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Presentation Address

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Governor of West Virginia

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PRESENTATION ADDRESS

BY EPHRIAM F. MORGAN*

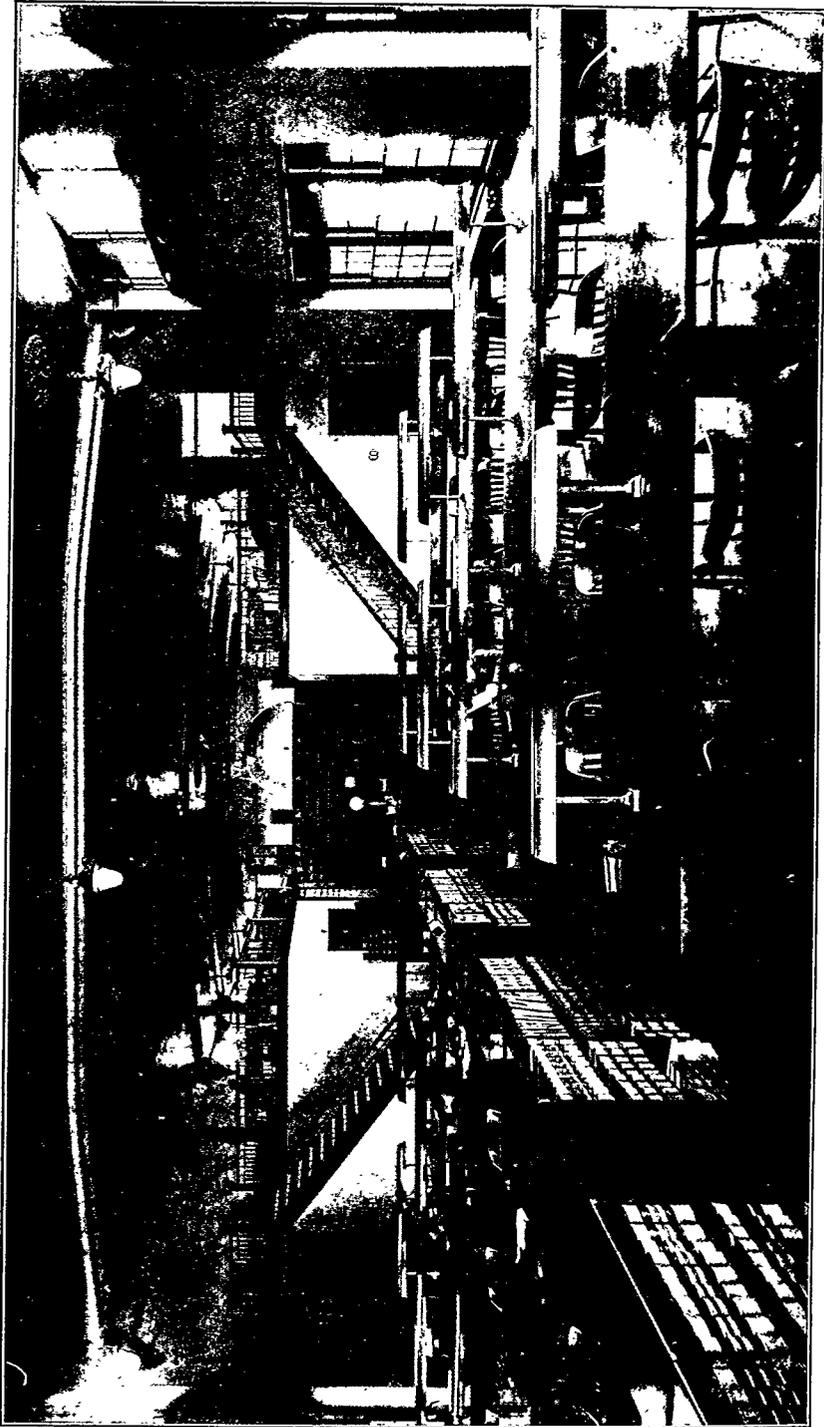
President Trotter and Members of the University Faculty:—

My pleasure in presenting to the State University this imposing structure, the future home of the College of Law, is twofold. As an alumnus of this institution it is most gratifying to me to be the instrument through which this property is conveyed to my alma mater, and as the executive of the State it is equally satisfying to make this presentation to an institution in which all of our citizens possess a vital interest.

In my humble opinion the building of this home for the College of Law is the most forward step taken by the State in a decade for the upbuilding and expansion of the State University. Although the completion of this building is not a precedent in the annals of this institution, I trust that it is the beginning of a building program that will give assurance to the people of West Virginia that their sons and daughters who are sent here to acquire a higher education in the arts, sciences and professions, will be given an opportunity equal to that offered by any similar institution. To my mind it is the crying need of the State to erect here such buildings and make such provisions as will accommodate the youth of the State without handicap. We have made some progress but we cannot afford to be hesitant when we stand on the threshold of necessity.

A quarter of a century has passed since I left the portals of the College of Law, yet I recall vividly many of the handicaps under which instructors and students labored, but in those days with a smaller student body the problems were not as intense as they are today when the enrollment in the University has reached the three thousand mark. For that reason it gives me added pleasure and will remain one of the pleasant memories of this administration that we have completed and here today convey to the University this magnificent building in which beauty is blended with utility

* Governor of West Virginia.



READING ROOM SHOWING BOOK STACKS AND STAIRWAY TO MEZZANINE.

to serve the needs of a great school, the apex of our educational system.

As we stand here today in the shadow of the State's greatest institution we are reminded that these monuments are erected and maintained by present and living generations as a contribution to those who follow us.

Unlike the towering pyramids of an ancient civilization they are not the symbols of a faded glory, they are not imperishable monuments of stone erected by vain rulers with the toil and blood of enslaved peoples to perpetuate the fame of dying dynasties, but the gift of a people for the improvement and betterment of mankind, symbolic of future power and greatness.

This majestic building is more than a mere convenience for those who come here to ground themselves in the fundamentals of a noble profession. It will stand as a monument to the law, expressing the respect and veneration that a great State has for that inspired instrument, the base of our whole structure of law, the constitution of the United States.

At this time in our national existence when unrest and discontent are epidemical, when quack remedies are brazenly offered to relieve and cure organic ailments with which we are not afflicted, when the constitution is assailed by demagogues stray in high places, the hope of the country is in the lawyer. It becomes his privilege and his duty to diffuse among our people a living, breathing sentiment that the constitution was designed for the protection of the weak and to safeguard minorities from ruthless and sometimes tyrannical majorities. It is the lawyer, true to his profession, unwavering in his steadfastness to principle, unyielding in his devotion to justice, who is afforded the opportunity to quell dissension, restore tranquility, rekindle our affection and renew our adoration for our government of laws.

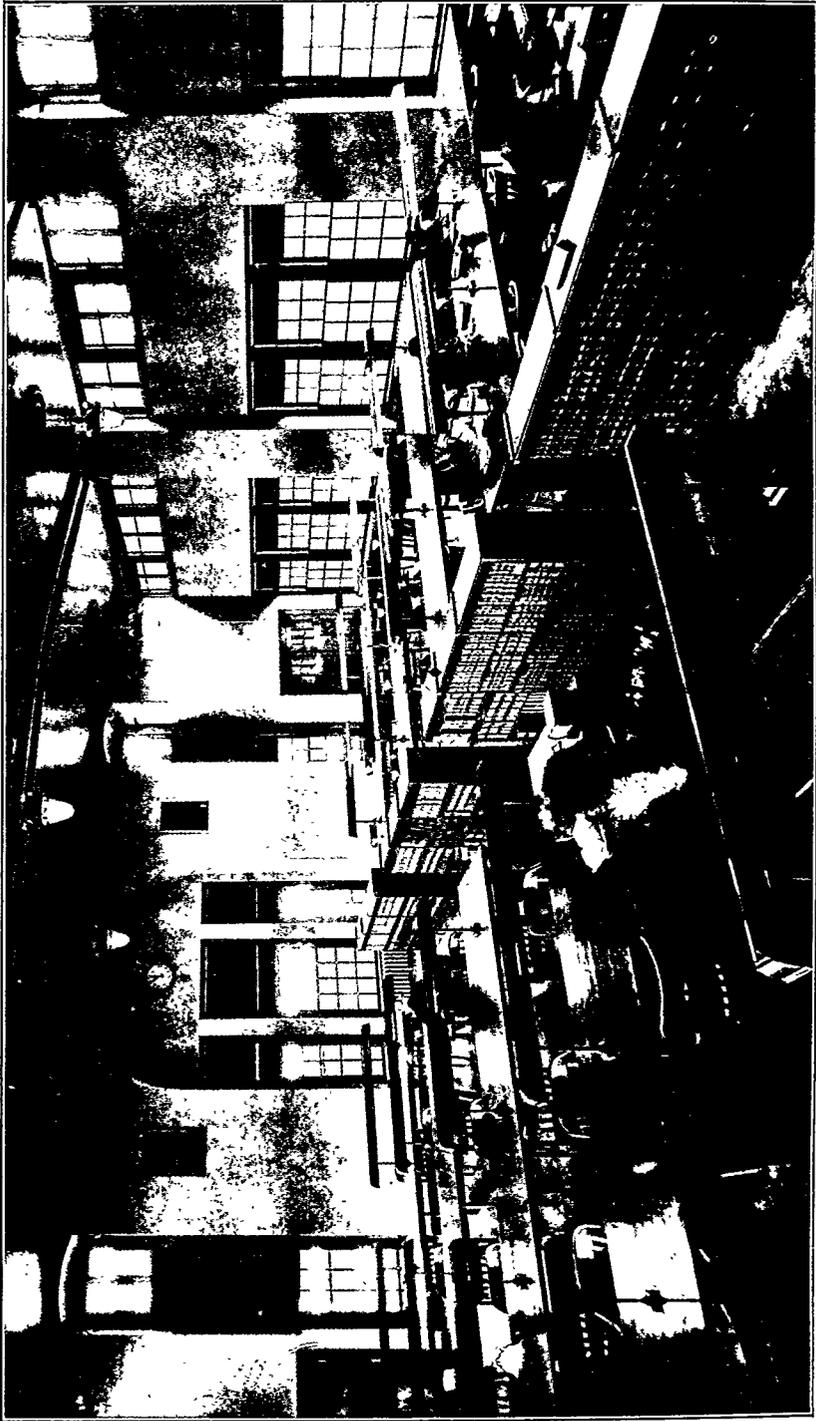
That towering giant, the late Chief Justice White, a few years ago before the American Bar Association, in a deserved tribute to the American lawyer, said:

“I must confess that sometimes, as my thoughts turn to the future and the vast probable increase in our population, to the infinite opportunity which liberty affords to those who misguidedly or with intentional wrong preach the destruction of our institutions under the guise of preserving freedom, a great dread comes to me that possibly some day in the future the forces of evil, of anarchy and of wrong may gather such momentum as to enable them to overthrow directly or indirectly

the constitutional institutions which the Fathers gave us and thus deprive us of those blessings which have come from their possession. But this pessimism is also only momentary, for Lo! as I strain my vision to the dawn of the generations which are to come my heart rises with exaltation and gratitude because it is given me to see an advancing force full of love for individual liberty and free government and fixed in the purpose to perpetuate them. Ah! as I look at this noble array, confidence in the future becomes assured and I cannot but exclaim: All hail, the American Lawyer of the generations which are to follow! Come! Come in your allotted time so that individual liberty may endure, representative government be perpetuated and the only safe and peaceful highway for the advance of democracy in its true sense be made certain."

"Our healing is not in the storm or in the whirlwind. It is not in monarchies, aristocracies or democracies, but will be revealed in the still small voice that speaks to the conscience and the heart prompting us to a wider and wiser humanity."

Behind this liberal gift to the University is the entrenched sentiment of a generous and loyal people, who have given their magnanimous support to this institution with the realization that education is the foremost essential to progress and that in its absence states and nations crumble and decay. The representatives of the people in their official capacity complied with that sentiment when they made provision for the building of this College of Law and as their representative I repeat that it gives me lasting pleasure to present it to the University.



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