Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I note by the program I am expected
to speak as a business man, expected to define I presume the relation of our
business man to our public library. I must confess I have been unable to
satisfactorily define that relation to myself so if I do not speak closely
to those lines I trust I may be pardoned. Being a business man, and not a
patent talking machine, I am conscious that whatever I shall say and how-
ever I shall say it this audience will be disposed to be lenient and not
critical.

A little while ago the business men of Chicago held a "Goodfellowship
Banquet" or a "Welfare Banquet", and there gathered around the banquet board
that evening 2,500 of Chicago's business men, and there blazed in incan-
descent letters above and across the Speaker's table the motto, as indi-
cating the chief sentiment of the evening, - "There is live work for live
men."

In contemplating the reopening and dedication of our Public Library,
this gift of a business man, and in contemplating the relation of our
business men to that public library, it would seem to me that there has
come to our business men a new and added responsibility, and again that
motto could be well thrown across the horizon of the business men of Wausau,
in letters of living light,- "There is live work for live men."

There also developed another sentiment and another spirit at that
banquet that is necessary for the intellectual, industrial, and cultured
growth and progress of every city, and that was the spirit of "I will."
Not only is an individual's character determined and fashioned by the kind of sentiment, but a city's progress and its prosperity is determined and fashioned by that kind of sentiment of its citizenship, for growth and progress must come from within, and not from without. Carnegie may plant a splendid home for our Public Library, he may till the soil, he may plant the seed, but the harvest will be what the citizenship of Wausau makes it, and the harvest to the business men of Wausau will be in proportion as they take advantage of its educational facilities.

The natural condition of a state, city, nation or an individual is to progress, is to learn, is to grow. If there is a business man in Wausau who is so chained to the chariot wheels of business, that has so run his splendid faculties into the one groove of business that nothing appeals to him but the eternal chase for dollars, if the planting and building of this splendid temple of wisdom and its objects do not appeal to him, I pity that man, for while he lives, and breathes and moves, he is dead to intellectual growth and cultured sentiment. I am somewhat familiar with Wausau's business men, and I know they will welcome this new condition. They will feel proud that Wausau has at last taken her place besides her sister cities of the State of Wisconsin so far as her public library is concerned. I know they will profit by the broadening and widening influences of a well-equipped Public Library. - I know they will be loyal, - I know they will be patriotic. "Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself has said, "This is my own my native land?" I am wondering if there breathes a man or woman in Wausau tonight who does not feel, who does not realize, who does not know that the reopening and dedication of this splendid building, there has been added one more opportunity to Wausau's educational advantages. And while I know that Wausau has had what she is pleased to term a Free Public Library for perhaps a quarter of a century, this is the first time in that quarter of a century she has had a home for her Public Library that is commensurate with Wausau's pride, Wausau's
ambition, Wausau's progressiveness. I know there have been hopes, I know there have been dreams, but this is the first time in a quarter of a century there has come the fulfillment of your hopes, the realization of your dreams. It seems to me that as the years come and the years go, this day will stand out as one of the bright days that have come to Wausau, one of the important historic days that have come to Wausau, for, with this building, well equipped, will come increased desire for learning, increased desire for reading, and opportunity for higher and nobler impulses of life. To my mind, this reopening of the Public Library, is the most important event of the year; great indeed the deliberations and actions of our City Council, great indeed the importance and influences of our Lecture Courses, great indeed the importance of the different organizations of our city, but more important still are these temples dedicated to learning. In all ages the measures of a nation's worth has been its building it has made dominant, and, if that is true of a nation's worth, may it not be true of a city's worth? It was true in old Greekian history, when all paths led to the Parthenon, that temple of art and beauty, and other generations have expressed themselves in their cathedrals, and other civilizations have burst into view through their fortresses and castles. But for American civilization, the one thing that stands out prominently is its school houses, its universities, its libraries; and when our country is visited by foreigners, they go back to their fatherland to say, "America worships her school houses, her universities, her libraries." That is a reputation that this nation ought to be, and is proud of. It may be that there are some who worship the Golden Calf, but in some way, somehow, there is being chiselled into the heart and mind of this great American people that the things that make life worth living are the attributes of the heart, the mind and the soul. More and more the people of this great nation are appreciating the value of education until we stand before the great nations of the earth, a veritable nation of schools, of universities, of libraries.
I have said that I have been unable to define the particular relation of our business men to our Public Library, I have been unable to separate one class of our citizens from another and define their relations, for ours is a democracy of opportunity and the child of the business man is wellcome to the allurements of the Public Library’s threshold, together with the child of the washerwoman,—one is as wellcome as the other,—each may enter within its splendid walls to reap as best he can the educational advantages resting there. Each may claim as high as he can; and anything that threatens that democracy of education, that democracy of opportunity, threatens the very foundations of our free institutions; but if our business men’s responsibility, of citizenship is increased, if their taxes have increased, by virtue of this temple of wisdom, they are recompensed by the increased educational advantages they have for themselves. For I take it that a business man should be a growing man, and if he purposes to keep up with the procession in these strenuous times, he will find it necessary to revitalize his brain every six months if he keeps up with modern thought and modern literature. But if we sweep this all to one side and say "Business is Business" and must be first, last and all the time, that it means nothing to us, I say without fear of contradiction, it means much to our children. Standing as they do on the threshold of a busy life, with the battle just ahead, they will need all the educational influences that can be thrown around them, with its wonderful results. To the young man standing at the headwaters of the stream of life, looking out into the future, yearning for success, full of hope, with an ambition, for ought we know of a Napoleon, to that young man I would say "Pay some attention to what your earning capacity will be. Do not fail to take advantage of the opportunities of the Public Library; for your earning capacity will be determined largely upon what you know. If you put your hand to the ax, the spade or the shovel, you will earn from $1.50 to $2.00 per day; but if you can put your finger upon the telegraph key, backed by knowledge and education, you may earn $5.00 per day, but if you dip your intellect into ink and give to the world something
that it demands; you may get for a single poem $1000.00 for the world stands ready to pay for the genius of knowledge. I would say to the business men as well as to every other citizen, that if this progressive step in Wausau means nothing to you, it does mean an opportunity at least, for your children to bask in the sunlight of the world's best literature.

In conclusion let me say again that it has been hard for me to talk with only one class of our citizenship in view. Indeed, it has been hard for me to say just what a business man is, just what that term means, for the man sawing wood, wielding the ax, or shovelling upon the railroad that is his business, and the results of that daily toil is as near and dear and as important to him as the results of the business man's toil who thinks in millions and deals in millions. More and more it is being appreciated that whether we have little or much, the important thing is how much we get out of the little or much. More and more it is being appreciated that it does not matter what kind of a house we live in, the important thing is the kind of a life we live in the house. In the establishment of the Public Library, well equipped, and all that it means, standing as it does for refinement and culture, standing as it does for the highest, truest, and best things in the community, it is important for the best development of the best citizenship of Wausau.

At the conclusion of this address the male choir of the High School sang—Schumann's,

"The Two Grenadiers."