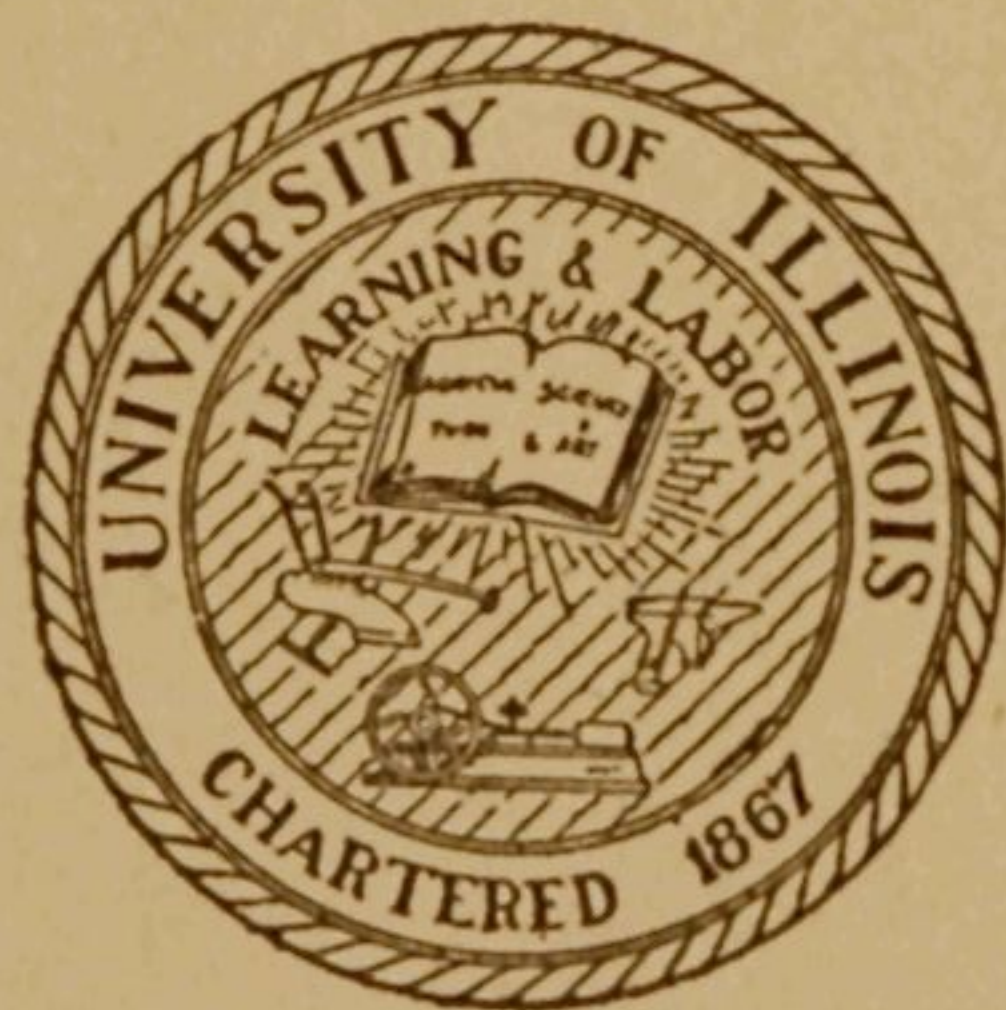


ADDRESS DELIVERED BY  
**HARRY WOODBURN CHASE**  
AT HIS INSTALLATION AS  
THE SIXTH PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS**



THE LIBRARY OF THE  
OCT 5 1932  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.

URBANA, ILLINOIS, MAY 1, 1931

C  
Iloukcha  
cop. 3

10:06

## Installation Address

2 min 45 sec

President HARRY WOODBURN CHASE:

It is with a deep sense of responsibility and of opportunity that I respond, Mr. President, to your formal words of induction into this high office. The history of the University of Illinois is so distinguished, the opportunities that lie before it so vast, that one is sobered at such a moment by the task that confronts him.

The University of Illinois is not, as universities go, an old institution. Incorporated in 1867 as the Illinois Industrial University in response to the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act, it was opened in 1868 with a Regent, two professors, and fifty students. These busy professors gave instruction in five departments: agriculture, polytechnics, military, chemistry and natural science, and general science and literature. In March, 1870, the trustees voted to admit women as students, and twenty-four entered sixty years ago this fall. In 1877 the University was authorized to confer degrees; in 1885 its name was changed to the University of Illinois. This is not the time for a recital of the successive steps by which the simple small college of those early days became the great university of today; by which, in a little more than sixty years, fifty students grew to nearly fifteen hundred people engaged in teaching, in research and in extension in the modern complex assemblage of colleges, schools, extension and research services, experiment stations and bureaus that is the University of Illinois. I will merely say that under able and wise leadership its history has been one of steady progress in usefulness and distinction. Few institutions have known more loyal and devoted service, none owe a greater debt to those whose lives of unselfish devotion have made possible the University of today. The history of the University of Illinois may be short, but it is rich in the names of those who have given it of their best in unrestricted measure.

State universities like the University of Illinois are expressions of the faith that the provision of opportunities for higher education is one of the functions of the American Commonwealth. Their history is as old as that of the Nation. The first of them developed in the older states as a part of that democratic ferment of ideas that produced, among other things, the American Revolution, and that brought a new nation into being. In states like the Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia, they represented a philosophy of education that was inherent in the thinking of the founders of the Nation. As the new Nation expanded, they found their place in the original constitutions of those states formed from the old Northwest Territory, and in many others since. Some of them, like the University of Illinois, were stimulated by the original land grants of the Federal government. Others are of still more recent foundation.

We have never believed, we Americans, that there should be any sort of government monopoly on higher education. We have held that the field was free for private benevolence, for church, and other agencies. The result has been the happy one that institutions of many sorts, with various conceptions of their functions, have grown up together, have influenced and stimulated each other to agreement or to difference. Today it results that even in spite of the sometimes too strenuous pressure toward educational orthodoxy from all sorts of standardizing agencies that has been characteristic of the period now passing our colleges and universities are not altogether of one rigid and monotonous type.

Among all these varieties of institutions, the large state universities like that of Illinois occupy a peculiar position. There is, to be sure, a real sense in which they are like all other large and complex universities. There are many old and well-tried fundamentals with which no university, however founded or maintained, can dispense and remain a university. There must be in all real universities freedom to teach and to investigate. There must not be interference from without in matters of control and policy that are properly within the scope

of the university itself. There must be competence in teaching and research; the determination to press beyond the frontiers of knowledge; opportunity for the great teacher and the distinguished scholar. The state universities which have prospered and grown great are precisely those whose states, like Illinois, have had the wisdom to recognize these things, and so to assure for them the maintenance of those conditions without which a university becomes but an empty name.

But states can only create conditions which make possible the growth of great universities. They can provide wisely for their maintenance and growth, provide responsible boards of control to supervise them and make possible conditions of financial and intellectual security which attract and hold men and women of quality and distinction. But these things do not necessarily create great institutions. Greatness springs out of the life of the institution itself and from no other source. The responsibility of the state university toward the public is as evident, and as important, as is the responsibility of the public toward the university. If, as all experience shows, states cannot wisely lay their hands on the internal control of their universities, if, as has been the case, all attempts to utilize state universities for personal or partisan purposes have reacted disastrously both on the universities and on the partisans, neither can state universities ever conceive of themselves as the instruments of any class, or party, or creed, or faction within the state. Their responsibility is to the public as a whole, and it is with a clear sense of that public responsibility always in the back of their heads that they must go about their business.

I am not concerned to discuss here this morning the responsibility of the State of Illinois toward its University. I am rather concerned with what, in this general and public sense, a university like that of Illinois owes to its state.

Primarily, it owes to it the obligation of being, in the real sense of the term, a state university. Like every other sort of organization, it realizes its full potential-

ties not by attempting to take on the characteristics of any other species, but by attempting to realize to the full the possibilities of the species to which it belongs. The University of Illinois as it develops must, if it is true to itself, develop in those ways and through those policies which are as unfolding of its possibilities, not merely as a university, but as a university maintained by a commonwealth of varied and rich resources and of aspiring life.

It must, in the first place, be responsive to the social philosophy of higher education which has become so clearly evident in state and nation. One of the startling facts of our national life is the sixfold increase, in thirty years, of the proportion of young men and women of college age who are continuing their education in institutions above high school. This percentage has risen from less than three in 1900 to more than eighteen in 1929. The current is too strong to be stemmed by any temporary depression, or by any criticism of the crowding of our colleges. Unless there shall be some marked and relatively permanent change for the worse in our American standard of living, this condition will not pass. Almost unconsciously we have come to a point at which the prolongation of formal education up to the age of maturity has become the normal and accepted state of affairs. Never before in the world has this been possible for the average family. In times of depression it is one of the last opportunities to be surrendered. Those of us who have faith in the future of America must look forward, I firmly believe, to an even wider spread of that philosophy and its consequences. It will not be, as I see it, primarily in terms of vocational preparation that this philosophy will manifest itself. It is a short-sighted and wholly partial view of higher education that measures its value in terms of its money returns to the individual. It must be measured rather in terms of the fact that a new and rapidly changing civilization, complex, confused, and intricate, requires a longer period of preparation if men and women are to lead in it lives of understanding, of happiness, and of usefulness. It must be

measured in terms of the fact that the welfare of the America of tomorrow demands a citizenry educated beyond the point of its citizenry of yesterday. There is, I believe, no other course. With the rapid and revolutionary advances of science, with our new and intricate social and economic structure, with the often startling changes in personal and community relationships all about us, there is a very real sense in which modern civilization has become, as H. G. Wells has pointed out, "A race between education and chaos." Today we can regard higher education as the privilege of an exceptional few only at the cost of sacrificing that widespread lifting of the level of our social intelligence which we so much need.

I believe, then, in this American philosophy of higher education. Its consequences, to be sure, are still a puzzle to the colleges and universities of today. Its manifestations are so new that ancestral voices prophesying woe have not yet ceased among us. Without the universities, many people still calculate its results simply in terms of the fear that there won't be jobs enough to go around, and within academic walls there are still those who lament the legendary—not to say mythological—days when every student was fired with the zeal for learning. But institutions are gradually beginning to define their attitudes in the face of this problem. Some are restricting their numbers, selecting students by capacities or by purpose, or limiting their scope of work more sharply. But in this situation, it seems to me, the state university has a particular responsibility. It must, in the first place, receive those students who come to it with successful records in properly qualified secondary schools. It cannot, in my judgment, do less than this and fulfill its responsibility as a public institution. To all such students it must afford a reasonable opportunity to determine whether they can profit by university life.

It will have, therefore, a student body which is not only large, but exceedingly varied in capacity, in interest, in personality, and in achievement. Naturally, it

must provide, for such a group, a wide range of liberal and professional opportunities. (Because of its very size and complexity, such an institution must constantly fight against the insidious temptation to become a sort of educational factory in which the student is the impersonal unit of raw material, and in which the methods of mass production prevail. But our students are not homogeneous. They present, as I have said, the greatest differences. To drift toward a comfortable theory of mass production is easy. It involves merely a multiplication of general rules and regulations, designed to label all conceivable acts in advance, so that all that is necessary in any given case is to determine the proper pigeonhole in which it belongs. The way out is not so simple. It includes, first, recognition of the fact that general regulations should be kept at the absolute minimum. It involves, second, an understanding that the various schools and colleges are in a far better position to know what attainment for their students, and what students are for their purposes worth while, than is the university as a whole. It involves again large opportunities for discretion and individual treatment on the part of those in positions of responsibility. Systematic opportunities for competent advice and guidance must be provided. For exceptional and unusual students must be given a large measure of freedom. I am convinced that, given intelligence and the disposition to do so, the large institution, with its resources and capabilities, is in an exceedingly favorable position to meet the individual problems and needs of its student body. But it can do so only by a resolute determination to study its students, its processes, to set itself definitely in line with those agencies of modern civilization that realize that the only means of dealing with the complex processes of today is by factual study and through the experimental attitude.

A state university like our own has, in other words, come to the time at which it must carefully and continuously carry on a constant reevaluation of its own processes. We are not dealing with a relatively static civili-

zation. Both in our professional and in our liberal education the conditions that confront our graduates are in many respects essentially different from those of even ten years ago, and in another decade they will have undergone still further radical alteration. The day is definitely over when curricula can ever long remain unchanged, or when methods and theories that have about them only the merit of antiquity should survive. A state university, of all institutions, cannot take refuge in the easy formula, "It has been so," as an excuse for evading its plain task. Universities like this, new as many of their problems are, must to a large extent make their own precedents. They must be judged, not by facility in imitation or by adherence to tradition, but by whether or not they exhibit that quality of creative-mindedness which is essential in their situation. Universities today are not cloisters. They are instruments for the adjustment of young people to the complex and bewildering life of twentieth-century civilization. With the processes, the needs, the problems, of that civilization they remain out of touch at their peril. The intricate task of a university like Illinois can be met only through the resolute determination to utilize every possible opportunity to study and to experiment with our own processes. Unsupported opinions, and viewpoints adhered to merely because they are traditional, are as much out of place today in universities as they are in industry, and are fraught with the same consequences.

For the University of Illinois there is still another type of responsibility and opportunity. That is in its attitude toward its student environment as a whole. About this campus there are living together more students than are gathered in any area of similar size in the United States. No one who knows anything of young people can be blind to the fact that, during these formative years of college life, the influences that play through this environment cannot be overlooked. In such an environment are opportunities, either for multiplying and reinforcing the processes that lead toward adjustment to modern life, or for negating to a large extent,



by neglect, or by wrong methods, the very ideals for which the university is striving in its classrooms. The importance of our student environment cannot be overlooked. It ought to be a powerful agency for the making of men and women. The task of negative restriction is, of course, only a minor problem in what is essentially a work of stimulation, coördination, and guidance.

After all, we have here, not only students, but a student community, and we have a responsibility to that community. In it, as in our classroom, we are making men and women. Out of that community ought to come people with habits of self-reliance and with a willingness to assume responsibility. The task of the University is not merely the negative one of preventing and punishing breaches of discipline. It is also the more difficult one of helping to secure in that environment happiness, stimulation, adjustment, proper living and working, recreational conditions and opportunities, and the formation of ideals and character.

If I have dwelt this morning chiefly on the responsibility of the state university to its students, it is because it has seemed to me appropriate to consider today our obligations to the state, and of these our responsibility for the students who come to us is the first. I am impelled to add this word. The decade on which we are now entering is, in my judgment, critical for the state universities. Under the influence of the new social philosophy of America toward higher education, they are confronted by a definite choice. Either they must accept the challenge which the public interest in higher education has thrown them, and do their utmost to deal with the vast and complex problem of popular higher education, or they will retreat from reality into an academic world that sighs for simpler problems and less varied tasks, that manifests impatience with all but superior students and traditional ideas, only to waken to the hard fact, when it is too late, that the public demand for higher education is strong enough to build up other types of institutions to meet its needs. If this is not to be the case, the state universities must recog-

nize that they are facing a task not unlike that of the public high schools when, two or three generations ago, secondary education began to be a normal and accepted thing. In this generation the state universities must unquestionably undergo radical transformation, as did the high schools under similar influence. I need not say that such a transformation should not be accompanied by any let-down in standards, in so far as standards represent real achievement. But neither can we necessarily identify standards of work with the preservation of any traditional theory of what education ought to be and do. Our mission is to our own civilization, with its own needs and demands, not to the civilization served by the medieval university or even by those of Europe today.

State universities must reinterpret and reassess their work in the light of their new obligations. They must not be afraid to experiment with new ideas. Here at Illinois we have begun this year a general program of study concerning what we are doing and ought to be doing. This task, in so large and complex an institution, is by no means an easy one. But it must go continuously forward throughout the years. Opinions must yield to fact, tradition to a deepened sense of our responsibilities to the new civilization. Only so will we do our duty to the generation of tomorrow, committed to our care today. These young men and women, stimulated and quickened by their life here, as they go out by the thousand each year into the life of State and Nation, are our prime reason for being, and as we deal with them wisely or perfunctorily we deserve to be commended or condemned.

I have been concerned so far with what might be termed the teaching responsibility of the University. This is the first great duty of any institution like ours. We want, as every institution wants, great teachers. I am not in sympathy with any policy which makes of publication the only yardstick for advancement. There are all too many crimes perpetrated against students and the long-suffering public in the name of research. But still less am I in sympathy with mental laziness that

makes of mediocre teaching an excuse for the avoidance of research. To the really great teacher, as for the great scholar, the highest rewards of the University should be open, but one can no more measure genuine scholarship by pages published than he can measure skill in teaching by the number of hours taught.

A state university has a twofold responsibility for research. Because it is a state university, it ought to be a laboratory for the investigation of problems of importance to its state. It must carry forward investigations of problems having to do with agriculture, with the industries, engineering, with business, social and economic problems, the prevention and care of human suffering, the public schools; in short, there is no important phase of our common life which it should not strive to assist and develop through its activities. It must do its work in these fields never in the spirit of propaganda, but always with that patient and sincere regard for truth which is the mark of the true investigator in any field.

Such an obligation is fundamental and inescapable in a state university. Acceptance of this fact has always characterized the University of Illinois. Many and varied are its contributions to the wealth and welfare of the State, by men who have served and serve this institution.

But the acceptance of this responsibility in no way excuses the state university from its obligations for investigation in directions less immediately practical in character. It must take the whole field of knowledge to be its province. The adventure of pioneering beyond the frontier of knowledge, of helping to remake our world of ideas and so ultimately our lives, is an adventure to which the University of Illinois gladly responds, and to its constant participation in which a long line of illustrious names bears witness.

Thus in research as in teaching, the state university confronts by no means a simple task. From the very nature of its foundation and maintenance, it is committed to certain obligations in the fields of both teaching and research. In teaching, it must deal, not with a

voidance  
the great  
ould be  
olarship  
teaching  
lity for  
ht to be  
impor-  
gations  
the in-  
onomic  
ffering,  
t phase  
assist  
s work  
a, but  
truth  
r field.  
ble in  
always  
y and  
are of  
e this  
way  
or in-  
tal in  
ge to  
yond  
our  
ven-  
nds,  
e of  
sity  
very  
mit-  
ning  
h a

homogeneous and selected group of students, but with great numbers of young men and women of widely different interests and capacities. It must devise ways and means of sending these out from its halls, some of them as leaders, many of them just as competent people, but all of them better adjusted for happier and richer and more useful lives in the world of tomorrow because of their work and their life here. In research, it must touch and vitalize the life of its state at every strategic point, and it must also be true to its function as a university in the search for truth in every field and without question as to its immediate value.

The very complexity of the functions and problems of a state university like our own constitutes a challenge to the wisdom and the vision of us all. There is no fixed formula for the solution of such a problem. This is not the time for the pronouncement of rigid formulas in education. In this rapidly changing civilization of ours, formulas are outworn almost as soon as they are stated. We have less need for formulas than for open and courageous minds, and for creative spirits. Institutions like the University of Illinois are pioneering in a new world. There are no maps to guide them. Precedent and tradition are of diminished value. Our problem in these large state universities is, after all, the tremendous one of the creation of a new type of institution for the needs of a new age.

Set, as we are here, in the midst of a rich, changing, and growing empire, stimulated by its life and its problems, is it too much to hope that the University of Illinois, with its history of courage, vision and devotion, shall write here a new chapter in the history of popular higher education in America? It is, I am convinced, not too much to expect, provided that we remember two things. The first of these is that we must be true to our own spirit; that we shall seek to become, not some other type and kind of university, but a greater and more distinctive state university. And, second, we must always remember that such an achievement can never be the work of one individual, but that it calls for the co-

operation of all those agencies that have a stake in such an enterprise: state, faculty, alumni, students, and our friends and colleagues everywhere.

To this group, assembled here today, and to the general public they represent, I pledge my utmost efforts to such an enterprise. As we rededicate ourselves today to the service of the University of Illinois, it is with the hope and prayer that, for us all, the call of the present hour may lead us to new endeavors and to a future even more illustrious than the past.

THE LIBRARY OF THE  
OCT 5 1932  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.