From the time of the founding of the Collegiate School, the family of Timothy Dwight had been connected with Yale. His ancestors included Jonathan Edwards; his grandfather and namesake, Timothy Dwight, who had served as Yale’s fourth President for twenty-two years; and Timothy Dwight Woolsey, who was President from 1846 to 1871. Dwight, as had so many who served as President of Yale, attended Hopkins Grammar School in New Haven, though he was born and grew up in Norwich, Connecticut. He graduated second in his class at Yale in 1848 and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. After attending graduate classes for two years, Dwight entered the Divinity School, from which he graduated in 1853. He served as a tutor during his graduate studies, faring better than his older brother John, who was killed by an irate student during an undergraduate disruption. After studying abroad at the universities of Bonn and Berlin, Dwight returned to the faculty of the Divinity School as an assistant professor, becoming Professor of Sacred Literature in 1861 in which year he was also ordained.

Dwight was almost sixty when he was appointed President, and many were disappointed that once again a clergyman had been chosen for the position. But Dwight proved to be an able administrator, even taking on the additional position of Treasurer during his first years in office. In his memoir, Memories of Yale Life and Men, Dwight noted that “The Presidency, though nominally a University office, was in reality until 1886—so far as its sphere of constant service was concerned—more like the chief position in the Academical Department with certain additional duties of general oversight attached to it.” During his time in office, Yale College became Yale University, the Alumni Fund was established, Deans were appointed for each school reporting directly to the President, and the University curriculum was extensively revised. Reaching the age of seventy, and the start of a new century, Dwight chose to resign in June 1899. He lived on quietly in New Haven, offered the benediction at the Commencements which he had helped to reorganize into the impressive ceremony it is to this day, and died in his home on May 26, 1916, at the age of eighty.
Timothy Dwight
INAUGURAL ADDRESS

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, JULY 1, 1886

On the seventeenth of August, 1795, the distinguished man who was at that time called to the Presidency of this College, in his letter of acceptance addressed to the members of the Corporation, wrote these words:—“Allow me, gentlemen, to say that few undertakings in human life appear to me to be fraught with more difficulties than this on which I am now venturing. It is a consolation to me to know that, when faithfully pursued, there are not many which are more beneficial to mankind. The Most High hath been pleased in His providence to call me to this employment. I feel myself obliged, though not without great diffidence, to obey the summons. On His direction and blessing I hope I principally depend, and next on the effectual support and counsel of this body, who are His ministers in this solemn concern.” By one of those singular movements of Divine Providence, which occasionally seem to make history repeat itself, I find myself to-day summoned to enter the office to which he was then chosen—the progress of two generations in the line of family descent and of ninety-one years in time placing the grandson and the bearer of his name where, in the course of his life’s experience, he was at that moment standing. The words which he wrote I would make my own at this hour, and would say for myself, that, in this work to which I am called, I hope I shall principally depend on the Divine direction and blessing, while in the effectual support and counsel of the members of the body which has given me my office and of my associates in the Faculties, I have the confidence which comes from common views or from life-long friendship.

The difficulties to which the writer of the quoted words makes allusion were doubtless those connected with the turning-point in the history of the College at which he saw that his official life was to begin. The institution was drawing near to the end of the first hundred years of its existence, as the eighteenth century was opening towards the new ideas and promise of the nineteenth. The Collegiate School which had satisfied the demands and almost, as it seemed, the possibilities of the past, must now begin a larger life and be ready for a growth of which the early fathers had not dreamed. New plans were to be formed, new fields of investigation to be entered, new instruction to be provided. The School was to become in a truer and higher sense a College; the College was even to make its first movement in that line of progress which should, in the course of time, change it into a place for universal learning. It was a day of comparatively small things for the present, but it called for a wide-reaching outlook upon
the future. Where were the men and the means, the buildings and the various instrumentalities of every sort to be secured, that the requirements of the rapidly approaching future should be successfully met? We cannot wonder that the man who was called to undertake the work was impressed with the difficulties attending it, or that he felt that its importance to the country, or even the world, would be a continual inspiration in his efforts and labors.

The ending of another hundred years now draws near, and, as the nineteenth century begins to open towards the twentieth, we find ourselves at a similar turning-point. The Collegiate School, as it might be called, was then to be transformed into a College; now the College is to grow into a University. In a peculiar sense, therefore, does history seem to my own thought to repeat itself as I am summoned at this particular moment to take, in some degree, the leadership in the life of Yale College. The difficulties and the inspirations cannot fail to rise before my mind, as they did before the mind of the one of whom I have spoken; and, in their union and intermingling with each other, they may well suggest the few thoughts to which I give utterance on this occasion.

Yale College is to be a University. This is, I think, what we who belong to it and love it are all of us saying to one another today. The thought itself is the inspiration of the hour. But how is the end to be secured, and what are the ideas which this University is to represent? As we ask these questions, it is important for us to remember that we are not planning for or creating a new institution; we are beginning a new epoch in the history of one which has existed for nearly two centuries. This fact necessarily imposes certain limitations upon us. It also serves to guide us in our course. The University which comes into being today may be established in accordance with the views of a single individual or the passing ideas of the time. But one whose origin is in the distant past must be affected in all its growth by its inheritance from other generations. The work which we have before us is one of development under conditions already, in large measure, determined without our intervention, and with the use of materials, if we may so speak, made ready to our hands.

There are two great facts connected with the past, which present themselves to our thought and must determine our action, as we inquire how the end that we are seeking is to be attained. The first is, that our University must be built upon the foundation of an already existing College. For more than a hundred years this College constituted the whole institution and had for its plan and purpose to furnish that general education which might prepare its students for whatever work in life they should afterwards choose for themselves. It grew stronger with the lapse of time
and acquired a wide-extended reputation, drawing its company of students together from all sections of the country. It had become a great institution for the period then present when the first of the professional schools was established. As a natural consequence, it continued to occupy the main thought of those who had the general interests here in charge, as well as of all who looked to this place as a seat of learning. The professional schools, which were all of them founded during the first quarter of the present century, were at the beginning small in the number of their students and weak in their resources. They depended largely on the fame and power of individual teachers for their very existence, and were compelled to live rather on the hope of the future than in any realization of the present. The self-sacrifice of the men who gave their lives to their service brought them gradually to an honorable position. But by reason of their much later origin and the fact that they were apparently somewhat loosely attached to the College, which was steadily increasing in numbers and fame, they seemed to all to be additions to the body, and not coordinate parts of a common whole. The same thing was true of the Scientific School, which came into being nearly a quarter of a century after the last of the schools for professional study. The sagacious minds of those who laid the foundations of this school saw the importance of meeting the demand which was then beginning to be made for instruction in the various branches of physical science, and they resolved to provide for the new wants as promptly and fully as the possibilities of the case allowed. But the first teachers commenced their work almost without means, and with little thought that the future would be what it has proved to be. Such being the order of growth in the institution and such the comparative strength of its different departments, it was a matter of course—we may almost say, of necessity—that the old original College should continue, in every sense, to hold the preeminent position.

Within the last thirty years the condition of things has greatly changed. The other departments of the institution have gained for themselves increasing success and reputation. The young men who enthusiastically devoted themselves to the work of building them up and making them worthy of the name of Yale College, have become men of acknowledged rank as scholars, both at home and abroad. The resources have been so greatly enlarged that permanence has been secured for the existence of the departments, though not as yet the sufficiency to meet their wants. In the number of their students they have multiplied fourfold, so that now, although the old College has moved onward with gratifying success in this regard, these departments which are outside of its limits have nearly one-half of the entire Academic body within their circle. They have thus, in a true sense, risen to an equality with the central College and have taken an
honorab]e place by its side. The College, however, or Academical Department as we call it, has until now, through the influence of past history, traditions and other causes, remained in the first rank, and attracted to itself the larger share of attention and regard. It is not unfitting that it should have been so; but a certain want of unity or coordination has been the result, which the development of the University must remove. Yet we cannot in the immediate future which is now opening upon us ignore or set aside the past in this regard, any more than we can elsewhere. The development must be with a full recognition of this past fact.

I cannot but feel that we are now at a period in our history, and in a condition of things, when this work of coordination, with a due regard to what lies behind us, can be successfully accomplished. The work of instruction in the Academical Department which in past periods has fallen to the President, and which has called him to be a Professor in that Department with numerous added duties, is now assigned to able men occupying permanent chairs. He is therefore to be so far released from the obligations which have hitherto rested upon him, that he may have time and strength to meet and work with the several Faculties, and may stand in a like relation to all the branches of the University. The President of this College, in my judgment, is not likely to be a mere business agent, giving his attention only to its financial and material interests; and he should not be so. He should come into contact with the students and should have opportunity to exert an intellectual and moral influence upon them. They should know him as a personal friend and should carry away with them from their College life, if possible, loving recollections of what he has done for them and the impress of his character on their own. He must be a teacher in some way and in some measure. But he cannot do everything. Fortunately, in the era now beginning, he is to be free from some duties, that he may be able to assume others which are equally essential. And prominent among these is the duty which lies in this line of unity and coordination. The honored man to whom I have alluded at the beginning of this address was, according to the unanimous testimony of all who knew him, possessed of a mind awake to interest in knowledge of every sort, with varied tastes and capacities and abounding intellectual enthusiasm. It was this peculiar constitution of his nature, this large-mindedness and large-heartedness, which qualified him so remarkably for the special work which he had to do for the College at the critical epoch in its history when he was called into its service. It was this which, in large measure, gave him his great success. At that period the needed results could be accomplished by one who centered the whole daily life of the institution in himself and was surrounded by only a few instructors, most of whom were serving but for a limited time. But now the College
has grown too large for this to be possible. A man endowed with even the

greatest gifts would find himself today unable to do for six or seven different
departments and eleven hundred students what he did for the old College and its comparatively small company. In order, therefore, that the presiding officer may send his best influence throughout all the parts, it is a necessity that he should limit his working in any single one. But the great call of the present time to him is to send it forth throughout the whole. I hope I may be able, in some degree, to respond to this call. I should be false to my inheritance, and, I trust it may not be unbecoming in me to say, to the impulses of my nature, if I should fail to be in sympathy with every earnest worker among us in any line of learning, however different from my own. And so my prayer is that, according to my powers, I may be helpful to every one. I may add that, in view of the peculiar growth of the College of which I have spoken, it is a matter of satisfaction to me that, while I enter upon my official duties after a long service in another branch of the institution, I was at an earlier period engaged in the work of instruction in the Academical Department. I was thus, for several years, familiar with the details of its daily working and knew personally all its students. In proportion to the wisdom which may be given me, I may hope, therefore, to represent the University idea as connected with that of the original College, and perchance to do something for the healthful development of the future.

But no one in Yale College can long and successfully exercise what is sometimes called the “one man power.” Happily for the institution and its welfare, happily also, in my judgment, for the man himself who holds the chief office in it, the President of the College, though having a certain constitutional prerogative, is yet dependent on the sympathy and support of his colleagues. He is a leader among brethren, rather than a commander in chief. It is, therefore, an encouraging sign of the present time, and an inspiration to myself and I think to all, that there is a practically unanimous sentiment among us in favor of the movement towards that unity and coordination of which I have spoken.

For the effecting of the result with any degree of completeness, time must, of course, be allowed. Indeed, for the full realization of all that it will bring, the University of the future must itself be realized. We are now only at the turning-point, and all that we speak of is the movement at this point. This movement will, I am sure, be in the right direction and will never go backward. It will involve the recognition of all degrees conferred upon students at their graduation as making them equally sons of this University; it will call for deliberations of the several Faculties or their representatives on matters pertaining to the general well-being; it will, perhaps, lead to the closer union of different departments in certain lines of instruction, where
the work of students can be thus combined; it will gradually increase the
number of University teachers who may have relations to any department;
it will, doubtless, demand a very considerable increase of University funds.
But in the history of our American Colleges the forming period has not yet
wholly passed away. It is ours to plan; it will be the part of those who follow
us to reap the fruits. There is, however, a glory and an inspiration at the
beginning, if we only plan largely and wisely. The growth and progress of
the last thirty years place us, as I am persuaded, at a new beginning in this
regard, where such a plan is called for. It should have a far outlook upon the
future, though it may lay hold at first only upon what is just at hand. What-
ever difficulties it may involve will be overcome sooner or later, for, as it is in
the line of the University idea, it is in the natural order of development. I
take up the burden of my new office hopefully, in this respect, for I believe
that there is a good work to be done and that the promise of the coming
time is in it.

The second great fact which comes to our notice as we remember that
we are to work upon old foundations is, that the Departments which
include what we commonly call the undergraduate students contain at
present, and have contained in the past, much the largest portion of the
membership of the institution. In the development of our University, there-
fore, we must recognize this fact. We cannot begin from the higher depart-
ments and work downward, but must rather move outward and upward
from these sections which are preparatory for the distinctive and profes-
sional studies of a later period.

The plan of this College, as it has been formed and carried out since
the peculiar demands of the last forty years have necessitated changes in
our older institutions, has involved two undergraduate departments:—one
of them making provision for that course of study which has been handed
down from earlier times, with such additions as in this age are required to
fit any person of liberal education for his mature life; the other furnishing
instruction along those lines which especially lead to scientific research and
to practical working in the field of the great material interests of the coun-
try. These two departments have been kept distinct from each other, each of
them being as far as possible equipped for its peculiar work. This argument
in the organization of our College has differed from that adopted in many
other institutions, but, after an experience of more than a generation, it is
believed that all who are engaged in instruction here are in accord in the
feeling that it is the wisest and most successful provision for meeting the
necessities of the case. The two departments have moved on side by side,
and with no collision, for many years. We believe that they are to move for-
ward in the same way hereafter. The development of the University, so far as
they are concerned, must, as we think, recognize this fact. In the growth and
increase of studies, however, which will doubtless be witnessed in both of
these branches of the institution, the question must necessarily arise,
whether in some respects they may not be arranged so as to supplement
each other. Wherever this can be done without injury to either, it would
seem that it must be the wisest course to make such an adjustment. We are
not creating or developing two independent institutions, but two separate
parts of one. That, in some cases, there should be a common use of the same
building by instructors in the different schools, or that the services of a
Professor in one school should be given for the help of students in another,
is a thing which may be expected in the immediate future. No doubt, there
will be limitations in the possibilities of such combination, which will be
readily understood by all who will attentively consider the matter. The
number of students and the very heavy pressure upon the time and thought
of instructors will give every man abundance of work in his own immediate
field. But wherever such a uniting of labors, or of places for labor, is practi-
cable, it will manifestly be an economy of force and means for the Univer-
sity, and will tend towards unity and coordination.

The existence of these two branches of the University is, of necessity,
closely connected with our view respecting the question of optional stud-
ies. We open two lines of study, which are carefully and thoughtfully
arranged and which lead to two different bachelor’s degrees. They are so
marked in their difference from each other, that students, at the age at which
they begin their College education, may be supposed to be qualified to
make their choice between them, or, if in any case they are not so, their older
friends may form a wise decision in view of their observed qualifications
and tastes. One of these courses excludes the ancient Classics and the more
special studies in Mental and Moral Philosophy: the other includes them as
essential or fundamental to the plan of the course. In both alike a common
curriculum of study is required of all in the earlier year or years, while in the
later years a greater freedom of choice is allowed, yet in every case with a
movement along some definite and prescribed line. This is our theory of
College education, and the arrangement which has been provided here in
order to the realization of it. That in every detail of our plan we shall always
continue precisely as we are today, cannot be expected. New questions and
problems will arise in the future as they have arisen in the past. There may
be changes in the field of learning and science in the twentieth century as
compared with what we know in the nineteenth, which will be as great as
those of our century in comparison with the one behind us. But as there
was no complete overturning of our plan and system in that former time,
but only progress in accordance with what had been previously done, so, in
the period which is before us, I think that Yale College must move forward towards the full and perfected growth of what it now is in this regard. Our system gives us the advantage of offering a general and, as we may say, fundamental choice of two kinds of education at the outset. It then prepares the student by disciplinary and common studies, in either line, until by his age and progress he may be fitted to determine his course more intelligently. Afterwards, it secures for him the benefit of that interest and enthusiasm which come from freedom of choice when the mind is ready, with wisdom, to use such freedom. In that department, especially, whose aim is to give a general education and to fit its students for any of the higher fields of working in life, for which they may make more special preparation in professional or other schools, those branches of study which are deemed most essential to all are required even in the later years, the freedom in the selection of other branches having special limitations with regard to the time to be devoted to them. Our plan of optional studies is thus consistent with the plan on which our institution has been arranged, and is one, as we believe, which if strictly followed out, may best satisfy the necessities of the highest education.

In the development of our University from these two undergraduate sections we come in the most direct line to the provisions for graduate students who are not preparing themselves for any one of the three learned professions. This Graduate section, which naturally draws its students from both of the undergraduate parts alike, is attracting especial attention at the present time. It is a healthful sign of increasing intellectual life in our country, and a sign of great promise for the future, that so many of our young men are desirous of continuing their studies after the collegiate course of four years is ended. The demands made upon us by the growing numbers of these young men call for earnest consideration, and already provision has been made to meet them so far as has been practicable, and with gratifying success. We believe that no friend of Yale College can do it a greater service in the way of benefaction at this turning-point in our history, than to aid in the more complete endowment of this part of the institution. We have a great company here who may be easily awakened to intellectual enthusiasm; with the present arrangement of studies in the different undergraduate departments, they are becoming more and more inclined to press farther and more deeply into the different knowledge’s; with affection for the place acquired by their residence here, they are disposed to remain longer in the University. If we are able to do for them what they need, the numbers of those who will remain will be steadily and rapidly enlarged. The progress which has been made within the past few years with respect to
this matter is such as to afford a most encouraging prospect for the future, provided we can be abundantly furnished with what is needful to this most important end.

In our case, this growth towards the larger idea of the University has certainly been a very natural one from the earlier arrangements for undergraduate instruction. As we look forward to a more or less remote period in the time to come, it seems not improbable that those who follow us may find that this graduate department is somewhat overshadowing the undergraduate ones, and that the latter have in a considerable degree lost their present significance. But the movement towards this end will necessarily be gradual. It will not be effected through any violent setting aside or overturning of these lower schools, but through a normal progress along the line of the historic idea. We are evolving something higher out of something lower, as we attempt to carry our College forward to its University life. Our movement must be always forward; but it must be forward out of the past, with a remembrance of the past, and under the best influence of the past. I cannot but believe that, when the results shall have been fully realized, it will be seen that our plan, if not absolutely the best one that could be conceived, is equally good with any other, and that it is the best for us, because it develops itself by a growth, not by a series of revolutions. In this development of our plan the inheritance from the fathers will be ever preserved for those who follow in the coming generations, and it will be always working with that which comes afterwards towards the final completeness.

With reference to the three professional schools, it may be said that they were the first and natural outgrowth of the original plan which the early fathers adopted. Accordingly, when the demand for more special and thorough teaching in preparation for professional work made itself especially manifest, near the beginning of the present century, the far-seeing mind of the one who had, more than any other, the charge of the future interests of the College immediately appreciated the importance of enlarging and broadening the institution in the direction indicated. As the result of his thought and suggestion and effort, it is believed, these schools all came into existence, though two of them were, by reason of the limitations of those times, not founded until after his death. They have had an interesting history—the one of them with which I am personally most familiar, a history so interesting and so connected with my own inmost life, that I could not attempt to tell it publicly. That they have been a strength to the whole institution is beyond question. That they are essential to the University idea will not be doubted. In the coordinating and unifying era upon which we are now to enter, they will more completely assume their rightful position around the common center than they did in former times, and will
have, no doubt, more fully the thoughtful care of the guardians of the general interests. For that one of them which is now most limited in its resources, the Medical School, it is earnestly to be hoped that some large-minded benefactor may come forward who shall appreciate the greatness of the blessing to our commonwealth which would result from making this place a center for medical education. With the advantages of the University and the increase of its endowments, the school may surpass its former prominence and have a most useful and honorable future.

The latest growth of a department in our College, the Art School, is one, no doubt, of which the fathers in the early time had no thought; and yet there is no one among us, I think, within the circle of our schools, who does not feel that it was a legitimate development of the institution which they founded. It has connection with the root and the trunk as truly as any of the other branches, and has its part in the perfection of our plans. The work which it has already accomplished for the College is a most important one; but, for reasons connected with the progress of art in our country, its greatest work belongs, in a peculiar sense, to the time to come. The cultivating and elevating influence of its studies must have a continually increasing power, as students of all other departments shall, in the future, appreciate more and more fully the value of the privileges which it offers.

I have spoken thus of these several branches of the College, because an allusion to them came naturally and necessarily within the line of the idea of development which I have endeavored to present. That the Library, which is related to all the departments alike, and which was, indeed, the beginning of our College, is to be and must be a central thing in the growing University, is clear to all. The graduates of the College and its friends who are interested in sound learning, it is hoped, will let their love for it and devotion to its welfare prompt them to aid it in this essential part of its life by abundant gifts. And as we think of the University and its hopes we cannot fail to bear in mind what has been effected by the energy and enthusiasm of those who have given their efforts to the Peabody Museum and the Observatory. The former of these institutions has already added greatly to the fame and honor of the College, a fact which is recognized throughout the country; while the work of the latter is moving forward with and towards success and increasing usefulness.

The idea which our College is to represent as it grows into a University is thus, as it seems to me, to be the historic idea of this place. The end which we have in view is not to be accomplished by a sudden and entire breaking away from what has been established here, or by imitation of what is done by others who may be under conditions and influences quite different from our own. Institutions, like individuals, have a peculiar life, determined for
them largely by those who give them being. With the inheritance of a noble ancestry, it is better for them to grow towards perfection in the line of their own character and of the past history, than to turn to the line of another inheritance, even if it has come from an equally honorable source. But for myself I am a thorough, hopeful believer in the future and would press forward towards it—a future of our own, indeed, but a future which has promise and life and blessing in it, the future of Yale College as it becomes a University.

In connection with this historic development which thus bears in it the promise of the coming era, there are two great ideas of education which have here been held to be essential to the College life, and which are essential also to the University life, if it is to have a vital union with the past. One of these has relation to the mind; the other to the character. With a few words with respect to each, I will bring the suggestions of the hour to a close.

The fundamental idea of our theory of mental education is, as I think, that of the superiority of man to his uses. Our primal thought has been to develop the individual man roundly and fully in himself. The service which he does for the world is the natural outcome of what he is. Education is like Christianity in this regard. Christianity seeks first to lead its disciple to be good, and then to do good. It aims at the former result because it knows that, if this is secured, the latter will surely follow. Its great and first object is the individual life. Everything else is the outgrowth of this. So it is with true education. It does for the mind, what religion does for the heart. It builds up and builds out the man. The man, when it has accomplished its work within him, can use his knowledge and his powers wherever the world may need them, and he will do so if the noble impulses of educated manhood are in his spirit. It is for this reason that we have held to a prescribed and common course of study for each of our undergraduate departments in the earlier year or years, and in the later years, especially in that department which is designed to prepare for the more general walks of educated life, have limited the freedom of choice within certain definite lines which should admit of and lead to a large and full education on every side. We believe that it is better that young men should not be disciplined and trained from the beginning for one thing only; that, whatever may be their future work, they will be larger and wiser and more useful men, if a very broad foundation is laid and if their minds are strengthened by the more strictly disciplinary studies and opened to a wide survey of knowledge. We believe that it is often more healthful for them to have their thoughts and efforts turned, not only to that which may excite their natural impulses in earlier life, but to things whose bearing upon mental well-being may not at
first be fully understood. One of the gravest evils of our national life in the immediate future, as it seems to me, is likely to be the one-sidedness of education—the fact that men are to have one line of thought only, moving within the sphere of their own single profession or business, and are to have their idea of the mind’s life limited to its practical results, and not enlarged to the comprehension of what the mind is in and for itself. The signs of this coming evil are already apparent in our public and popular life, and I cannot but think that the subject which it suggests is worthy of most serious consideration on the part of all whose home and work are in our various seats of learning.

Let me remark also, in passing, that, with the happy and healthful changes in the modes of instruction which have been largely introduced in these recent years, the possibilities are greater than ever before of awakening enthusiasm in the minds of all for any or every branch of learning. The living teacher may now come into more immediate intellectual contact with the student than he did in a former generation, when instruction was much more closely confined to the text-book. With the opportunity which is at present so freely afforded for direct communication from the teacher to the pupil and the more pleasant relation which exists between them as between an older scholar and a younger one in a common field, there is no reason why interest should not be excited in the studies of a general course, and why the mind should not be thus cultivated to its own pleasure and satisfaction, while it is at the same time cultivated widely. The opposition to the study of the Ancient Classics—so far as I have been able to read the essays of recent writers on the subject—is in reality an opposition to certain unhappy methods of teaching them. No man who has learned to read Homer or Demosthenes in any measure as he would read the best English or German authors has ever regretted it. No one who has ever learned, through the knowledge of the Greek language, to appreciate, in any measure, the poetry or oratory or philosophy of Greece has grieved over the hours spent in gaining that knowledge. I do not myself believe that any such man, to the end of time, will ever have such grief or regret, or will be otherwise than thankful that his mind was thus lifted above the one work of his daily life. The disputes about education which have filled the air for the last few years, we may well remember, are not yet ended. It will be a strange thing in the world’s history if, in this regard, the permanent future does not find its fountain of life in the permanent past.

Closely united with our theory of education for the mind is that which has reference to character. The men who have carried forward this College from its beginning until now have believed that, in the making of men, the training of the mind alone is not enough. They have labored for the moral,
as well as the intellectual life. This is eminently true of all those who have
had the highest distinction as teachers and have given the institution its
widest reputation. In the case of these men, whose fame is a part of our rich
inheritance, the work which they accomplished for science and learning
was never greater than that which they did for true character. As we grow in
the future towards the realization of the University idea, we must, if we
move according to the Yale thought, keep steadily on in the same pathway.
It is the priceless privilege of a University teacher to help the manly youth
around him in their souls’ living, to make them more generous, more truth-
ful, more fit for life in this earnest and struggling world, more worthy of
love and respect. The teacher who thinks his work is ended when he has
heard his recitation or given his lecture, has little conception, in my judg-
ment, of what his work is. As for myself, I may truly say that, if I were not
hopeful that the young men of these coming years would look back in after
life upon some blessings for their souls’ living derived from their inter-
course with me and from the friendly relations which existed between us
here, I would turn aside from the office which opens before me at this very
hour of its beginning.

And the best of all living for the soul is Christian living. The gift which
the fathers who founded Yale College prized above all others, the one which
they handed down to their descendants of the later generations as the most
precious of inheritances, was the Christian truth. It abides here today. I
believe that I utter the sentiment of almost all the living graduates of this
College, when I say that we mean, so far as in us lies, that it shall abide here
as the College passes into the University, and through all the future. And
that God may enable us to carry out this purpose is our earnest prayer, for
we know that if, at any period in the future, the guardians and teachers of
this home of learning shall prove faithless to this most sacred of all trusts—
though there may, indeed, be something yet remaining here—it will not be
the Yale College upon which our deepest love centers and from which our
inmost and noblest life has been drawn.