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A Word to the Alumni in Michigan

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THE MICHIGAN ALUMNUS.

Vol. IV.—JUNE, 1898.—No. 35.

A WORD TO THE ALUMNI IN MICHIGAN.

Through the amalgamation, at the last commencement, of the different alumni societies and the employment of a resident secretary who gives his entire time and undivided energies to the work of the association, a step was taken that must result in great and permanent good to the University. The unification of this great body of men and women who have at heart the interests of the University and who are ready and willing at all times to use their influence for its advancement, cannot but bring the institution into closer touch with the people. I firmly believe that substantial results must come of it. No better endowment can fall to the lot of a university than the support and influence of an enthusiastic and united alumni. This is emphatically true of a university that is dependent so largely as is ours upon the good will and generosity of the people. In order that the people may fully understand what the university is to the state from a material point of view and appreciate the influence that it exerts upon the intellectual life of this great commonwealth, means must be taken to bring home to them a knowledge of the extent and nature of the work of the university. If the people could be made to realize what the university is to them, there would, in my judgment, be no opposition to an advanced and liberal policy for its support. I need not say that we must depend very largely upon the alumni of the state to keep the people informed as to the work of the university. They are a natural and legitimate medium for the spreading of information, and they will gladly co-operate, I am sure, in any plan that seems likely to yield beneficial results.

It has been suggested, and it is for the purpose of calling the attention of the alumni of the state to the proposition, that I write this letter, that the work of the general association throughout the state and the influence of the alumni upon the people could be materially advanced by the formation in the different counties of local associations. I am, of course, aware that such associations exist in several of the cities, and they are, without doubt, doing a good work. What I wish to urge is the general formation of such societies throughout the entire state. There are but few counties that do not contain alumni and matriculates. Let them get together in each county, perfect an organization and report it, with its officers and membership, to the General Secretary. This should be done even though the number be small. The mere existence of organizations through which the alumni and matriculates of the different counties could be reached without delay or trouble, would give opportunities for molding public opinion that we have never yet enjoyed. There are times when the University needs the immediate and earnest efforts of friends and supporters, and those efforts can best be secured through the medium of local organizations.

The scheme suggested would not necessarily call for large expense in the way of public entertainment, although a meeting of each local society at least once a year for social purposes and the discussion of University affairs would certainly be desirable. To such meetings the University would gladly send its representatives. The plan recently adopted by the Macomb county society, of inviting to the banquet a number of the leading citizens of the county, outside the alumni body, might well be followed. The compliment would be appreciated, and the university would thus be brought to the attention of many who otherwise would have no definite knowledge of its work and needs.

It is to be hoped, moreover, that the movement proposed would result in the establishment in many of the counties of university scholarships for worthy students who otherwise would be unable to enjoy the advantages of a university educa-

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The Arch of Trajan at Benevento.

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tion. It should be generally known, I think, that this has already been done in at least one county. So worth an object would certainly operate as a stimulus to a local organization.

May 21, 1898.

H. B. Hutchins.