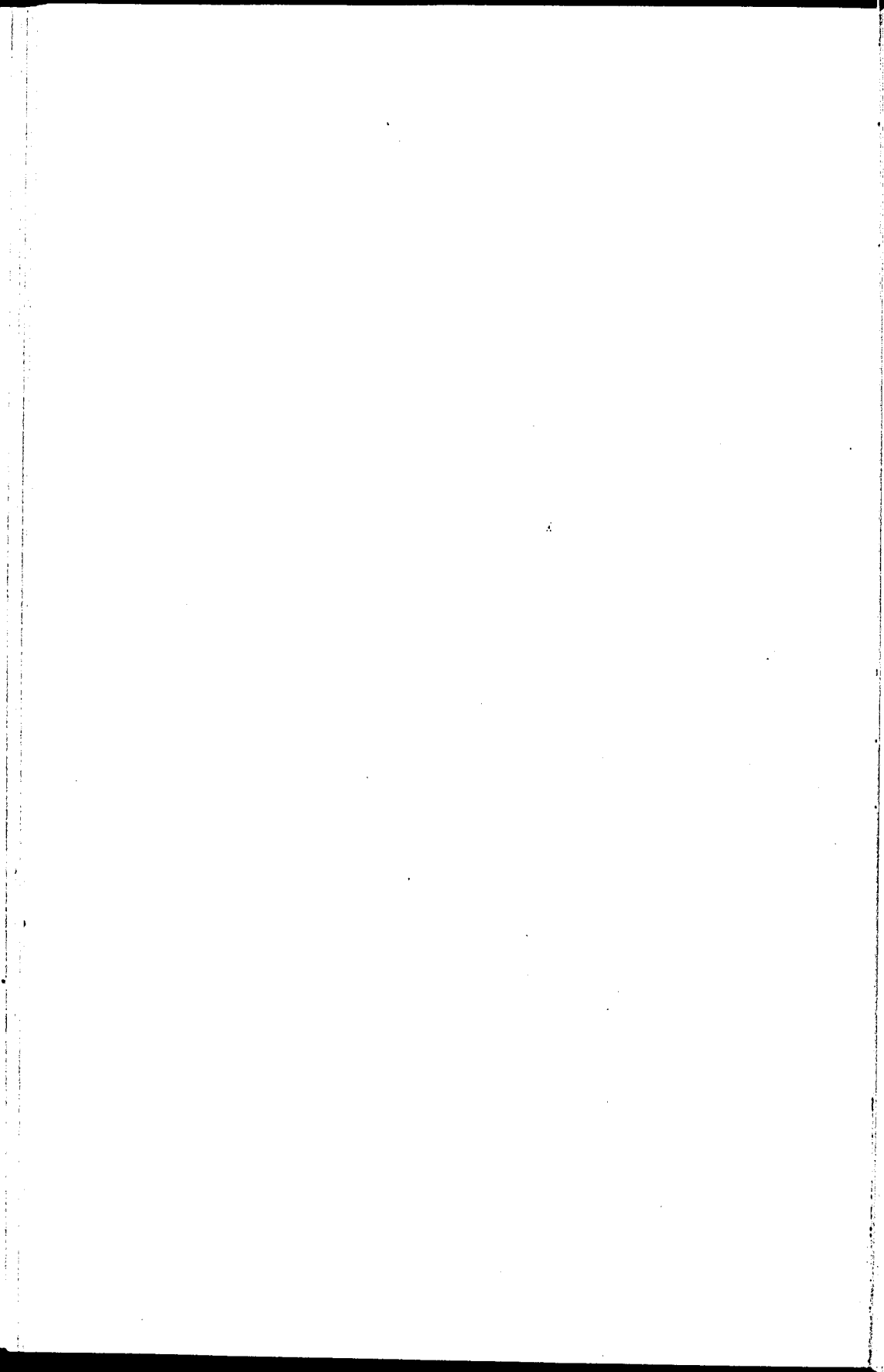
Dr. Parsons retired from the presidency of the State Normal on Friday evening, September 30, 1921. Lacking two days he died just four years later. He left every detail of his work in splendid shape on that Friday evening four years ago. He had finished every task. There was nothing left undone. All letters had been answered and everything had been prepared for the administration that was to come. He had, indeed, closed his work in masterly fashion. The new president needed only to open the desk the next morning and give his attention to tasks that lay ahead. Nothing could have been finer than the business-like way in which he closed his active work and prepared to enjoy the rest that he had so fully earned.

During his years of retirement, President Parsons maintained here in this main building an office of his own. He liked to come to that office, read, write, visit with his friends and talk about the days that had been. He had a friendly word for all—faculty and students alike. As one who knew him during all these years, I can say that I shall always recall with pleasure the conversations with him, his friendly counsel and advice, his willingness to help, his fund of anecdotes, the evidence he gave at all times of culture and learning—these things make up a list of wonderful memories of a wonderful man.

We of the Normal School extend a welcome today to these exercises in honor of the memory of Dr. Parsons—a welcome to you, his friends, his neighbors, his fellow-townsmen, his former students, his long-time acquaintances, his former co-workers, to all those who seek to do him honor. We feel a deep regret over the fact that Mrs. Parsons is not able to be here. Illness keeps her elsewhere. We wanted to say to her directly that we grieve over the passing of her distinguished husband. We extend to her today every wish for her speedy

recovery and wish for her every good thing that the years can bring.

President Parsons—you have gone but you remain. We do not see your form but we seem to hear your voice and we feel your influence. You have endowed us richly with the memories of a high example. This institution is largely the work of your hands. We who remain behind shall do our best to carry on worthily and thus pay tribute to the influence of a wonderful life.



Address

By Dr. Lotus D. Coffman

President University of Minnesota

It has been thirty-two years—almost one-third of a century, since I entered the halls of the Indiana State Normal School as a freshman. I was a typical freshman, green, awkward, unsophisticated, and bewildered by the city; the normal school itself—its great building, its size, its dignified and learned faculty, its student body, everything—quite overwhelmed me. And yet I was not lost, for there prevailed everywhere a spirit of helpfulness and of cordiality, an apparent interest in me and in my problems, which I afterward recognized and cherished as an expression of the atmosphere, if not the soul of the institution. With friendly guidance my registration was completed and with the ringing of the bell on the opening morning, I followed the other students to the chapel. There for the first time all the faculty were assembled. How well I remember them and how pleasant a task it would be to tell you the impressions of them. At their head near the piano, sat Mr. Parsons, the President, or as he sometimes insisted upon being called, the principal of the school.

That morning scene is indelibly impressed upon my mind. Following the singing I can see with memory's eyes Mr. Parsons arise from his seat and walk to the pulpit in the center of the platform. I have forgotten the scripture lesson he read and the prayer he offered, but I have not forgotten the fatherly, friendly, encouraging talk he gave us, nor have I forgotten how he turned from this to a discussion of what this school is for, why the state maintains it, what we should expect of it, what it in turn had a right to expect of us, and finally, what it means to prepare oneself for the profession of teaching. Until that day teaching had been just teaching to me—a way of earning a livelihood. I have drifted into it through more or less accidental relationships and adventitious circumstances. Its great call to service I had neither seen

nor appreciated. But that vision was opened to me in that chapel talk. Whatever misgivings the faculty may have had during my stay here as a student as to my ability to become a teacher, and I know that these apprehensions were many and that they were mentioned not infrequently to me, it nevertheless is a fact worth recording on this occasion, when we are assembled in tribute to our friend and leader, that his chapel service was pitched to the plane of the incoming freshman and that it had a great influence in determining his future course of action.

In this chapel incident lies, I believe, the cue to Mr. Parsons' influence upon the student body and the respect and esteem which the alumni have always had for him. To the students of this institution he never had but one dominating aim. To those outside he may have been a man of affairs, a civic leader interested in financial and charitable work, or a politician of rare skill and insight. Others may praise him for his achievements in these fields, but as far as the alumni of the Indiana State Normal School are concerned he was a great teacher and educational statesman. To us he thought and acted in terms of the good of the school. If by chance or intent he did something in the world outside it was for the purpose primarily of broadening his point of view and of increasing his usefulness to the school. He loathed provincialism and he abhorred narrow mindedness in the practice of any profession.

In his young manhood he deliberately chose to be a teacher and he early cast his lot with this school. He graduated from this school in 1872 and returned to it in 1876, becoming its president in 1885, which position he held for thirty-six years, retiring finally of his own volition to give way to a younger man. During these years he saw this institution develop and expand. The registration increased, new buildings were erected, faculty enlarged, new forms of service created. The institution never stood still because of a lack of ideals or ambition. It never became complacent and satisfied with its lot. It never developed an isolated and detached social point of view. On the contrary, Mr. Parsons, at home, before the legislature, and elsewhere throughout the state, was continually emphasizing the importance to the state of having trained teachers.

His philosophy involved an interpretation of the school in relation to the state; indeed, it went beyond that and called for a consideration on the part of the school of the service it should render society. The animating point of view of the school was a social point of view, the school lived, not for itself but for society's direct benefit.

Mr. Parsons having once made his choice and having cast his lot with teaching nothing ever lured him away. He was not a wanderer or drifter in the educational field. He stayed here and the trustees had the good sense to keep him here. The school grew in every way under his administration. A faculty of really distinguished teachers was gathered together. They were men and women of scholarship. Moreover, they could think and most of them could write. They thought and wrote and worked to provide a subject matter for the training of public school teachers. I do not believe that there is or has been any faculty of corresponding size anywhere in America that during its day and generation has contributed so much in the way of literature and organized programs of instruction to the training of teachers as has this faculty. But through all these years and in every department of the school there is abundant evidence and testimony that the Indiana State Normal School was, if any institution ever was, the lengthened shadow of its leader. He set up an ideal, he defined a goal, he organized a program, he exalted a profession, and others helped him to realize these things. Thousands of students have gone from this institution indoctrinated with the wholeness of the philosophy of this school.

How was this spirit developed? What was the force back of it? No adequate analysis can be made at this time. It is my opinion that the most potent influence in the individuality of this school, was the high consecration of Mr. Parsons to the profession of teaching. The incidents which flood my memory in support of this must be left unrecorded. He possessed convictions upon this matter which, to his way of thinking, were confirmed and accentuated with the passing years. To those of us who were his students, his vibrant voice was seldom, if ever, raised except in the interest of better teaching and better teachers. His great energy and dynamic and forceful person-

ality were always used to their utmost in this cause. He did not administer the school for personal glory, nor did he seek public office or public favor. He dedicated himself, his energy, his strength, his ability, and his powerful personality to one end—better public school teachers. That is the thing which the alumni emulate most in his life.

In discussing the dominant qualities in Mr. Parsons' makeup, there are many which I am deliberately omitting, such for example, as his superior judgment, his unusual administrative sense, and his unflagging interest in scholarly attainment. There was one thing in particular, so it seemed to me, which counted heavily in his success. It was his democracy. He was an aristocrat, perhaps I should say an evangel, so far as his belief and faith in his profession were concerned, but he was democratic in his contacts with others. He lived in the realm of high professional service but he walked on solid earth, mingling with his fellows and leading and directing the thought of the uninitiated his way.

His democracy expressed itself in many ways. He advocated wholesome social life and took part in it himself. What a revelation it was for me to see him step out on the floor and join in the dance, enjoying himself as much as any.

What a point of view I got of him when he went with a group of students in row boats up the Wabash to the old fort for a picnic supper! How helpful he was to me when I went to Indianapolis to apply to the State Intercollegiate Athletic Association for admission to the school! He took me to the old Bates Hotel with him for lunch. It was the first time I had ever been in a big hotel. I felt strange and lost, and even more so when the menu, printed in French, was laid before me. Mr. Parsons looked it over and read off the names of the things he wished. But that card meant nothing to me in my young life. There was no language on it which reminded me of any variety of food with which I was familiar. So with a look of innocence and a note of hope in my voice, I asked the waiter to bring the same as Mr. Parsons had ordered. What we got was some ordinary but perfectly respectable Indiana food.

I had many experiences with Mr. Parsons which showed how human he was in every respect. It is these experiences that I cherish most. One in particular, I recall. I was rooming with another young man in the vicinity of the Normal School. Our landlady decided that we were too noisy. We did stay up rather late chattering over our lessons, and we did sing a bit in the morning. Perhaps we did a little more of this than we should just to hear our landlady scold, for she was notorious throughout the whole neighborhood for her contempt of the students and for her sharp tongue. I am unable to tell at this remote date what influenced my roommate and myself to such great activity. It hardly seems possible that it was a manifestation of an impelling desire on our part to study long, and hard and loud in order that we might stand high in our classes; it does not seem to me that our singing was due to the belief that we had wonderful voices that only needed a little cultivation for us to become distinguished singers and that the morning was the best time to exercise them. Whatever the reason, it is nevertheless, a fact that the landlady neither liked our methods of study nor our voice exercises. Her emotions became more agitated and her speech more colored. Eventually she could stand it no longer. She served notice. In reply to which and with a mistaken notion of cleverness we wrote her a note, telling her that we expected to leave on a certain date, the day our rent expired, but that we would remain until midnight. We told her that we had invited a number of our friends in for the last night and in the language of the present day, "we were going to throw a party." Of course, we were issuing a special invitation to her to be present. We assured her that at midnight we would with due and impressive ceremony hand over the key to her and file silently from the house.

Well, this old lady didn't accept our invitation. She carried it to Mr. Parsons. And he sent for me as he very frequently did when anything happened about the institution. When I walked into his office there sat the landlady. He handed me the note, saying, "Lotus, did you write that?" I looked at him with my most angelic expression and said "Yes, sir." Then the landlady got started and she had much to say. Finally,

Mr. Parsons turning to me asked why I did it. I explained that we didn't mean any harm, that we had no thought of doing what we had outlined in our note, that we had done it merely because of the great provocation the old lady had given us. He looked across the table at me in a stern and severe manner, admonished me against the consequence of such conduct, and assured the landlady that she need have no further worries as he would take care of us. While I was taking what seemed to be a pretty severe reprimand from the president, the landlady's face glowed with great satisfaction. When the president was through, she left. I still sat there. Then Mr. Parsons came around the desk, placed his hand upon my shoulder and said, "Now, of course, you should not have done this." Then he paused, after which he continued, "I have known this old lady for years and the thing that surprises me is that something like this didn't happen long ago. In my heart I don't blame you very much, but this is not for publication." Turning to me with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye, he said, "Now get out of here, you young rascal!" Well, it is needless for me to enlarge upon my state of mind as I left his office. The old lady may have been happy, but her happiness was nothing as compared with mine. I had, of course, been taught a valuable lesson but at the same time I had been won by the president because he could see and appreciate the situation from my point of view.

It is a wonderful gift to be able to admonish without creating a multitude of unpleasant reactions, to be able to criticise without leaving a permanent sting, to punish without generating ill will. Perhaps it isn't a gift, it may be an expression of wisdom. In all of his dealings with the students, there was no lowering of the dignity of the institution nor was there any loss of personal status on the part of the president. He knew how to be sociable, he cultivated sociability, and even though he had numerous contacts and demands with the outside world, he maintained a friendly intimacy, during my days at least, with the student body. He addressed many of us in personal conversation by our first names and continued to do it as long as he lived. He was the father; we were his children. He could and he did chastise us, but he never ceased

to love us. We were of his family bound to him by the ties of professional blood.

His democracy was continually manifested in the enjoyment he got from association with people. He was a student of philosophy and reader of good books, but was above all a student of human nature. He was a good companion. He liked to talk with you about your hopes and ambitions, your desires and aspirations. He would visit with you by the hour, if his administrative duties permitted, discussing some of the fundamental questions of the philosophy of life. In all of his conversations there was a fine and cultivated sense of humor, which made both the conversation and the man the more interesting. I have no doubt but that this sense of humor helped him to dispose of many a problem and situation that would otherwise have been very provoking. Continued association with young people and with persons in other walks was a part of his deliberate program. He believed that these contacts would give him a healthier and saner interpretation of his duties as the head of this great institution. He was also convinced of the truth that if one confines his thought to a given field he will become narrow and unsafe. It was his profound conviction that the leadership of a great teacher training institution that was seeking to serve the interests of a developing society, must be open-minded and progressive at all times.

Animated by the spirit of youth, endowed with a liberating sense of humor, and controlled by a philosophy of life which called for continual reinterpretation and readjustment, he persistently refused to grow old. He would not follow the trodden path, if a by-path seemed to offer new adventures. He had no mind-set and static view of life. His mind remained plastic to the end. One of the surest signs of plasticity of mind is an interest in the unconventional, a willingness to try new things, a desire to break through tradition, a readiness to modify one's thought and action to conform to the changing conditions of life. All this Mr. Parsons possessed to a high degree.

Now his course is run. His work, we say, is finished. Students, faculty, alumni, and friends meet together to pay their

respects to him. Not to him alone, but to the things for which he stood. If one of the measures of immortality is found in the influences one leaves at work among his fellowmen, then our departed friend and teacher must possess immortality of the enduring sort. He was a remarkable and distinguished leader of teacher training. Currents of influence radiated from him in all directions and now for years eddies have been flowing back with increasing strength from thousands of alumni in every part of the world. They will not cease with his passing. On the contrary, they will gather in volume and particularly if those of us who participate in these exercises and those whom we represent, do upon this occasion, while our thoughts are focused upon the life of our leader, who, a student himself, an artist teacher, and an educational statesman, re-consecrate ourselves to the calling we chose and which he reflected honor upon in such high degree.

Address

By Mr. Charles A. Greathouse

[NOTE—Mr. Greathouse was unable to be present at the Memorial Services. In his absence Mr. Sanford M. Keltner, President of the Board of Trustees, spoke briefly about his long period of acquaintance with President Parsons and the remarkable influence which he had exerted upon this school and the community and State.]

More than half a century ago the Indiana State Normal School came into being. At that time there was but one building, without library or laboratory and with an enrollment of twelve young women and eight young men.

Today the institution consists of a group of large, modern, well-equipped buildings and with an enrollment of almost three thousand students and during its existence has trained to some extent, nearly fifty thousand teachers.

It was on the 12th day of June, 1885, William Wood Parsons became President of the Normal School and with due regard to all who have served in the position as President, I may be permitted to say that he is the outstanding man, not only here at the Normal and in the city of Terre Haute, but in all educational affairs of the State. During the years of his Presidency the school has stood for the best educational facilities of the state and nation. I mention these facts concerning the Normal School because here it was that President Parsons lived. Here were his thoughts. Here he came and went. Here his voice was heard in the halls, class rooms and chappel. Here he mingled with the faculty and students for more than a quarter of a century and during all that time I cannot imagine anyone thinking of the Normal School without at the same time thinking of its President. There is not a stone in the foundation, a brick in the construction, a tile in the roof of any building on this campus that was not put there by the untiring efforts and unfaltering devotion of the man who served so long and so well as its President.

The greatest tribute to President Parsons remains in the memory of those who knew him and have been associated with him and could appreciate his remarkable intellectual gifts. He had a comprehensive and all-embracing knowledge of the world's literature and was familiar with the poets, essayists and the drama of all ages. He spent many happy hours in the study and interpretation of the tragedies of Shakespeare.

Although we pay homage to his achievements as a teacher, scholar, man of letters, administrator, orator and financier, the remembrance of him as a friend is the most precious memory of those who knew him, for President Parsons was preeminently a friend. Young and old, rich and poor, found in him a good friend and kindly neighbor whose ready sympathy and understanding were always theirs, for their sorrows and their joys were his, his home their happy meeting place where all were welcome. We think of his association with the young people whose privilege it was to come in contact with him, to whom he was a beloved ideal and inspiration, and whom he sent out into the world with lives enriched by his friendship. He possessed that rare understanding of the mind and heart of youth which won their eternal affection and gratitude.

President Parsons, with his great heart and mind and his sincere concern for the dignity and enlightenment and progress of the old Hoosier State, leaves here this monument, a sufficient answer to all pessimists who complain that things are not as they once were. He believed the world a much better place than ever before. He thought the doors of opportunity were never before flung open so wide as they now are to aspiring American youth and it is to his everlasting honor and glory that in this great piece of constructive work he has demonstrated his idealism, his good citizenship and his practical understanding of the needs of the Commonwealth and his sympathy with the purpose and aspiration of all who truly love America.

Address

By Mr. Paul Bogart

President First National Bank, Terre Haute

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Three quarters of a century ago in this City there was born a child who was destined to exert on this community, perhaps more than any other man of his generation, a profound force in the creation of worthy citizenship.

Education is the greatest single force there is for the creation of worthy citizens. The teachers of the children of any land have a wonderfully direct influence upon the quality of the future citizenship of their pupils. How much broader is the power of the teacher of teachers; through the product of his work, if he be truly inspired, he impresses his ideals and theories of life upon an ever broadening circle.

Such a man was William Wood Parsons. For more than forty years, upon this very place where now we meet to do him reverence, with his sagacious intellect, his warm humanity and his rugged character he worked upon the minds of young men and women, slowly and surely impressing them with his philosophies and his creeds which they were in turn to pass on to the youth entrusted to their tuition.

"As a man thinketh so is he." Therefore in seeking to analyze the influence of Dr. Parsons, what he thought is of vastly more importance than what he did or how he did it, and his direct and clear thinking and his concise expression of it left no room for doubt in the minds of his intimates as to the high quality of his thoughts.

He was an intense individualist. He believed that society reached its highest expression through the development of its individual members rather than by mass movement. He believed that real character was the only foundation upon which to rear a worthy life work and that self denial, self analyzing thought and unflagging industry were necessary tools in such an erection. He had little patience with the type of man

who coasts through life, taking an easy course. He knew that he who coasts is always descending and that he who reaches the heights must labor in the ascent.

He feared that the modern plan, of society-in-mass caring for the under-privileged tended to take away from them the desire to climb and while he had a warm sympathy for the unfortunate his remedy was to equip them by education and the strengthening of character to surmount their difficulties rather than to coast over them through temporary aid from society at large. He believed that each individual should constantly strive to improve himself by his own efforts and by the constant exercise of his own power of thought so as to make of himself a greater force in his community. He prescribed no rules of conduct for his fellows that he did not impose upon himself, and to the end of his life he kept his own mind open, tolerant and free to new thought, new ideas and new conceptions of duty and responsibility. He acted upon his own convictions and held himself rigidly to his own standards; no one else did his thinking for him or mapped out his course.

He had a rare type of mind in that he was at once an intellectual and a practical man of affairs. He participated largely in the business life of the community and by his wise counsel and prudent foresight contributed greatly to the success of numerous business and financial institutions.

In the churchyard at Old Bennington, Vermont, there is inscribed an epitaph to one of the old New England pioneers which might well have been written of Dr. Parsons.

"He possessed a prompt and vigorous mind; a spirit of enterprise and perseverance, which enabled him to discharge with respectability and success a great variety of useful and benevolent duties."

He believed in the dignity of living and maintained throughout his life in this community a home of dignified culture and refinement which could not do otherwise than impress this ideal upon his friends and neighbors.

He was an uncommonly emotional man; he gave largely of love and loyalty to those upon whom his affection was fixed. He deeply appreciated and desired the love of his friends—and it was given to him in large measure—yet if he had had to

choose he would have chosen to be respected rather than to be liked. Just as he insisted upon others holding themselves to standards of respectable conduct, so did he hold himself to them. His own dignity and self respect were essential to him and therein lay his strength. He suffered in life as deep griefs as can come to man but bore himself through them with manly strength and fortitude.

By his manner of life, by his works and by his thoughts he has, through a long and graceful life, greatly enriched this community and its present and future citizens shall long enjoy the heritage he has left for them.

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Address

By Dr. William Lowe Bryan

President Indiana University

(An Abstract)

More than fifty years ago the Indiana State Normal School was established under the leadership of President Jones. President Jones was undoubtedly a man of extraordinary power. I do not know this directly since I never knew him. However, members of the first faculty have told me of the marvelous influence which the president exerted over their ideas and spirit. He brought to them profound philosophical ideas with the fervor of a religion, so that soon his ideas and fervor dominated the teaching of the entire faculty. At the same time these influences were brought to bear with compelling power upon the young people who entered as students. As a result there came from the State Normal School in its early days a group who became national leaders in education. Of these none exerted a greater influence than Howard Sandison and William W. Parsons. Mr. Sandison, relieved as he was from administrative duties, gave the whole strength of his powerful mind and noble heart to the work of teaching. President Parsons was also a great teacher but also a great administrator. It was his part through the years to organize the forces by which the ideas permeating the school should permeate the state. Twenty years after the founding of the State Normal School it is certain that the ideas of that institution were more general and more influential amongst the teachers of the state of Indiana than any other. Innumerable times I have talked with students of the second, third and fourth generations who, like the first disciples of the school, were filled as far as they were capable according to their ability, with profound ideas and with the zeal of religion.

It is doubtless true that the students subjected to these influences will carry them through life.

The strength of mind which made President Parsons a success in his chosen field would have made him a success in many other fields of high endeavor. I sometimes had the impression that he regretted not having been a lawyer. If he had entered the law he would undoubtedly have been a great one by reason of the strength of his mind and the force of his will. The success which he and those associated with him achieved should encourage others to have faith in the power of great ideas to exert real influence in a democracy.

Letter

From the College of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

Mr. Chairman, Dear Friends:

As the representative of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, I have the honor to convey to this assembly, expressions of the admiration, the respect, and the reverence in which the memory of Dr. Parsons is held at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Placing our laurels on his tomb, we would wish to quote those poets who have so well expressed the sorrow of the human heart upon the loss of true and greatly cherished friends. Mingled thoughts from all the elegies rush in upon the heart and mind as one dwells upon the memory of this great educator and well-beloved man. Fittingly indeed might these be repeated in extolling the splendid manhood of our lamented Dr. Parsons. His nobility and integrity of character, his culture, his learning, his great-mindedness, his masterful teaching, his beneficent influence, especially that well-nigh boundless influence for good upon the lives of the thousands of young men and women who came within the light and blessing of his personality,—all these are subjects for our admiration and our praise.

To this paeon of honor Saint Mary-of-the-Woods brings a personal tribute of profound respect and gratitude. From his childhood, Dr. Parsons knew and loved Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. And his life-long fine and valued friendship will be forever counted as one of the signal blessings in the history of the school.

In the words of the Wise Man, "Many shall praise his wisdom, and it shall not be forgotten. The memory of him shall not depart away, and his name shall be in request from generation to generation."

Telegram

Rochester, Minn., Nov. 2, 1925.

President L. N. Hines, Indiana State Normal School, Terre Haute, Ind.:

One of the great disappointments of my life will ever be that because of physical disability I shall be unable to be present Wednesday, November 4th, at the beautiful exercises planned as a memorial to my dear husband. I shall be with you in thought and spirit.

Mrs. William Wood Parsons.

[Address delivered by Mr. Lawrence McTurnan, Class of 1897, at the Normal School banquet at the Claypool Hotel, Indianapolis, Thursday, October 22, 1925.]

Our Debt to President Parsons

Our beloved friend, Dr. William Wood Parsons, has gone. Words are feeble instruments in the hands of one of humble limitations to do justice to the affection which cloaks his memory or to render due praise and honor to his pioneer achievement in educational thought. If his passing has left its mark of sadness in the hearts of those who loved him it has left a compensating pride to be cherished by those who understood the greatness of his accomplishments. Where there was once a blazed trail of education methods which wound about among the forests of uncertainty there is now a broad national highway of enlightened procedure leading by the most direct line from darkness to the light of understanding. There lies the worthy and lasting tribute to the mind of our friend and leader. He has built his own monument. It will perpetuate his memory long after our words of praise have ceased to echo.

His mind searched with the restlessness of a pioneer, his eyes saw with a vision which penetrated all obstacles, his heart throbbed with a courage to carry out his convictions and his strength thus inspired never failed.

President Parsons, was, first of all, a great teacher and he understood a half century ago the need of basing the teaching processes upon scientific principles of pedagogy. In behalf of these principles, he fought many hard battles and became a scarred but victorious veteran in the cause of professional teaching. In these struggles he met with three outstanding challenges. Each one of these challenges was backed by such a large number of prejudiced and uninformed people that it taxed all his giant powers to overcome it.

His first challenge

For many years President Parsons and Professor Howard Sandison bore the brunt of the fight in Indiana to make teaching a real profession. In the beginning of this struggle many college men scoffed at the idea of establishing courses of study in *History of Education* and in *Principles of Teaching*. They objected to the time given to *practice teaching* and in substance declared there was no need for a normal school. These critics believed in rote and cram. They said: "Fill your head with subject matter and you can teach." The short-sightedness of these men now seems pathetic but their scorn was a problem in the early days when the teaching profession was struggling for "a place in the sun."

In those days colleges and universities would not deign to recognize "the mollicoddle courses in Education." It is true there were other normal schools trying to meet the onslaught of opposition and they were struggling nobly, but teacher-training as a profession was not placed upon a solid foundation until these numerous scoffers were hushed.

Against this criticism from well-meaning but misled men, President Parsons set his iron will. With the aid of many noble men and women and with the sympathy and help of that matchless teacher, Howard Sandison, he won, and today all over our land colleges and universities have come to see that great store houses of knowledge, while essential, are not alone sufficient unto the teacher who would lead the student with the utmost skill from "the known to the nearest related unknown."

Today, thanks to such stalwart men as Dr. Parsons, normal schools have enlarged and strengthened their courses of study and the efficiency of these schools has increased amazingly. Not only have the normal schools been placed on a high plane in professional work for teachers, but the colleges and universities all over our country now point with pride to their teacher-training departments.

In Indiana, due to the tremendous efforts of our lamented leader, funds were created sufficient to enable him to gather about him an able faculty of men and women who were effi-

cient in teaching and noble in character. He selected instructors with such care and wisdom that he could justly refer to them as he was wont to do with a distinct pride and deep affection.

He established courses of instruction, requiring work of such breadth and depth of study that the school of which he was so long President came to be considered by educators everywhere as the best of its kind in America. The students were taught the value and the purposes of the mind and gradually the products of the normal school rose above the contempt in which they had been held and commanded the recognition of the great universities of the country.

The graduates of this school have for many years wielded a marked influence in directing the course of education from the primary work in the elementary schools to the heads of the greatest universities in America. Their contributions have advanced the torch throughout the length and breadth of the country and with one accord they give the largest credit for their power and mastery to their first love, their Alma Mater, the Indiana State Normal School. Thus do the echoes from this great school roll from soul to soul and grow forever and forever.

Every brick and stone in the beautiful and commodious buildings on the campus were laid through the untiring efforts of Dr. Parsons. The splendid and up-to-date equipment in the different departments and the great library, which remains unrivaled in any Normal School in the land, are products of our late President's handiwork.

His second challenge

A little more than a quarter of a century ago there arose in Indiana much opposition to higher education in both the state university and the normal school at public expense. Private schools and church schools united in an effort to block public taxation and legislative appropriations of public funds for institutions of higher learning. Those were critical days in the history of higher education in Indiana and they called for heroic action. The feeling between the non-state school men

and the state school men grew tense. A day was set for a public hearing between the contending factions. The question was: "Should the people pay taxes for maintenance of the state universities and normal school?"

The non-state school forces were led by well-meaning but misled religious zealots who could not get the vision of the great future in which we now live. The meeting was attended by the best talent the colleges, the universities and normal school could muster. Many men spoke and it seemed that the cause of the state institutions was losing ground when it came Dr. Parsons' turn to speak.

Everyone who had the privilege of attending this historic debate will remember Dr. Parsons' address. He was so thoroughly prepared and his logic so convincing through his powerful oratory, that he made the enemies of the state schools tremble. He hurled a veritable Phillippic at his opponents. His logic and his eloquence completely overwhelmed them. He did to the opposition what John Quincy Adams said Webster did to Hayne in his famous reply to the Southern Senator. "He didn't even leave a wreck." From that day scarcely a chirp was heard against the state schools.

Most of the men who took the leading part in that bitter, state-wide fight have passed on. It must be said, however, in credit to most of the non-state men, that before many years had passed they saw the error of their way, and those few who still survive Dr. Parsons now honor him for his courageous and victorious stand.

In later years Dr. Edwin Holt Hughes, now Bishop Hughes, came to Indiana as President of De Pauw University. He saw the wisdom of President Parsons' arguments and upheld them. He declared that the private schools enjoyed greater prosperity in every way when the state schools were properly financed. For many years all normal schools and colleges in Indiana have worked together in harmony toward the high purpose for which they were created.

Every state institution of higher learning in Indiana today and all that may yet come, owe Dr. Parsons an everlasting

debt for the masterful way in which he won a complete victory over the powerful and aggressive forces against the state's right to give its sons and daughters a higher education.

His third challenge-

For almost a half century there had been a groping for better teaching in our high schools. Elementary teaching had steadily improved until the day came when it was generally admitted that the poorest teaching was being done in the high schools. Too many high school teachers followed the lead of those that sneered at scientific teaching and employed the filling and pouring process. Often there were no moulds for the pourings and no results were accomplished.

President Parsons was one of the first to sound this note of warning. He declared that high schools were part and parcel of the common schools and that it was the province of the normal school to train high school teachers for their high calling. He demanded that high school teachers quit imitating university men who, though they might be scholars, were not teachers in the best sense of the term. Be it said to his honor he won, and today our two State Normal Schools train teachers for high school work, and a degree from one of the Indiana State Normal Schools stands for as much as a similar degree from any college in the country.

It may be mentioned here that powerful influences attempted a few short years ago to discredit and even abolish this vital factor in our teacher-training courses in the State Normal Schools, but due to our worthy President L. N. Hines and a few friends the plot was felled to earth where let us hope it lies buried forever. No true friend of education in Indiana will ever try to resurrect it.

It is proper and fitting here to mention these three great challenges which were so important in the advancement of education in Indiana. In these times of educational peace it is easy to grow insensible to our debt to these heroes of the past who made our state's present road of progress one of comparative ease and comfort.

Let us salute the men of that day who fought for righteous

causes, and let us waive a double salute to our Friend just over the Border, for the valiant and successful victories which he won, which will be a blessing to each succeeding generation so long as time shall last.

For thirty-six years Dr. Parsons served as President of the Indiana State Normal School and while there were a few tempests within the four walls of the school, these, in the hands of a master of men such as he, were quickly and easily brushed aside. He treated small affairs with the slight attention they deserved.

He was a noted lecturer and as already has been said he was an orator that had to be reckoned with by the worthiest antagonist. Never can his hearers forget his fiery addresses when he was once fully aroused. The school world never had a better advocate from the forum, and America has had but few speakers who could so move men in prepared or impromptu speeches.

Dr. Parsons was a business man of high rank. Fortunately it proved that his success in one avenue strengthened and fortified him in his struggles in other lines.

He was a man of worldly wisdom and worldly means, and yet he was always complete master of both. His philosophy was as much opposed to Epicureanism as it was to Sophistry. He knew that the true way of life lay in the things eternal. Because of his ascendancy over things sordid, temporal and temporary we owe him a treble salute. All honor to the man, who, through long years of power and success retains unaffected, the vibrant chords, which respond to the sweetest notes of truth, beauty and goodness. This responding chord answered in harmony when he was asked to serve as trustee of the Orphans' Home, where he served many years. Again it sounded in harmony when he resolved to keep two poor boys in college every year. Again and again it responded in numerous ways of which his most intimate friends scarcely learned. No student ever called in vain to him for help. He loved his school and while she was a small school at first, yet, as Webster said at Dartmouth, "There were those who loved her," and through love she grew and bloomed.

When one thinks of Dr. Parsons' great talents and his power over men and things, and remembers his kindness of heart, he is reminded of the poet's couplet:

"The tenderest are the bravest
The loving are the daring."

Even such a brief tribute such as this to President Parsons must take into account his fifty years of bosom-friendship for Professor Sandison. These two men loved each other and for forty years this noble pair did harmonious team work arm in arm in the cause of education—a record unparalleled in the Normal School history of the country. They launched in the educational ship together as young men. They were many times at sea but never lost. The Captain explored new waters yet all the time he was guided by the stars of eternal principles and he brought his vessel safely into port. His mate measured with fine instruments the spirit and nature of the cargo. The Captain was a master hand to deal with the storms however rough, while the Mate saw to it that all was well within when the landing was made.

In all the years no one ever heard these two friends indulging in idle or trifling conversation. They felt their task to be a sacred one and there was no patience with shallow and frivolous effort in the face of their great mission.

These two great men did team work in behalf of their school which will stand out as a beautiful heritage for the faculty, student body and alumni forever. It is a priceless heritage of which I believe no other normal school in America has a counterpart. Let me repeat, *this is a priceless heritage* of which any school may justly be proud. Schools may be made rich by the money of generous men, but the school which is hallowed by rich memories of great spirits is spiritually endowed and thrice blessed.

The school that does not honor such a rich spiritual and intellectual legacy, for its own sake and for the sake of future generations of teachers, is dead in spirit, dead, dead as Old Marley and the door nail. We *know* that the spirit of this great institution is alive and that it is *quick and sensitive*.

All that is needed is to awaken the great body of supporters of this school to its opportunities, and point the way to the best method of advancing the torch which has been passed on to us, lit with such an illuminating flame.

In behalf of the ideals of both youth and age a tribute must be paid to our departed friend for the way in which he passed his declining years. After retiring from active school work the Normal School Board honored him by electing him President Emeritus, but this duty required little of his time.

He divided his time between study in his library and business. He was elected president of the board of directors of the First National Bank of Terre Haute. He was also identified with a number of other business firms.

In his studies he carried research in three distinct lines of work even though he had passed the three score years and ten. The Bible and the Masters of Literature formed one course. His other lines of study were in political economy and the great philosophies of the world. He was a thorough student of Shakespeare, and his interpretations of Shakespeare's plays and of the great drama Job, were masterpieces.

He spent his last years joyfully with his wife in their beautiful home where they were surrounded by books and friends. As he ascended the hilltop the twilight came creeping after him. He could see the sun lowering in the golden west. He could see far down the road of life over which he came, and the view was not dimmed by unworthy deeds. The view was worthy of one who looked his fellow man full in the eye and played the game of life fairly.

He could look upward with expectant joy. He knew he had been a part of God's great plan and that in the Divine order, he would reap as he had sown; with this he was content.

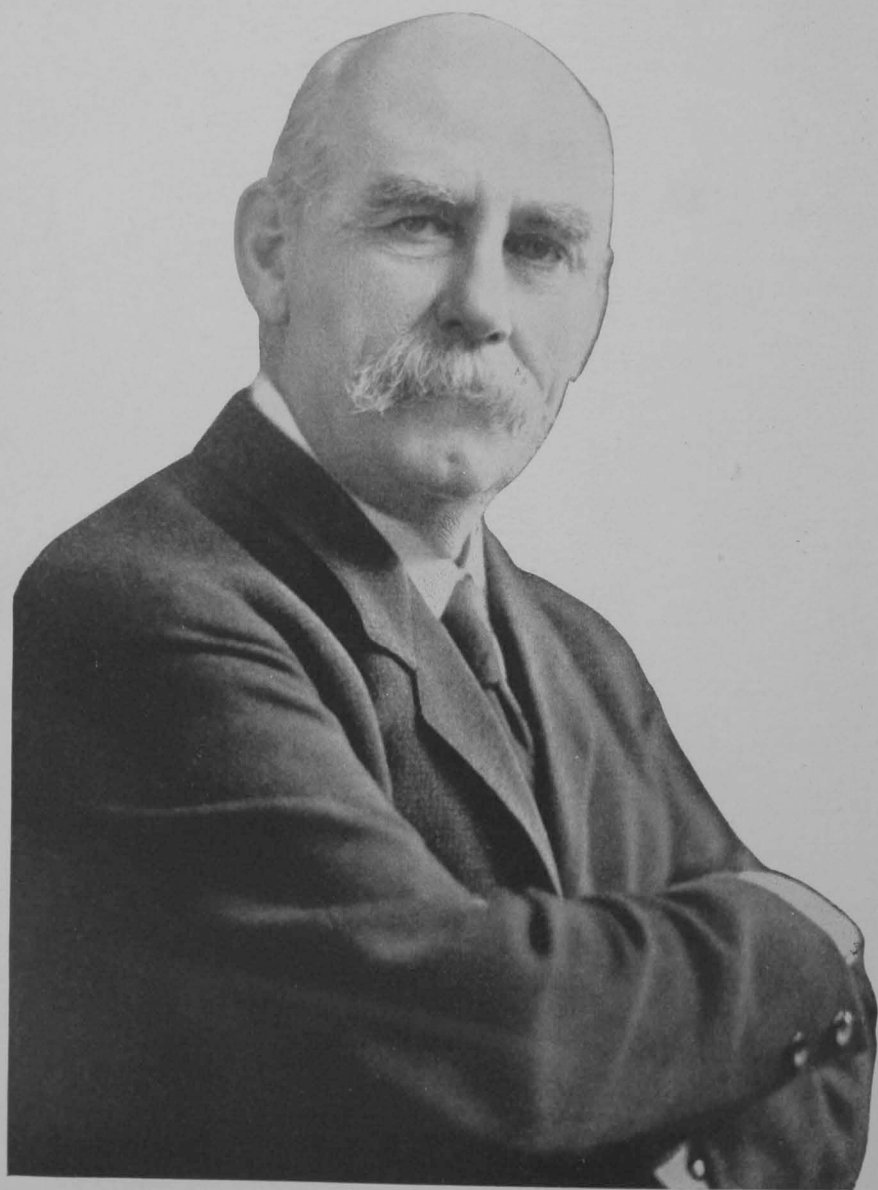
His last challenge

As he neared the crest of the Border he met his last challenge. He had been master of men but now came a stronger and more experienced foe than he had ever met before. Death

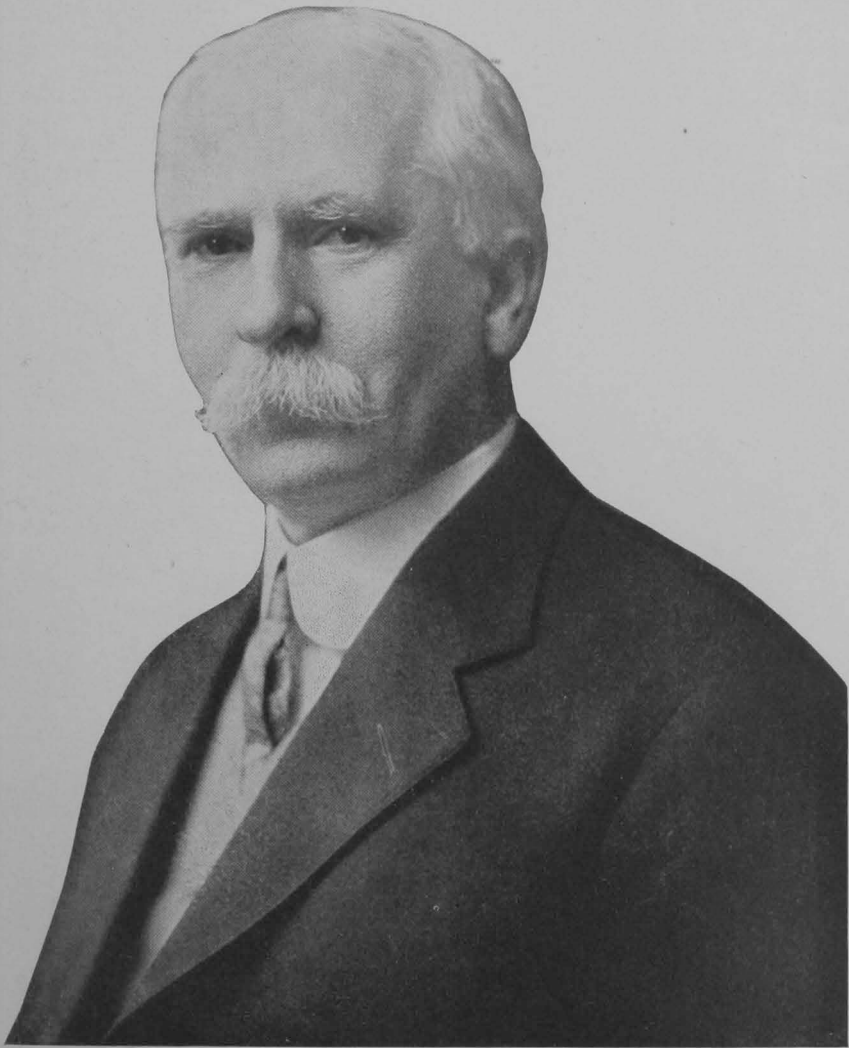
grappled with him and for eight long weeks our great friend held on with weak and weaker clutch until at last he was defeated, defeated—yet in that defeat he won a glorious victory.

Such my dear friends was the man whom we loved. He was our hero, and truly was he worthy of Anthony's tribute to noble Brutus:

“His life was gentle; and the elements
So mixed in him that nature might stand up
And say to all the world, ‘This was a man.’”



PRESIDENT WILLIAM WOOD PARSONS



VICE-PRESIDENT HOWARD SANDISON