

OTTAWA UNIVERSITY.

HER GREAT DISASTER.

"The opening exercises of the new school year of Ottawa University will be held at 10 a. m. tomorrow, in the new chapel. An address will be delivered by Dr. J. S. Kirtley, of Kansas City, and a number of Ottawa's citizens will make five-minute talks on appropriate subjects. The university opens this year under more favorable circumstances than have existed in the past, and the management anticipate a highly successful season."

This was the notice inserted in the evening papers September 9. It was but a cold statement of what caused the hearts of all interested to burn with joy and gratitude. The hard work and struggles of many years were bearing rich fruit. Our hopes and aims were nearing realization. How we had watched the beautiful structure evolving out of wood, stone, bricks and mortar! How we had looked forward to this hour when we should possess it in its completeness; when the beautiful chapel should be alive with ambitious, consecrated young people, lifting their voices in song! How we had labored and prayed to this end, and how little we had dreamed that calamity could come! With the last details arranged for the dedication; with our pretty town filled with students, many here for the first time; with a prospect of a better year than Ottawa University had ever known; with joy in our hearts over present achievement and the determination for still greater advancement, we closed our eyes for a little rest before taking up the work of the year. We are all too familiar with the history of the fateful morning when the dawn found us without a college home; with only blackened walls and smoking ruins in which to welcome our fine band of young people.

It is useless to spend time in grieving. Our beautiful building and all of its contents are gone. The relentless flames made no distinction, but swept offices, class rooms, literary halls, museum, library and chapel into a mass of ruins. Dreams of the future and traditions of the past alike vanished, and we stood bereft and dumb with sense of loss. Every day the disaster seems to grow. Every day we wake up to some new loss. There are the class pictures; the portraits of some

who have labored for Ottawa University; the books accumulated laboriously through many years, a large number of which have been secured during the last few months. There was the valuable Theological library of the late Rev. Robt. Atkinson, just added to the shelves, never having been used by us. There was the beautiful ivy vine, which has climbed from year to year about the stones, lending itself with grace and beauty to the outlines of the building. We could go on enumerating our losses and never seem to come to the end. Many are intangible losses that money can never replace, and still we can not stop to mourn. We must turn our backs upon the past and resolutely face the future. We can not resuscitate the associations, but we must rebuild the building. Ottawa University will live. The stone structure will again lift its outlines to the sky, but it will be the result of many sacrifices; sacrifices that do not just touch us and are soon forgotten, but sacrifices that go down deep into our lives and take out some things that we care for.

Just now the question of how, out of the ashes of the old shall arise the new, and, if possible, the greater university, is absorbing the minds of our friends. Ottawa University's motto must now be "*Resurgum*". With this watchword we must press forward, our eyes on the mountain tops. We must not faint by the way. After all, it is the accomplishment of what seems impossible that really makes a movement great.

What encouragement have we for the present hour? Our loss financially is about \$50,000.00. To meet this, we have an insurance of \$26,000.00. The building fund raised two years ago for the burned edifice was insufficient, so that we also face indebtedness. At a glance the case would seem hopeless, but in reality it is far from it. We are rich in friends if not in money, and it is to them we turn in this time of trial. Ottawa is proud of her university, and the citizens who responded so generously to the demand for a new building two years ago are again giving liberally and promptly. Every day our subscription list is growing, and the gifts are rendered freely and cordially. The state too is responding, perhaps more slowly, but we feel confident that in the end we will not be disappointed in our call for help from the Kansas Baptists. The alumni

will probably do much, and members of their association are sending money and pledges. One young man sent a check for \$25.00, proposing to be one of two thousand who shall contribute that sum. Several alumni, students, and others are already on that list. Count it up, young man or woman, and see what a fund you will be helping to raise if you join this company. \$50,000.00 for Ottawa University! Is it not worth a sacrifice? There is no age limit in this movement, but many who are older can give more. Perhaps you think you can give nothing. Could you not give \$5.00 this year? If so, can you do as much next year and the next three? Of course, our present necessities demand as much cash as possible, but we are glad to take pledges payable in the future. Give as you can, but give, friends of Ottawa University. Above all, give loyalty and enthusiasm for our beloved college. Give your support and prayers to those who are in the thick of the fight. Give of yourselves ungrudgingly, for the cause is worthy of the best.

Then will our hopes for a new and greater Ottawa University be realized and our new motto, "*Resurgam*", will be vindicated. Then will young men and young women, whose faces are bright with promise, whose minds are full of possibility, and whose souls are potential of great usefulness in the service of our common Master, be attracted in increasingly larger numbers to the halls of our university. Then will new friends by the thousands all over this broad commonwealth be won to our support, bequests will be made in our favor, scholarships will be founded, endowments will be enlarged, equipment will be increased, we shall all be encouraged, each by the other, and this will be regarded as our common work; and above and beyond and more than all, we shall bask in the sunlight of the Father's favoring smile, because it will be recognized as assuredly His work.

DR. J. D. S. RIGGS.