ANNUAL ADDRESS

BY PROF. GEO. W. HARPER. (Read May 4, 1886.)

The large increase in the membership of the Society during the past year, the many and valuable additions to our library and museum, and the present healthy condition of our finances, are not only evidences of present prosperity, but are omens of good in the future. This flourishing condition of our Society should be a source of gratification not only to every member, but to every lover of science in our city, but we must not forget that this substantial growth brings with it increased responsibility.

Within the near future several questions must be settled, questions of great interest not only to our city but to the cause of science in general. Prominent among these questions is, the future location for this Society. Large and valuable private collections are awaiting the decision of this question. Our rooms are already over-crowded, and many valuable specimens are relegated to dark corners where they can not be seen to advantage. It is true that the present building might be enlarged so as to cover the entire lot, but the relief would be but temporary, for in a very few years we would need additional room.

It is quite plain that at an early day we will be compelled to remove from our present location, and any move is likely to be a permanent one. Hence the question, where? should be carefully considered and wisely settled.

The great cost of a suitable lot and the question of cleanliness are two insuperable objections to any location within the limits of the lower levels of our city. If, then, we must go to the hill tops, there are only two localities eligible—Burnet Woods and Eden Park. In both a site could be selected high and isolated, so as to avoid a large percentage of the dust and smoke, so detrimental to fine collections, within the heart of our city.

Between these two locations the preference should be given to Eden Park, as it will soon be very accessible, having two cable lines connecting it with the center of the city, and because there is already located there a museum of art, and this would become doubly attractive if it were a museum of science as well as of art. In other cities where the great mistake has been made of organizing separate museums of science and art, the two institutions have become rivals for public favor to the detriment of both.
Cincinnati Society of Natural History.

The directors of the West Museum have already accepted in trust a large and valuable collection of ancient Peruvian pottery.

The extensive collection of minerals, fossils and archeology belonging to Paul Mohr, Esq., will be displayed in the same building.

Mr. Cleneay's numismatic cabinet, together with his unrivaled collection in archeology, will no doubt take the same direction. By this action of the trustees in furnishing room in their fire-proof building for these valuable collections in science, they have already laid the foundations of a great museum of the arts and sciences, which will either overshadow or absorb all kindred institutions in our city. If the Mechanics' Institute, the State Archeological Association, the Historical Society of Ohio, the Natural History Society of this city, and all similar institutions, while maintaining their separate organizations, were to concentrate in one building, or cluster of buildings, with a common hall for assembly purposes, they would each and all better conserve the purposes for which they were founded.

Great libraries and museums permeate with their healthful influence all grades of society. They not only attract the passing stranger but they invite permanent residents among the better class of educated and refined people, and particularly special students of science, who naturally seek homes in places where the largest facilities are afforded for study.

In a great commercial and manufacturing city competing sharply with rival cities for the trade of a wide extent of territory, it becomes necessary that our citizens be thoroughly posted in regard to the great and live questions of the day, and what can conduce to this end better than these great public institutions.

Nearly all valuable discoveries and inventions were first thought out and formulated in the busy brain of some scientist and then handed over to a practical man who never could have originated them, but who is quick to discern their practical bearing and to push them in the marts of the world for all they are worth. It is only when the enthusiast in science and the practical man of the world go hand in hand that there is real substantial progress.

Our University can never become a seat of learning in the true sense without these necessary adjuncts of the higher education. Time was when our lovers of art were compelled to live in exile in order to draw inspiration from the great art collections of
Europe, while our scientists in like manner made long pilgrimages
to the great museums of Paris, of Berlin, and London, but now
our home collections are exciting an interest even on the other
side of the ocean.

The large and unrivaled collections made in the Bad Lands
of Dacotah by Prof. Marsh for the Yale College, and the remark-
able work done by Louis Agassiz and his co-laborers for the
Harvard College Museum are well-known.

The growth of the American Museum, established in Central
Park, New York, a few years ago, has perhaps been the most re-
markable. The City of New York has so far expended over half
a million towards the building, which is only about one-eighth of
the intended cost when completed. This museum is maintained
by a private society. It has already received the following dona-
tions, namely a conchological collection, numbering 50,000 speci-
mens, and valued at 10,000 dollars, with a library on conchology
numbering 10,000 volumes, the gift of Miss Catharine Wolfe. The
Maxmilian and other collections, containing 4,000 mounted speci-
mens of mammals, birds, etc. Collection of North American
birds, 2,500 specimens, lepidoptera 10,000, beetles and insects
4,000, and over 7,000 specimens of minerals. Add to these Dr.
Davis' pre-historic collection, numbering many thousands of speci-
mens, and Prof. James Hall's large collection, containing many
valuable types of silurian fossils, described by him and others,
which was purchased for $6,500, and presented to this same
museum. The above are only a part of the many donations made
to this museum since its foundation.

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia has also
grown enormously within the past few years. Among its many
valuable acquisitions is the collection of Crania, numbering over
1,300 specimens, begun by the late Dr. S. G. Morton, and said to
be the finest in the world.

There seems to be no good reason why the Queen City of the
West should not have a great museum of the sciences as well as of
the arts. The enterprise and generosity of our citizens in the past
is an assurance that all the money needed to accomplish this ob-
ject will be furnished as soon as our Society has proven itself com-
petent and worthy of such a trust.