

responsibilities for these coming twenty years. But the last twenty have put the tools into our hands. We need have no fear of failure if we remain sturdy in our trusts and put our faith in the younger generation.

And here in Cleveland you are again expressing this vigorous faith in the future which has characterized the entire history of the Western Reserve—a faith which inspires the undertaking of great beginnings which you know will be carried on eventually by younger hands in the high spirit with which they were begun. In this great and splendid institution, in which all the humane and benevolent forces of your city are cooperating you will solve all the problems that may arise from the rapidity of development which renders our own era of medicine a difficult but a particularly fascinating one. You may, at times—with all of us—fail to strike that delicate balance between the practical things of life and the more intangible qualities of spirit and intellect, which must be found in order that our profession may continue to perform its full functions in the service of civilization. These temporary fluctuations which occur in all difficult human undertakings are like the swinging from right to left of a vessel in the wash of a heavy sea—but they make no deviation from the eventual true course when wise and vigorous hands are on the wheel. You know where you are going, your course

is charted, and you have already a great tradition to drive you forward.

Of few things can we foretell the future. In these days of world transformations no one can foresee the events that are to come. No man can much affect them except by lifting his hand and mind honestly to the tasks that lie immediately before him. But in this is our profession more blessed than all others. Whatever the changes or trials that an uncertain future may hold, nothing can alter the intrinsic purposes of medicine, the very definition of which must be stated in words of action, to increase in wisdom and skill for the relief of suffering and the solace of sorrow—to serve men, their bodies and their minds—indiscriminately in a spirit that transcends social, racial and national distinctions. In all the rivalries and hatreds and mutual distrusts that hold the political and economic world in a grip of terror, medicine has no part. It is the one activity that, through these years of upheaval and revaluation of ideas and institutions, has had no need to alter its standards or its aspirations; it has known no enmities and recognized no national boundaries. Epidemic, sickness, physical suffering wipe out all this, and unite all men in sympathy and human equality. And all those in the world whom a kind fortune has permitted to devote themselves to this profession, rejoice and are grateful for the work you are inaugurating to-day.

OBITUARY

THOMAS ALVA EDISON

1847-1931

THOMAS ALVA EDISON died in the early morning of October 18. From the tributes from many sources printed by *The New York Times*, the following from Mr. Hoover and from a number of scientific men are quoted:

It is given to few men of any age, nation or calling to become the benefactor of all humanity. That distinction came abundantly to Thomas Alva Edison, whose death in his eighty-fifth year has ended a life of courage and outstanding achievement. His lifelong search for truth, fructifying in more than a thousand inventions, made him the greatest inventor our nation has produced, and revolutionized civilization itself. He multiplied light and dissolved darkness; he added to the whole wealth of nations. He was great not only in his scientific creative instinct and insight but did more than any other American to place invention on an organized basis of the utilization of raw materials of pure science and discovery. He was a rare genius. He has been a precious asset to the whole world.

Every American owes a personal debt to him. It is not only a debt for great benefactions which he has brought to every American, but also a debt for the honor

he brought to our country. By his own genius and effort he rose from a newsboy and telegrapher to the position of leadership among men. His life has been a constant stimulant to confidence that our institutions hold open the door of opportunity to those who would enter. He possessed a modesty, a kindliness, a staunchness of character rare among men. His death leaves thousands bereft of a friend, the nation bereft of one of its notable citizens and the world bereft of one of its greatest benefactors. I mourn his passing as a personal friend over a quarter of a century.—HERBERT HOOVER, President of the United States.

It has seldom fallen to any one man to be of such service to humanity. The world mourns a great benefactor.—SAMUEL W. STRATTON, chairman of the corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (dictated a few minutes before his own death).

I think his reputation was great outside America. One could not go anywhere in the world where he was not considered the greatest inventor and help to mankind. He was kind and considerate and a good friend.—G. K. BURGESS, director of the Bureau of Standards.

In my opinion Mr. Edison had a greater influence on the world than any other American.—KARL T. COMPTON, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Edison, through his discovery of how to preserve the spoken word, made man and himself immortal. What greater is possible in practical achievement?—ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, California Institute of Technology.

At the dawn of the electrical age, a little over fifty years ago, Edison appeared like a heaven-sent pioneer. His burning enthusiasm and undaunted courage and perseverance succeeded in creating in 1882 the incandescent electrical lighting system, which has not experienced an essential change since that time. This was his greatest achievement and entitled him to immortality.—MICHAEL PUPIN, Columbia University.

Edison was truly one of the great Americans. His contributions to science have been outstanding.—JOHN C. MERRIAM, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Thomas Edison used science for the benefit of mankind to such a high degree, and brought science and the scientific method into such high repute in the public regard, that it is an open question which of these two great contributions to modern civilization is the greater. Certain it is, that no other man of our generation has made a larger or more inspiring contribution.—VERNON KELLOGG, permanent secretary of the National Research Council.

With the insight of genius Edison made trial and error combined with industrial organization a method of research. He was one of the greatest men America has produced, leading in the applications of science to industry that have made possible a new civilization based on democracy, universal education and general welfare.—J. McKEEN CATTELL, editor of SCIENCE.

America has lost one of its most famous citizens and the world one of its greatest benefactors. In a very real sense Edison was the founder of our electric era. What a fine thing it would be if such a useful and inspiring personality could be granted a span of life commensurate with his value and usefulness to the world. If so, Edison would have lived for ages.—EDWIN W. RICE, JR., honorary chairman of the board and former president of the General Electric Company.

Edison was doing—and is doing—more to advance our human affairs and interests than any one I know. I repeat "is doing" because his example of actively trying to lift us continually a peg higher in our civilization by strenuous personal effort is now actuating countless youth of all lands.—WILLIS R. WHITNEY, director of the Research Laboratory of the General Electric Company, Schenectady.

Edison demonstrated to the world the enormous practical importance of electric power and its applications. Few men have ever benefited more of their fellow-men.—IRVING LANGMUIR, associate director of the General Electric Research Laboratory.

Among all the people of the earth no name has been mentioned with greater admiration than that of Thomas A. Edison, the greatest inventor of his time. An adequate appreciation of all Mr. Edison's merits can not be encompassed in brief space, but this much can be said here: not only his work but his personality especially was of sublime grandeur.—OSCAR VON MÜLLER, Deutsches Museum, Munich.

In Edison the world loses one of the greatest technical geniuses who ever lived. Though Edison himself very often equated genius with application, we know that his successes can not be accounted for by application alone. In Edison intuitive thought and exact weighing of all technical and economic problems were united with unparalleled perseverance in pursuit of his problems to such a degree that thereby he became for us the archetype of inventor.—AUGUST CAROLUS, the University of Leipzig.

The passing of Edison is a great loss to the world and especially to science and industry. Not only was the world indebted to Edison for innumerable creations of his own brain, but for his aptitude in adapting to practical purposes the ideas of other inventors, which but for him would have remained impracticable.—THE DUC DE GRAMMONT, Paris.

With the passing of Edison one of the world's greatest benefactors leaves us. What he has done for business, pleasure and philanthropy can not easily be calculated. But some idea of what the world would be without his inventions, his self-sacrificing labors, can be gathered if we try to live for a day in busy centers without the use of the telephone. He was a great and constant inspiration to me throughout my life.—GUGLIELMO MARCONI.

In Edison, one of the great technical inventors to whom we owe the possibility of alleviation and embellishment of our outward life has departed from us. An inventive spirit has filled his own life and all our existence with bright light. Thankfully we accept his legacy, not only as a gift of his genius, but also as a mission placed in our hands. For to the new generation falls the task of finding the way for the right use of the gift given to us. Only if it solves this task will the new generation be worthy of its inheritance and become really happier than former generations.—ALBERT EINSTEIN.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

CONFERENCES ON THE CALENDAR AND ON METEOROLOGY

PROFESSOR CHARLES F. MARVIN, chief of the U. S. Weather Bureau, was a representative of the State Department at the fourth general Conference of the

Committee on Communications and Transit of the League of Nations, which met at Geneva, Switzerland, on October 12. This designation was in response to a request from the League of Nations that this country be represented at the conference, especially in connec-