

ing overhead a little banner with the date of their graduation. A thousand men were in these ranks to tell the story of the struggles that had been gone through. The old college, built on the then frontiers of New York State at Schenectady, was contributed for in the same way that Harvard was contributed for—out of the poverty of pioneers. I have in my possession a copy of the old subscription list, and it brings tears to the eyes as I remember that out of the penury of the times when every day they were liable to the return of the Indians who had robbed and murdered, and burned their village five years before; how that out of the savagery around them they won the precious gifts—saved from the daily bread that they otherwise needed.

We think often, young men, with pride and with gratitude, I hope, of those brave men that gathered around George Washington in the winter at Valley Forge, in the eastern part of your own State, and went without shoes to their feet or blankets to their beds that they might win for this country the liberty that we have—their own and our independence as a Nation. But long before that, and long after that, the Christian men and women of this country were contributing, as I have said, out of their poverty, the means to build colleges. Not mere common schools that their own children might learn to read—these they also cared for—but the institutions of higher learning which few of their own children would ever enter. They knew, though they were yet poor and living in log cabins, and were still dressed in homespun and frequently in the skins of the beasts they had killed in the forests—they, in the midst of all this, knew that the world must have learning, but above all that Christianity must have learning. I could tell you many other facts that come to me.

It once happened to me in earlier years to stand amid the fathers, in one of the Western States, whose college, after having cost them untold labors and sacrifices, was about to be sold for debt. Its board of trustees, a body of gray-headed men, talked over the possibilities of saving this institution of learning which had already cost them so much. They were awaiting the decision of one who had declined the position of leadership in the struggle that must be made. These men bent their heads on the desks before them and wept. It was a college about to go out of existence. I never saw a scene so touching and yet so grand. The wished for, but reluctant leader could not stand it. He said to