

**A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT
WILLIAMSTOWN JUNE 29, 1886
ON THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT
OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE**

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A discourse delivered at Williamstown June 29, 1886 on the fiftieth anniversary of his election as president of Williams college by Mark Hopkins

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MARK HOPKINS

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DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT WILLIAMSTOWN

JUNE 29, 1886

*ON THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS
ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF
WILLIAMS COLLEGE*

BY

MARK HOPKINS, D.D., LL.D.

EX-PRÆSIDENT

NEW YORK

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Mr. President and Brethren Alumni :

THE American people are much given to the celebration of anniversaries. To say nothing of those that recur annually, as the Fourth of July and Washington's Birthday, has a man been married, or a minister settled, five, or ten, or twenty-five, or fifty years ; has a battle been fought at one of these intervals ; has a town been settled or an institution founded fifty, or a hundred, or two hundred and fifty years, there must be a celebration, a gathering, congratulations, sometimes gifts, sometimes a dinner, always a speech.

From this tendency the calls upon me have been exceptionally numerous. When this College had been founded fifty years, having been for seven years its president,

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I was called upon by the Alumni for a semi-centennial address. That address I gave at Commencement, in the old church on the hill by the Mansion House, forty-three years ago. The following year, being a native of Berkshire, I was appointed to a similar service at the Berkshire Jubilee, celebrated at Pittsfield. When the American Board had been founded fifty years, in 1860, having been three years its president, I was appointed to give a semi-centennial discourse. That discourse was given in Boston. By the appointment of the Alumni I gave a discourse here on the hundredth anniversary of American independence; also, by the appointment of the Trustees on the first anniversary of the assassination of President Garfield; and now, when one would suppose I might be suffered to rest, I am called on by a voice which I have always obeyed, to give a special discourse because

it is fifty years since I was appointed president.

In calling me to this service the Alumni did not, as heretofore, assign me a topic. What shall it be? In view of my long connection with the College and the natural garrulity of age, I incline to think you will expect me, instead of discussing principles or metaphysical points, to give rather some reminiscences of that earlier history of the College, so much of which I have seen, and a part of which I have been. This, if my turn were in that direction, as it is not, my position would enable me to do better than anyone else.

I have been connected with this College as student and teacher sixty-one years: three years as a student, two years as tutor, six years as professor, thirty-six years as president, and now again fourteen years as professor, but without responsibility for the government of the College.

There have thus been fifty-six years of continuous service. According to the last General Catalogue there are but six graduates of the College living who graduated earlier than I did. If we include the present graduating class, the whole number of the Alumni now living is seventeen hundred and twenty-six. Of these, all except thirty-one have been taught by me. I have also taught five hundred and thirty-four of the Alumni who have passed away: in all, two thousand two hundred and twenty-nine. Deducting these from the whole number of the Alumni, but six hundred and thirty-one are left whom I have not taught.

When I entered college in 1822 but one of the fourteen college buildings now on the ground was standing. That was the old West College. The old East College, a larger and finer building than the West College, was burnt down in 1841. The

other buildings, as I have seen them arise, let me have the pleasure of enumerating. They are Griffin Hall, the Observatory, East and South Colleges, Kellogg Hall, the Chapel, Lawrence Hall, Jackson Hall, Goodrich Hall, College Hall, the Field Observatory, Clark Hall, Morgan Hall, and the Gymnasium. In 1823 the College owned but two houses: the president's house, that stood on the north side of the main street, since moved and now occupied by Professor Safford, and a small house that stood where the chapel now stands. It now owns seven houses. The College then owned no land except about three acres connected with the then president's house. It now owns the land connected with West College and Kellogg Hall, presented by Mr. Seth B. Hunt; also the land south of East College as far as the street, presented by Mr. Elizur Smith, of Lee; also the large field beyond, recently purchased