

rian institutions. "FORWARD," not *backward*—is our State's noble and heroic motto.

That man is to be pitied who can see no good in our universities, our colleges, our academies, our normal and high schools, and last, but not least, our humble district schools—"the colleges of the poor." And God pity the man who has no realizing sense of the value and necessity of our public libraries. He who can ruthlessly strike down or cripple these institutions—the pride of our people, and the boast of our age—would only equal the monster who could amuse himself with a fiddle when his city was being devoured by the fiery element.

Chicago has permanently provided one-fifth of a mill tax for the support of its public library, which should yield about \$60,000 a year. Surely the people of Wisconsin will not begrudge the pittance of a tax of the *three hundred and eighty-fifth part of a cent* on the dollar's valuation, to maintain and gradually build up a noble State library—one that our people will reverently guard and cherish for all coming time.

Twenty-fifth Annual Report¹

Secretary Draper made the following report, in behalf of the Executive Committee, for the year 1878, which was read and adopted:

It is now a quarter of a century since our Society was re-organized, in January, 1854, and entered upon a career of steady growth and constantly increasing usefulness. Its earlier years were necessarily years of "small things;" the annual accretions, while valuable, were not large; and not infrequently the Society met with narrow escapes from the unwise onslaughts of zealous public functionaries, who, with good, yet misguided intentions, thought they were rendering the public meritorious services by efforts to destroy its efficiency and usefulness—efforts that were, in no single instance, called for by the people of the State; and which, fortunately for the cause of enlightened progress, failed of their pur-