

**Address Delivered Before the Two Literary Societies of the University of North Carolina,  
February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1976 By Prof. Albert Coates**

**Published by Order of the Philanthropic Society**

**Remarks of George T. Blackburn, II, President  
Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies Foundation, Inc.**

Mr. President, honored guests, fellow senators, ladies and gentleman:

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the Philanthropic Society acquired a portrait of Johnston Blakely, a naval hero of the War of 1812. Blakely had been a member of the Philanthropic Society in 1797. That portrait founded a great tradition of which we are the present stewards and beneficiaries.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the two Societies assiduously collected portraits of their greatest alumni. By the dawn of the twentieth century, the biographical history of North Carolina could be read upon the walls of these chambers. These were pantheons of the State's heroes.

But in those first years of the twentieth century, the halls had not become museums of a past and envied glory. The air was electric with challenge: North Carolina had begun to industrialize. Tobacco was making new wealth, and with it were vanishing the last traces of Southern sorrow and defeat. A sense of expansion and a sure hope of achievement filled these halls.

In the fall of 1917, Thomas Wolfe stood at this podium and vowed that his portrait would one day hang beside that of Governor Zebulon Vance, the State's most admired hero. Although Wolfe spoke at least half in jest, he did not mistake his own caliber, nor was he conspicuously advanced from his fellow students. For in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the University of North Carolina found its golden age.

It was as if a modern Jason had gathered together the young heroes of the State to set them a great task. Here they assembled: Thomas Wolfe, Sam Ervin, Albert Coates, William Bobbitt, Paul Green, Robert House, Luther Hodges, William Umstead, John Kerr, Jr., Thad Eure. They came from small communities in a state of small towns. And they brought with them the gift that only a small community can give: the sense that one's own efforts make a difference to those around him and can make a difference in the world. That sense is the spark of achievement, and the surest hope of a democratic people is that it will be engendered in the greatest number of its youth.

They came to a university that was still enough of a community to preserve their sense of self-worth while adding a proper humility for the achievements of past generations. At the University, these heroes found their Jason. He was Edward Kidder Graham, President of the University from 1914 to 1918.

Graham was a native son of North Carolina, the state that had given more men and materials to the Confederacy than any other state. That sacrifice left this state in greatest want. In the task of

rebuilding, each man learned for himself the lean virtues of the individual, denuded of materials excess. Their individual efforts bore fruit, brought wealth, and powered the first wheels of industry in North Carolina.

But the industrial and commercial success of the people was posing a threat to their moral achievement, to their individualism, and to their democratic self-government. Elsewhere, industrialism had already produced narrow men performing specialized functions. President Graham saw that threat, and he led the University to preserve in prosperity the principles and values North Carolinians had learned in adversity.

What he did not do is as important as what he did. He did not defend idealism by belittling the efforts of capitalists. That is the mistake the University has made in recent years. The faculty and students have voiced an unrelieved criticism of social practices and commercial efforts common to the State, a criticism that has estranged them from the people and set them apart from the efforts and concerns of the State. But Edward Graham enjoyed a keener intelligence and a broader humanity. He recognized and praised the enterprise of bankers, industrialists, small-town businessmen and farmers, the people who had rebuilt North Carolina. And he gave them a new vision, a new challenge to which all their enterprise might nobly lead them.

Here is what he told them:

"The expectation of the people is a compelling prayer. It will be the work of our section, re-established in nationalism through prosperity, to lead the nation out of its confusions of materialism, and it will only be through interpretations of the old ideals. However this may be, I know heroes will come in commerce, in statecraft, in literature, in religion when the spirit and temper of the State becomes resurgent through patriotic faith and so liberates the splendid virtues of constructive materialism from its own unbalanced tyrannies. To usher in this creative era is in part the glorious privilege of every man and woman who would play a patriot's part in the North Carolina of today and achieve in the North Carolina of tomorrow the commonwealth for which men have dreamed and died but scarcely dared to hope."

The heroes sat before him, ready to usher in that creative era: Thomas Wolfe and Paul Green in literature; Luther Hodges in commerce; Same Ervin and William Bobbitt in jurisprudence; and in statecraft, Albert Coates.

We have assembled here today to add the bust of Albert Coates to those portraits of distinguished alumni of the two Societies. I have begun these remarks by attempting to give you some idea of the historical context in which his achievements began and of the ideals with which he was inspired by Edward Kidder Graham. In Mr. Coates's writings, Graham's remarks are frequently quoted. His career as a student paralleled exactly the years of Graham's presidency. I think, in the creation of the Institute of Government, Mr. Coates achieved the union of University and State, of education and citizenship, that Graham advocated.

Albert Coates came to the University of North Carolina in 1914. During his four years he distinguished himself as the foremost orator among his fellow students. He won every major medal in oratory offered by the University: The Freshman Debater's Medal, the Carr Medal, the

Bingham Medal, and the Mangum Medal. To these he added the prize for the North Carolina Peace Oratorical Contest. His record of offices includes every major office of the Philanthropic Society, over which he presided in 1917. He also served as president of the Junior Class, the Athletic Association and the North Carolina Club. For his services as a leader, Mr. Coates was inducted into the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Upon completion of his law studies at Harvard University in 1923, Mr. Coates accepted an appointment as Assistant Professor of Law at the University of North Carolina. In 1925 he became an Associate Professor of Law, and began his tenure as full Professor of Law in 1927, a post which he maintained until his retirement from the teaching faculty in 1962.

It was significant to Mr. Coates that he entered directly upon his career as a professor of law without interval of actual practice. This omission aroused in him a curiosity about the practical world of laws in which he had not participated and about which he could not inform his students. This curiosity engendered a methodical study. Mr. Coates brought sitting justices and practicing lawyers of North Carolina to his criminal law classroom to provide the practical experience of the bar to his students.

The gap between the practical and the theoretical occurred to Mr. Coates in the field of public administration of laws as well. He sought to gain an understanding of the problems of administration. He joined police forces, participated in investigations, testified at trials as a police investigator, worked with solicitors, sat on juries, investigated prison conditions for the State. He discovered in city councils and county offices that the problems of city and county governments were becoming more and more complex as the field of government services was rapidly expanding. That complexity was making democratic self-government, with its constant turnover of officials, more and more difficult. Some method of educating the newly elected public officials and of keeping officers of the law informed as to changes in state laws and new enforcement techniques was needed if law and the democratic system were to meet the practical complexities at hand.

But now the nation had entered the Great Depression. There was not enough money to finance existing institutions, much less to experiment with new and untried ones. Only a man who had won the Peace Oratorical Prize in 1918, the year of the Great War, could have persuaded contributors to assist the new venture. The hardships, sacrifices and near failures out of which the Institute of Government arose were as exacting as the early struggles of the University itself to take root in the wilderness of North Carolina. But its success was ascertained as the need it answered.

Mr. Coates gathered a small faculty of talented men, and the promise of the Institute became apparent to the multitude of officials it aided. When money for salaries drained away, Mr. Coates persuaded his law students to work part-time to keep the Institute alive. As prosperity slowly returned, the Institute expanded rapidly beyond its facilities. It became a vital adjunct of local governments across the State. Policemen, city councilmen, mayors, county commissioners, legislators, civic club members, men and women who had never attended the University of North Carolina, now found in its Institute of Government a practical and constant aid in the conduct of

their political life. Here was realized Edward Kidder Graham's dream of planting the University in the daily democratic life of the people of North Carolina.

Mr. Coates brought the Institute of Government to secure success in 1959 with the erection of its present building on the eastern gateway of the University. Three years later, in 1962, he retired as director of the Institute.

These literary societies were first to recognize Mr. Coates's achievements. In 1951 he was awarded the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies Award for Public Service. This was followed by the University's O. Max Gardner Award in 1952, the John J. Parker Award of the North Carolina Bar Association in 1964, and the North Carolina Award in 1967. More recently he has been honored by the announcement that the projected building to house the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and the North Carolina League of Municipalities will bear his name.

Since his retirement in 1962, Mr. Coates has devoted his talents to the study and development of what he calls the "flying buttresses of government." These are the civic organizations, student governments and public school civic curricula that train and provide the ordinary citizen with opportunities for service to his community and state. He has written articles, books and texts, given talks and held workshops to promote the history and ideals of citizen groups. These efforts were recognized by the General Assembly of North Carolina upon joint resolution of the two houses in May of last year. That work continues today.

Before closing these remarks I must supply the obvious omission that those who have known and worked with Mr. Coates have no doubt noticed. In 1928 Mr. Coates married Gladys Hall. That marriage was as fortunate for this University and for these Societies as it was for Mr. Coates. It should be counted among his foremost contributions to the State. Mrs. Coates is not native of this state, nor was she a graduate of this University. But she has researched the history of the University with greater diligence than has any of its graduates. Much of the credit that there still exists a collection of Societies' portraits to which we might add the bust of Mr. Coates belongs to Mrs. Coates. Her research and talks kept alive public interest in their welfare. The fruits of her research will be borne in publications during the next few years on many aspects of the history of the University and State.

Mr. President, it is a privilege for the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies Foundation to comply with the Societies request that we add this bust of Professor Albert Coates to those portraits in our care. It was sculpted by Mr. William E. Hipp III, a native North Carolinian and a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The likeness is remarkable, and the work itself is a fitting testimony to the forceful personality it portrays.

Now, as a member of the joint Senate of these Societies, I request that privileges of the floor be extended to Professor Laurens Walker, Mr. Donald Hayman, Chancellor N. Ferebee Taylor, and the Honorable Terry Sanford for remarks in honor of Mr. Coates. Thank you.

## **Response to the Recognition By the Joint Senate of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies**

By Albert Coates, Professor Emeritus of the Law School of the University of North Carolina at  
Chapel Hill

Thursday Afternoon, February 19, 1976

### **I**

Samuel Johnson, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century English philosopher, was called into the King's quarters in London one morning for a visit. His was a signal honor for a literary man. His friends wanted to know what was said in the meeting and arranged a testimonial dinner for him. He told them that in the course of the conversation the King had complimented him highly on a book he had written. "What did you say to the King?" his friends inquired. "I took him at his word," Samuel Johnson replied. "Who am I to bandy civilities with my sovereign?"

And who am I to bandy civilities with those who have preceded me on this program tonight? I listened to their remarks with exceeding care. They have put every paling in the fence, and I am satisfied of their correctness to the last detail.

"Don't let this recognition go to your head," remarked one of my friends on hearing of the honor you are conferring on me tonight. "Where else should it go?" I answered. "My head is the only part of me that can appreciate the honor and articulate a response." On second thought, I must qualify that answer, for my head has signaled my body and the answering thrill of appreciation goes all the way to my toes and comes back again in a total response to your gracious action.

In the book of Genesis, it is written that "god formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." I saw Mr. Hipp, the sculptor, look at me, pick up a mass of clay without form and void, and start working with it day after day until he got it in the shape you see tonight. He must have breathed into it something of the breath of life, for when it was first seen by Novella Harriss, who comes to my home one day a week to help with the housecleaning, she said to my wife: "It looks just like Mr. Coates opening his lips to say, 'Novella, it's a great life if you don't weaken.'"

### **II**

I am happy that this recognition of me has come by way of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies, co-operating in this Joint Senate. Let me tell you why:

When Hinton James came to this campus on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1795, he found: Old East building, the president's house, a pile of lumber for building a steward's house, a mass of yellow clay dug out for the foundation of a chapel, and one faculty member, who had been waiting for him since January 15<sup>th</sup> when the University opened its door.

He was the one lone and lonesome ember of the student body. Two weeks later he was joined by Maurice and Alfred Moore of Brunswick, Richard Eagles of New Hanover, William Sneed of

Granville, John Taylor, and three Burton brothers of Orange. There were forty-one students to keep each other company by the end of the term in July, and one hundred by the end of the year.

The books provided for the students by the Trustees included: Whittenhall's Greek Grammar; Homer and the Greek Testament; Latin authors including Sallust, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Lucian and Xenophon; and gestures to the English language including Webster's Grammar, and Scot's Dictionary.

The students had come from rural surroundings to an even more rural setting on top of a high hill in Orange County to which the ruins of an old English Chapel had given the name o Chapel Hill. In this strange place they were studying still stranger tongues, spoken in civilizations long since vanished, by men and women long since dead.

Misery must have loved company in those days as well as in these, for on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 1795, the students got together in a society where they could speak to each other in a language of their own. They called it "The Debating Society." They must have believed that competition was the life of education as well as the life of trade, for on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July they divided the Debating Society and called the new organization "The Concord Society." Thereafter the Debating Society took the name of the Dialectic Literary Society and the Concord Society took the name of the Philanthropic Literary Society. They began competing with each other in everything: in debates, in orations, in compositions, in putting tombstones for their respective members who died in Chapel Hill.

### III

In these Societies students began teaching themselves what they were not being taught by the University faculty.

There was no English Department, so they began teaching themselves English: by way of written compositions which were read at their weekly meetings and criticized by fellow students who took the critic's job seriously; and by way of orations and debates within the societies, between the societies, and between colleges and universities.

There was no University library, and since they needed books, newspapers and periodicals as source materials for their intellectual activities, they started to building their own libraries which grew from 2,000 volumes by 1812, to 6,000 by 1835, to 10,000 by 1854, to 16,000 by 1858. Their periodicals included the London and Westminster Review, the London Quarterly, the New York Review, the North American Review, and a variety of others.

There was no force outside themselves which could make rules and regulations for their meetings, set standards of conduct inside the society halls, and carry those standards to the campus outside, and they taught themselves to do these things for themselves. It was their contributions to the faculty and trustees n the campus.

From 1795 to the 1860's and into the early 1900's, these societies continued their self-educating and self-regulating activities. The faculty and trustees recognized their effectiveness in the life of the University to the point that they required all students to be a member of one society or the

other. They were the only students on the campus--excepting freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes.

They worked their way into the life of the University to the point that when New East and New West Buildings were erected in the 1850s, one floor in each building was provided for Society Hall, along with dormitory rooms and classrooms.

The Society members taxed themselves, and called on their alumni for added help, to furnish these halls, until they could say that "rich damask curtains from the looms of France are suspended from window arches, the floor is spread with neat carpeting," and "420 pivoted chairs upholstered with scarlet velvet."

"From the walls of the societies," said a letter to their alumni in the 1820s, "hang portraits of various state worthies, like guardian Genii of the place, looking with complacency on the efforts on the young hope of the state," and they looked forward to seeing their "walls covered with portraits, and our niches filled with busts of North Carolina's distinguished sons."

After the University of North Carolina opened its doors in 1795, Governor Alexander Martin expressed the hope that from this University would come "men of ability to fill the departments of government with reputation," and in the year 1830 Chief Justice Thomas Ruffin of the Supreme Court of North Carolina wrote this letter to members of the General Assembly of North Carolina, saying:

"The seven or eight hundred of the alumni of Chapel Hill, now fill with honor to themselves and the College and with usefulness to their country most of her posts of distinction, trust, labor, and responsibility in her legislatures, her Judiciary, her professions, her schools. Many who have sought employment and homes in distant sections of the Union make us favorably known in Sister States . . ."

The University of North Carolina was thirty-five years old when Chief Justice Ruffin wrote that letter. Most, if not all, of the men he was talking about were men who had been members of the Dialectic and philanthropic Literary Societies.

Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, Historian of Harvard University, visited the University of North Carolina in the early spring of 1892, and "when he returned to Cambridge he told his students that he had heard a debate in the United States House of Representatives and one in the Dialectic Society at the University of North Carolina and that the collegiate boys had beat the Congressmen." He wrote a chapter in a book on "The Art of Debate", saying that the "machinery of debate took its most effective form in two rival systems, such as the Whig Clio at Princeton,, Philanthropic and Dialectic of the University of North Carolina, Philolexian and Barnard of Columbia, and the Union and Forum of Harvard."

The Societies were playing a great part in the lives of students of my college generation, 1914to 1918: there were many of us who put more hard, solid, and rewarding work into these societies throughout those years than we put into all other student activities combined. We went out from campus owing more to them than all other student activities put together.

They were no longer the dominating student organizations of the 1790's and 1800's, but they were still at the heart and center of student life. Their halls were full at their Saturday night meetings. And they were filling Gerrard Hall at their intersociety and inter-collegiate debates.

#### IV

They began to lose their all-inclusive grip on campus in the early 1900's as the University began to outgrow the limitations of a small liberal arts college. As University departments began to take over services which had been given to students by the societies alone. As the Law School and Medical School and Graduate School came into being and began to bring in students with specialized interests who did not feel the need for services the societies provided for their members. As the University ceased to require students in these professional and graduate schools to join the Societies. As new student organizations grew up to minister to specific student needs.

When the Societies ceased to include significant parts of the student body and lost their jurisdiction over them, they were no longer adequate to the task of law and order--which is a seamless web, and the Student Council was organized to represent the student body as a whole and to take on the student governing responsibility. But it should be pointed out that it was the cohesive experience of the two societies and the continuing moral force of their traditions that provided the underpinning of the newly organized Student Council in its early days.

When the University library began to grow to meet the general and specialized needs of an expanding faculty and student body, the Societies transferred their 16,000 volumes to help build the general library for the whole University on its way, with the legend, "Endowed by the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies," pasted on the opening page of every book in recognition of their continued underpinning.

The student forums bringing outside speakers to the campus today are reminders of the practice of the Societies in bringing outside speakers to the campus to talk at the annual Society reunions and the Commencement exercises throughout the 1800's.

The intercollegiate debates now in the hands of the Division of Speech in the English Department are reminiscent of the intra-society contests, and the intercollegiate contests of my own student days.

The interscholastic contests conducted by many departments in the University are reminiscent of the high school debates started by the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies in 1913 and later taken over by the University Extension Division.

The Music Department, the Drama Department, and the Art Department of today grew out of student glee clubs, student dramatic clubs, and student artistic interests of earlier years, and this process still goes on in a continuing pattern of stimulus and response.

#### V

With all of these organizations and activities competing for the time and attention of students, the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies weakened in vitality, began to lose their way, and resorted to face-lifting operations. They changed their names from the Dialectic and Philanthropic



Literary Societies to the Philanthropic Assembly in 1919, and to the Dialectic Senate in 1925. This new look saw the same old things. By 1959 they resorted to the device of sitting together as a Joint Senate, with members of the Di and Phi sitting on opposite sides of the hall. The Joint Senate had a slow and desultory growth from 1959 to 1967, became quite active in 1967-1968, and then declined again.

For many years the projecting power of old traditions has kept the Di and Phi Societies going. Let me illustrate my meaning: The Philanthropic Assembly lost all of its members during World War II. The Dialectic Senate barely survived, and one of its members, Robert Morrison, editor of the Daily Tar Heel, got the Philanthropic Assembly going again. In 1971 the membership of the Joint Senate of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies dwindled to one, Stanley Greenberg of Orange County, who was to graduate in June. Mr. Greenberg didn't want to see these ancient institutions die on his hands, and went out to persuade other students to join with him in a blood transfusion to keep them going. Thirteen students agreed. Here are their names:

Hugh Joseph Beard, Jr.	from	Alamance County	Phi
George T. Blackburn, II	from	Vance County	Phi
David G. Changaris	from	New Jersey	Phi
Mark Keating	from	Mississippi	Phi
Phillip Micheals	from	Pitt County	Phi
James Uzzel	from	South Carolina	Phi
Oliver K. Bagwell, Jr.	from	Buncombe County	Di
Joseph Bryan Cumming, Jr.	from	Georgia	Di
William Lapsley, Griffin, Jr.	from	Buncombe County	Di
Howard Alan Lipton	from	Durham County	Di
Joseph P. McGuire	from	Buncombe County	Di
William Francis Mignuolo	from	New York	Di
Charkes Christopher potter	from	South Carolina	Di

If these societies were born in the lives of students on this campus in the 1790's, they were born again in the lives of Stanley Greenberg and his thirteen associates in the 1970s.

## VI

These men found the records of the Societies from 1958 to 1970 scattered and in complete disorder, and that the records of their proud history from 1795 to 1958 were unknown to the new members.

Here is what they did. They gathered all the records that could be located and arranged them for deposit in the University Archives in Wilson Library. Partial minutes were transcribed and supplemented to provide, as nearly as possible, a record of the difficult period in the Societies' history from 1958 to 1970. They began systematically to index and review the minutes and papers from the first meeting of June 6, 1795 to their own time. This work is nearly complete. They kept thorough records of their own meetings and activities, adopting the forms used by the Societies in earlier days. And they culled from old Yackety Yacks, roll books and minute books, the names of their alumni since 1887 to update the last catalogue of members.

They found the portraits in deplorable condition--some gashed, some misplaced, many decaying for lack of proper care, and familiar only to scholars of University and State history.

Here is what they did. They searched all University buildings to find missing portraits and locate known portraits that had been loaned for display. They devised a biographical index to familiarize their members with the great men of the Societies' history. They formed a foundation to restore the entire collection of paintings and other art objects and to provide for their permanent care in future years. This was an effort requiring tens of thousands of dollars. And they raised it all.

They found that intercollegiate debates, once conducted by the Societies, had been shifted to the Debate Council, which was established by the Societies in the early 1920's, and shifted from the Debate Council to the Speech Division of the English Department in the 1960s. Only the Mangum Medal competition is still operated by the Societies.

They found the weekly meetings non-existent. Students seemed to have little interest in participating in activities like debate and discussion requiring a great deal of work, when there were too many forms of entertainment at the University requiring no effort at all. There was the great carnival of moves, rock music concerts, exhibitions, public speeches, social entertainments, and spectator athletic events.

Here is what they did. They began meeting twice a month and publishing a newspaper to advertise their activities. They invited faculty members to debate each other on topics of current events and history. They began inter-society debates and public readings to improve their own speaking abilities. Their membership began to grow, albeit at slow and fluctuating rates. But they were on their way.

## VII

It is an inspiring thing to me that the sole surviving member of these societies in 1971 did not want them to die on his hands and that students responded to his appeal and helped him keep them alive. It is an inspiring thing to me that these students started in systematic fashion to gather up the ragged ends of old traditions and put their records in order, make an inventory of their properties, locate the portraits of their famous men, restore them as nearly as possible to their original condition, rescue a quarter of a million dollars in cash values that were going down the drain, and provide weekly programs good enough to attract attendance of their members. These activities are worthy of the traditions of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies at their historic best.

With all of these inspiring activities underway, the question facing every student in this room tonight is this: Granted that you have got these Societies going again, have you got them going to the point that they will keep on going when you are gone?

## VIII

In 1976 you are involved in a more difficult undertaking than your predecessors in 1795 and throughout the 1800's. Let me illustrate my meaning: They had few if any competing attractions

to contend with. The Saturday night meetings in the Society halls were about the only places for students to go to, and that was in great measure true in 1914 when I came here as a freshman. There were no paved roads, automobiles were few and far between, and no one was raising his thumb for a weekend ride out of town unless he has the St. Vitus Dance. In 1976 the Societies have lost the competition with the automobile and the hard-surface road and weekend exits to the point that they have moved their periodic meetings to the middle of the week.

There is another reason for the drift away from Society halls as student centers, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill offers a far richer mixture of opportunities to students in 1976 than it offered to students in the 1800's and early 1900's: in volume and variety of its courses of instruction, in the reaches of its libraries and laboratories, in the multiplicity of organizations and activities competing for a student's time and attention. This is illustrated by the fact that intercollegiate debates were transferred from the Societies and Debating Council to the Speech Division of the English Department because it could give them systematic instruction in the art of public discussion and debate that the Societies could not compare with. This transfer is all the more significant because it was made at the request of the students themselves.

It is related in the New Testament that Jesus of Nazareth was urging his disciples to undertake a course of action which He thought was worthwhile and got this question from the disciple Peter, reflecting what was going on in the minds of all of the disciples: "Master, what is in it for me?" That, I think, was a fair and honest question two thousand years ago. It is, I think, a fair and honest question for every student to ask of every campus organization soliciting his membership in 1976: What is in it for me? That is a question the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies have to answer.

Look at their fluctuating membership after World War II. Look at their fluctuating membership in recent years: down to one surviving member at the beginning of the 1970s, up to 14 in 1971 with new members coming in on a death bed appeal from Stanley Greenberg, down to 7 in 1973, up to 20 in 1974 and 45 in 1975. Whether it will keep on going up or down from year to year is still uncertain. These fluctuating figures suggest that calls like Stanley Greenberg's call may be enough to get the Societies going again, and again, and again, but they are not enough to keep them going. Sooner or later students will begin asking: What is in these Societies for me? In return for membership dues and the time I put into meetings and programs, what is my take-home pay?

Lasting life and steady growth call for a two-way street. They call for student-getting as well as student-giving. It may be more blessed to give than to receive, but if it is all giving and no receiving, the giving is likely to give out as soon as students find out that instead of priming the pump they are filling the well. And that is as it ought to be. Let me tell you why.

As member of the Philanthropic Society, Charles B. Aycock, left this campus in the 1880's and ran for Governor of North Carolina at the turn of the century, saying to the people: "If you vote for me, I want you to vote for me with the distinct understanding that I shall devote the four years of my administration to building up the public schools. I shall endeavor for every child to get an education." You will notice that he did not say that the public schools would give an

education to any child. He said that the public schools would give to every child an opportunity to get it for himself.

"What is education?" called out a heckler from the crowd at one of Aycock's stump speeches. On the spur of the moment he threw back this answer: "By education I mean getting out of a boy and girl everything that God Almighty put into them." He made this meaning more explicit in a later speech affirming the equal right of every child to have the opportunity to burgeon out of himself everything there is within him."

Education is what the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is all about. It does not promise to give an education to any student. It does promise to give every student an opportunity to get it for himself: by studies with the faculty in the classrooms, by associations with fellow students on the campus, by thinking to himself as he walks along the campus paths, by curricular and extra-curricular activities of all sorts and sizes.

To what extent, if any, can the Dialectic Senate and Philanthropic Assembly contribute to the education which a student has come here to get? To what extent, if any, can they help him to get out of himself everything that God Almighty has put in him? To what extent, if any, can they increase his take-home pay?

I am not about to give you advice on how to go about meeting this responsibility. In my early married days I gave some advice to my wife which I thought then and think now was good advice. She smiled at me and gave this answer: "Sweetheart, you have heard of Oscar Wilde's remark that 'all advice is bad and good advice is worse'?" I got her meaning to the point that years later when my younger brother asked me for advice in a critical situation, I replied, "Son, I will give you all the advice you want, provided you will agree not to take it." He understood what I meant: that I was all for him, that I wished him well and more than well, that I would give him everything I had to give, but that he was on his own and could take it or leave it as he saw fit.

Many years ago Robert Hutchins, the 28-year-old Dean of the Yale Law School, visited the Supreme Court of the United States in Washington, D.C. One of the crusty old Justices jovially slapped him on the back and said in great good humor: "Well, here is our boy Dean who is teaching his Yale law students that the Supreme Court of the United States doesn't know any law." "Oh, no, Mr. Justice," replied Dean Hutchins, "we let the boys find that out for themselves." And that is what the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies have got to do.

While you are working to find out for yourselves how to keep these Societies going after you are gone, you can, I think, thank God and take courage from these facts:

The records show that the students in the Oxford and Cambridge Union in Great Britain never wearied of well-doing, that they never lost their way, that the quality and calibre of their discussions and debates in this day and generation rises to, and sometimes surpasses, the level of discussion and debate in the British Parliament. You have seen and heard them for yourselves on television.

The records show that the students of this day and generation have abilities as great if not greater than students of former generations, and that they have more information and knowledge to bring to bear on current issues and problems than their predecessors ever had in their day an generation, and more of them have greater interest in public affairs than any generation I have ever known.

I believe these resources can be brought to a focus in the quality and calibre of public discussion and debate going on in the Dialectic and Philanthropic Society has from week to week, giving more take-home pay to every participating member--if that is what you want to do, and if you are willing to pay the price, and if the price is worth your time and effort.

There are some among you in these Societies who have spent a lot of time in searching for scattered records and in putting them in order, and in locating scattered portraits and restoring them to face value and laying foundations for keeping them restored through future generations--as much time as they have put in studying any exacting college course. I know they feel that their labors have been worth their while. I believe that the same amount of time put on studying the topics for public discussion and debate in your regular meetings will be worth the while of those who do this work, and worth the while of those who come to listen to what they have to say.

Let me illustrate my meaning: Students in the University are now preparing a Symposium on this campus in march on problems in the third American century, including such problems as" population growth; food shortage; pollution of the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters down under the earth; the energy crisis; the rapidly emerging third world; and so on. Most, if not all of these questions carry the connotation of life and death to every one of you. You will be grappling with them all of your lives. There is nothing in the law of the land, or in the Constitutions of North Carolina and the United States, to prevent you from studying and discussing these problems while you are students on this campus.

Let me throw out this suggestion for your consideration:

Select a committee of ten of your ablest members.

Let the go to work to make up a list of ten or more of the most vital questions of this day and generation.

Let them put this list of questions the agree on into the hands of all members of this joint Senate and ask each person to study it and make up his own list of ten most vital issues, adding or subtracting from the initial list , and turn it back to the committee to put together a consensus of the thinking of all members.

Let them arrange for a full-scale discussion and debate on these priorities at one or more regular meetings of the Joint Senate when there is no other business to be discussed.

Allocate the greed-on topics to as many meetings of the Joint Senate and schedule them for the fall term of this year--1976.

Assign the topics to members of the Joint Senate by the end of April, so they will know the topics they are to discuss and when, and thus give them the time to study and prepare themselves to turn their discussions and debates into great occasions worthy of the time and the attention of their fellow members, and let their fellow members at each meeting join in a free-for-all discussion.

Think of what such a program carried out in the fall and spring terms for four years could mean in the present and future life of every member of these Societies.

I believe that some such experiment as this might enable students in these Societies to lift themselves by their own bootstraps into a program which can contribute as much to their education as any course in any classroom in the University, a program which continued from year to year would make these societies mean to their members throughout the 1800's and into the early 1900's.

In the early 1800's, William Rufus King of Sampson County, left the University to become Congressman from North Carolina, Secretary of the Legation to Russia, United States Senator from Alabama for thirty years, Minister to France, and soon elected Vice president of the United States. In 1838, at the height of his career, he wrote this letter to his society, saying:

"To sustain the honor and advance the prosperity of [the Philanthropic Society] constituted at one period of my life, the strongest feeling of my nature; it entwined itself around every fiber of heart, and stimulated all of my energies. Time and diversified pursuits have weakened, but not extinguished that feeling. I still exult in the success of the white badge; nor in the palmy days of Rome's grandeur did the 'I am a Roman citizen' command more of confidence and respect than 'I am a member of the Philanthropic Society' does for me."

When Turner, the great English artist, was painting his glorious sunsets, and cynics commented that they had never seen sunsets like them, Turner replied, "Ah, but don't you wish you had?" And to those of this day and generation who say they have never seen societies like the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies of the 1800's, described by William Rufus King and Albert Bushnell Hart, let me give this answer: Don't you wish you had?