ADDRESS GIVEN BY DR. FREDERICK P. KEPPEL,
PRESIDENT OF THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK, AT THE UNVEILING OF THE HAMERSCHLAG MEMORIAL AT THE CARNEGIE DAY EXERCISES, NOVEMBER 27, 1928

Mr. President, Faculty and the Student Body, Alumni who may be present, ladies and gentlemen, and perhaps most of all, Nelson Hamerschlag and Mrs. Hamerschlag: I am not here today as the representative of a group of Carnegie activities in New York, and I am certainly not here as a professional educational critic. I am here in the very simple capacity of an old friend of Arthur Hamerschlag.

Nor am I at all embarrassed by having to treat a subject of this character in the midst of these rather informal and genial exercises, in the glow that can come only from the termination of a successful football season. The man whom we honor in these exercises would have wished it just so.

It must have been more than thirty-five years ago when I first knew Arthur Hamerschlag. At that time he was the director and I was one of the supervisors of the little Saint George's Trade School on the east side of New York. Not long after those first meetings I remember he showed me the draft of a plan upon which he had been at work as
one of a committee of three, the preliminary plan for the Carnegie Institute of Technology. I am delighted to see that one other of the three [Dean Clifford B. Connelley] is here today. Shortly after that came the announcement of his selection as the organizer and director of the new schools. In many ways it was a very strange choice. Hamerschlag was young, he was untried in work of that kind, his formal educational preparation had been slight. But Andrew Carnegie, among his other great qualities, had the quality of picking men. He felt that there was something rarer than experience, something rarer than formal preparation. In this young man he thought he saw, and I for one believe it was there to see, the spark of creative genius.

Hamerschlag started upon his work of organizing and building here in Pittsburgh quite unhampered by the traditions and conventions of formal education. Many and many a time he accomplished the impossible and accomplished it just because he was so innocent he did not know it was impossible. I could give you half a dozen instances of the things which are now part and parcel of our safe and sane American educational tradition only because here in Pittsburgh Hamerschlag had proved that they would work.

Of course, he made mistakes. We all do, and a man of his temperament was quite sure to make more than his normal share of them. His ideas of academical finance, for example, were not what were ordinarily called sound.
I will say this, they had the merit of being easy to understand. His thesis was this: "Nothing is too good for Carnegie Tech." Nowhere was there so admirable a place to try an educational experiment. If the treasury groaned and creaked under the new enterprises, so much the worse for the treasury. We know to our cost in the Carnegie Corporation the inevitable results of such a point of view, but I cannot help reminding you young people here today that many of the things that you see about you at the Carnegie Tech, many of the facilities you enjoy, are the direct results of Arthur Hamerschlag's improvidence.

It was not a particularly peaceful administration. I used to come from time to time to visit him here and usually found a war on somewhere. Usually so far as I could see Hamerschlag was right; sometimes I am sure he was in the wrong. Let me say in passing, that when he used to return these visits and when he came to see us at home it was a red-letter day in our nursery. And after all, little children are about as good judges of human character as we have.

It is not for me to appraise his administration as a whole. I want to point out, however, what very often happens in a case of this kind, that is, that the administration as a whole ranked higher in national esteem than in local esteem. It is a natural thing, and I believe it is so in this case. I think as an educator Hamerschlag is distinctly a national figure. Perhaps I can throw a little light on what he has put into this institution by recalling
that when General George Goethals was called upon during the war to undertake another of these impossible tasks, to reorganize completely the quartermasters' department while the war was going on, he found in the civilian Hamerschlag one of the very small group of men, five or six as a total, upon whom he relied the most in a job which literally was a bigger job than digging the Panama Canal.

I do not know whether I have any reputation as a prophet but if I have I'll stake whatever it is on this statement: When the historian of the future looks back upon what was happening in American education during the first two decades of the twentieth century and tries to describe and to appraise them, I do not believe that he can deal with that picture, no matter how briefly, without making some mention of the part played by Arthur Hamerschlag. There I think is his real memorial; what he put into this institution for which he would gladly have given his life, and what he put into American education as a whole.

Other memorials I am confident will come. We are now unveiling the first one and let me close these remarks as I began them. Let me tell you all, and particularly you, Mr. President, how deeply I appreciate the opportunity which this occasion offers me to pay tribute to the memory, not of a paragon of all the academic virtues, but of a brilliant mind, a picturesque and stimulating personality, and to me of a very dear friend.