

never had such advantages when in college." Shall we students of the present day not heed the suggestion in this remark and remember that these improvements are not merely for our pleasure but for our profit? Ought we not to prepare ourselves to honor the college, the state and the nation through whose bounty we enjoy these increased privileges?

#### OUR SOUTH AMERICAN NEIGHBORS.

Delivered in the Junior Oratorical Contest, June 24, 1890.

If Columbus should suddenly awaken to-day and again become interested in the affairs and developments of this world, it is a question whether Chicago herself with all her plans and preparations to do him honor, would prevent his embarking directly to visit the sunny land he discovered at the mouth of the Orinoco, almost four hundred years ago. It was the soft climate and the anticipated gold of that country that enticed him then, and his curiosity to learn what such a country has become during these four centuries might be a sufficient attraction now.

The attention of the entire world and in particular that of the United States is at present toward the southern half of the American Continent. It is needless to review the history of this land. We know too well that it has been little else than one long chapter of wars and revolutions; but now that we have good reason to hope that the day is not far distant when war between civilized nations will be a thing of the past, the practical subject is, the present condition of these republics, their mighty resources, and their future development.

The theme, or even the least of its parts, is vastly beyond exhaustion in one brief discourse; but in the language of a certain eminent speaker, "It is better to know a little about a very great subject, than to know a great deal about a very

little subject." We become near sighted when we fix our eyes too long upon that which comes within the narrow range of human vision.

The nations of the American Continent have similar forms of government, like sympathies, and aspirations; yet in social, political, and commercial intercourse, they have been comparative strangers. They have known less of and had less to do with one another than they have known and had to do with the monarchies of the old world. Trade well illustrates this. The foreign commerce of the South American and Central American states and of Mexico amounts to a billion of dollars annually, about equally divided between exports and imports. Of this the United States controls scarcely one fifth, though in climate, products, supply and demand they are the reverse and complement of our republic. They raise raw materials, have but few manufactures. We can use the one and supply abundantly the other, yet we do neither to any great extent. Of our exports to-day only five per cent. goes to these sister republics.

How strange it is to say that beyond the Isthmus of Panama, no passenger, freight or mail can reach in an American steamer, any South American country other than Brazil and Venezuela. How strange that there should be no steam communication at all between our great maritime and manufacturing nation and the Argentine Republic—a republic as enterprising, as progressive, as rapidly measuring in wealth, and population, in proportion to our own. Her capital city, Buenos Ayres, and the neighboring capital, Montevideo, are both equipped with splendid capacious harbors on a great navigable river reaching far into the interior, inviting our ships to their convenient waters; yet not one of our steamers now seeks these ports. With Chili, a rich and enterprising country, and with Peru, our commerce is likewise impeded by this want of direct communication, while with Equador, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Paraguay we have no trade at all; England, France, and Germany practically tak-