

# SCIENCE

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## THE ROLE OF SCIENCE INSTITUTIONS IN OUR CIVILIZATION<sup>1</sup>

By Dr. WILLIAM D. COOLIDGE

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*Mr. President, Members of the Board of Directors of Ursinus College, Members of the Faculty, Members of the Student Body, Dr. Pfahler, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

WE are met here to-day to dedicate this new temple of science—to dedicate it to the service of mankind and to give it a name—a name worthy of the inspiring tradition which shall with the years grow up around it.

In our evaluation of the importance of this event we are more in danger of under- than over-estimation. We can, of course, judge the future only by the past. So let us think of the consequences of similar occasions which have already taken place. To mention only a

few examples drawn from the field of physical and chemical science:

Once upon a time there was doubtless a dedication ceremony for the physics institute of the University of Wurzburg, and it was in that laboratory that Roentgen later discovered the x-rays and published his results in a series of papers which have had so profound an influence on science and on our civilization. It is of course the man rather than the institution to whom we give most of the credit. The fact remains, however, that the institution attracted him and he was, perhaps unconsciously, inspired by its traditions.

In the same way consider the importance of the founding of the Royal Institution, where Faraday did

<sup>1</sup> Founders' Day address at the dedication of the Pfahler Hall of Science, Ursinus College, October 13.

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