To the Hon.................................... Senator.

DEAR SIR:—It had not been the purpose of the undersigned, the Regent of the Illinois Industrial University, to enter into the discussions which would arise upon the proposition to change the name of that institution, believing as he does that this proposition when fully understood would commend itself to all unprejudiced minds. But the turn which the discussion has taken, and the desire manifested of the change proposed, the folly and the evidence of a covet purpose to change the essential character of the University,—a change from a school of science bearing practically upon the varied industries of the people to a "more literary and classical college,"—leads me to trespass briefly upon your attention. This duty seems incumbent upon me because, standing as I do between the Trustees on the one hand and the Faculty on the other, I may be supposed to know, if any one knows, the facts as to their purposes and wishes in this matter.

I desire, therefore, formally, with emphasis, and without any reservation, to assert that neither hortensia nor has there been, nor is there any valid or just ground with which to change the character of the University, as suggested, in the minds of any persons intrusted with the conduct of its affairs. The original law of Congress as the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, standing in the plans and designs of Trustees, Faculty, and Regent. "Its leading object shall be to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, ** * in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life." Act of Congress, 1862, Sec. 4.

But as this purpose is charged as a covert purpose, a simple denial, however complete and emphatic, may not be enough. The only other answer that can be made is an appeal to the acts of those whose designs are questioned—to consider what has been done during the five years in which the University has been under its present administration. For this entire period we confidently affirm that the whole of both effort and result has been to develop and strengthen the technical or industrial side of the University.

1. As to students. In 1889, 60 per cent. of the students were engaged in technical courses, to 40 per cent. in other courses. In 1885, 65 per cent. are in technical courses to 32 per cent. in other courses. As about 20 per cent. are women, nearly all of whom are in literary courses, it follows that 65-80 per cent., or 65 per cent., of the young men now in attendance are pursuing technical courses of study. Moreover the essentially scientific character of the instruction is defended and protected by a guarantee which no one seeks to remove. The law of 1873 prescribes that each person shall be taught and shall study such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, and consequently the Trustees have provided a list of such studies, one of which, at least, each student must pursue in each term of his residence at the University, and this rule is enforced.

2. As to facilities for instruction. All advances made have been such as have added the technical studies. Among these may be noted: The tools and machines in the shops have been doubled during the last two years and are yet insufficient. More will be bought with the next means furnished. There is instructive space in the halls of the several departments. There is the machinery which each student is directed to use in the practical instruction of students in those several departments. The intent is to make the University a school of mining engineering at the opening of the new year, and also to recognize the department of veterinary science at the same time. We are doing all the work of a thorough school of chemical engineering, and by the time this letter is written the counters of an actual drug store have been opened.

These and these only are the steps by which the present administration of the University is seeking to convert it into a "more literary and classical college." The students may have been allowed to see in these the leading work of the University. Many of you will remember the striking display made in the state house two sessions since. At the great educational congress held at Madison, last year, this University occupied a very prominent place in its annual training work alone. At New Orleans the University may claim to have done more, with its varied and elaborate technical exhibits, to save the credit of the State of Illinois than any other interest, and almost as much as all others combined.

Is it possible, my dear sir, for us to meet more fairly and conclusively these imputations against our "covet intentions"? Two points, only, as to the name.

1. We have no objection, per se, to the name as it stands. Its intent was good. But we know, from the practical working of the University, that this name, and from the associations which even the legislature itself has unintentionally united with it, will continue to be a serious obstacle to the success of the University, in that it deters many of the best youth of the state from entering our doors, and that it too frequently costs an aspersion upon those who hold our certificates of proficiency. Whether this is right or not, IT IS. Why need it continue?

2. The founders and builders of this institution have honestly and earnestly labored to develop an institution which they have fondly hoped may be worthy of the affection, the pride, and the support of the grand state of Illinois, and they have placed as its corner stone the title of "thus named." The students have been rejected, we have made the head of the corner stone. We have joined with it such other elements as seem natural to a broad and wise charactoristic. We are trying to show in this broad prairie land the virtue and the force of the "New Education." In this we shall claim no more of success than others are willing to concede to us. But will those who believe in the dignity and the grandeur of scientific training consent that our and their University shall be as worthy of a noble name as those other schools which have built on the chief corner stone of classical learning, but are themselves fast discovering, from their own experience, that not superior power of scientific training in moulding and developing human and scholarly characters?

In short, the undersigned hold that it is deliberately and maliciously unjust of the Trustees and Faculty of this University, their opinion that the best interests of the people of the state of Illinois will be served if you permit this institution to assume the title named in the bill now pending before the Senate.

I remain ever your most obedient servant,

SELM H. PFABODY, Regent Illinois Industrial University.

Urbana, May 30, 1885.