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The Ideals of Lafayette.

BY ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD, LL.D., PRESIDENT OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE.

Lafayette College stands for two ideas which are somewhat out of fashion. It is a small college and it is a Christian college. It believes that in both of these facts there is strength. That, in days of growth out of and away from such conditions, she continues to represent them is due, not to her being left behind in the race, but to deliberate choice. In each is contained a principle which she believes vital; in the one the view that the function of the college is sound and systematic teaching; in the other the belief that the training of the mind should take place in an atmosphere of high moral and spiritual earnestness. Contact of teacher and taught, not at one but at many points; not only as professor and student, but also as counselor and friend; not merely fitting minds for intellectual achievement, but developing the men for moral mastery; such are some of the ideals involved in this view of the scope of our college.

Hand-in-hand with the conservatism represented by this point of view there is a conservatism in methods that is not less characteristic. Recognizing with the very first the scientific renaissance of the present age, Lafayette began her life with mechanical ambitions, and revived them with vigor in 1866. While she founded and built the fine school of technical studies so liberally endowed by Mr. Arrio Pardee, she liberalized her courses, differentiated her curriculum,

gave a large and notable place to the departments of physical science, and led the way in the application of modern languages to sound discipline and true culture. In all this she set her face firmly against transforming schools of technology into mere shops, and the study of modern languages into mere dilettantism. The new education rightly urges the importance of the training of hand and eye, and deplores the too long continued sway of the mere theorist. The perversion of this view which would swing the pendulum to the other extreme and replace thought with bare practice, and the engineer with the handicraftsman, is even worse. Lafayette has striven and striven successfully to assimilate her growth and expansion to her older methods of thorough work and steady discipline. The result has been seen in all departments, where a large and thorough knowledge of the mother tongue, some liberal culture in the foreign languages primarily learned for their practical value, and the essentials of safe citizenship in political and economic knowledge, have been required of all.

In dealing with the rapid growth of scientific knowledge, and the great increase of materials for college teaching, the popular demand for extended and varied courses has been met, first, by the subdivision of courses, and, secondly, by the admission of elective studies into the junior and senior years.

The single course of 1865 has grown into three. There is the old classical course, formed still upon the historic basis of the humanities, rich in classical

NOTE.—This article is the third in the series on Lafayette College, begun in November, 1896, by Prof. William B. Owen. It will be followed by an account of Lafayette's Alumni by Mr. Alden March.

learning, philological, historical, and literary, not less strong in the accurate discipline of mathematics, physics, chemistry and astronomy, and by means of the electives of the later years varied and supplemented by such work as each student may select, informing the mind and preparing the way for professional work in law, medicine, theology, and the higher business careers. The second course, known as the Latin scientific course, is similar to the classical course, but replaces the Greek which is required for that course with an extended course in modern languages, and fuller work in physical science. The third course, known as the general scientific course, omits the classics entirely and seeks by the application of the methods of classical philology and history to make use of the modern languages to secure the same discipline and a more distinctly modern culture. The rich courses in English classics which form a part of this plan are one of the many illustrations of the influence of Prof. Francis A. March in forming the ideals of Lafayette.

The degree in which elective studies have been admitted to these courses has been determined by two considerations. In the first place a careful study of the needs of the field has been continuously made and the entrance requirements have been adopted with due regard to securing the best possible material from this field. Proceeding from this starting point, a standard and scheme of study has been developed, fitted to the development of the actual material at hand. As new sciences have demanded a share in the curriculum, they have been admitted to a fixed place or as alternatives with others, and as the entrance requirements have risen with the improvement of the school system, the time thus gained has been granted either to a choice of one or more studies already pursued for more advanced and extended study, or for the pursuit of some subject not heretofore embraced in the curriculum.

A more radical influence has been at work for several years in the demand of certain professional schools for work in college in anticipation of the more fundamental needs of the professions. To meet these demands, Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Theism, Christian Evidences, the

History of Philosophy, and some other courses are offered to those preparing for the ministry; constitutional history, Blackstone, international law, and kindred courses, to the students of law; while in response to the large demands of some of the medical schools, a course in biology extending over nearly half of the junior and senior years, in connection with the usual courses in chemistry and physics, prepares the students for regular admission on certificate to the second year of these schools.

The whole plan of election is, however, kept under check by a system which prevents the dissipation of mental effort, and gives direction and system to the whole college course, and permits no evasion of the demand for unremitting work. No such thing as the heedless choice of unrelated topics based on no principle save that of following the line of least resistance, is possible.

The technical courses being strictly professional in aim have as yet but little room for elective studies. They are divided into the schools of civil, mining, and electrical engineering, and chemistry; a division itself implying a decided choice. Some special needs are, of course, recognized from time to time in these courses, especially in the chemical department.

In dealing with all these courses one universal standard of method is impossible. Yet, however much a lifeless uniformity is shunned, a vital unity in diversity is sought, and generally secured. Small divisions under experienced teachers enable the object of a definite discipline to be sought. The work is clearly conceived as college and not university work. A definite daily routine in which lecture, text-book and laboratory methods are all combined, is firmly established. Pure lecture courses are almost unknown, and but a small proportionate value is placed on final examination. After daily drills, frequent papers, constant experiment, and satisfactory review, the final examination can only confirm the record of good, and not replace that of poor term work.

Perhaps in this epoch of large ideas of the application of university work in so many colleges, such an account sounds cold and hard and very far from being worthy of a place among "ideals."

Yet this is far from true. As is always true of a reasonable routine, there is little friction. This is rendered doubly true by the richness and breadth of choice. And there are no days of dire trial and tribulation when weeks of wasted lecture-courses are summed up in a few days of searching examinations and long lists of failures.

Lafayette believes in work. Work on the part of the teacher in full consciousness of the duty to impart knowledge. Work on the part of the student to master in regular order what is taught him. The responsibility for failures is pretty equally divided between teacher and taught, and the result is that the air on her beautiful hill is not too rare to be breathed by the pedagogue, and that noble word is not esteemed a symbol of reproach.

Throughout all the teaching, in dutiful and willing recognition of the Christian character of the College, there is reverent regard for truth as all alike divine. There is no room for controversial or sectarian teaching. Under the broad mantle of the great church which has preached liberty of thought and liberty of action to the world the College rests secure. It asks and does not need to demand loyalty to the truth, reverent scholarship, and Christian fellowship from the teachers; it seeks to inculcate the same ideals in the students.

In order to secure the highest results from the methods thus employed in making educated men, the students are brought together upon the campus in seven large dormitory buildings. The college life is upon the campus. The college ideals are therefore those of the College itself and not of the town. And it is one of the great duties of the teachers and officers of the College to keep these ideals sound. One of the great forces in developing men is found in communal life. The dormitory life is very free. Social and home restraints are withdrawn. It is in college-public opinion that boys learn to be men, to do things because they are right, reasonable, and of good report, and not because they are duties. As college men are not average men, but a picked body, the best socially, intellectually and morally of their home communities, the standard is naturally high. The force of

college opinion is therefore strong, and it grows stronger every year. The great concern of college teachers is to see that in growing stronger it also grows nobler, purer, and better.

Among the influences that tell upon this public opinion on the student side are those of the Young Men's Christian Association, always vigorous and fruitful of much good; the literary societies ("Washington" and "Franklin") strong, beautifully equipped, and doing a great work; and the Greek-letter fraternities. The first step in housing these fraternities upon the campus has just been taken by the D. K. E. fraternity; a very hopeful step, for whatever sets the fraternity more and more within the college life is sure to hold it more definitely to its obligation to contribute to the college welfare. Of all the forces in modern college life the fraternity is the one of most doubtful utility. A good fraternity can only be useful, but the element of secrecy makes a bond that often proves a barrier to the speedy acceptance of helpful aid and advice from those outside its spell. In this day of high self-consciousness a fraternity rarely loses its self-respect, and it is to be hoped the once common troubles of the past will never come again. The fraternities at Lafayette enjoy the confidence of the faculty and seem to be entering upon a career of growing usefulness.

The two ancient and beloved literary societies have occupied a great place in the annals of the College and deserve an ever larger place in her life. They have beautifully furnished halls and libraries, do vigorous and excellent work in speaking, debate and essay, and breed up the student in a practical knowledge of the rules of procedure. The annual contests between representatives of the societies in oratory and debate give the public an opportunity of showing their appreciation of the work that is done, and the debate with Lehigh and the inter-collegiate oratorical contest rally the boys to a recognition of the heroes of brains as well as of brawn.

In the broad field of college ideals these societies occupy a large place. Together with the department of elocution, always highly honored and very generally required, they help to lay stress

upon the side of college training too often neglected; the side of expression. If the value of oratory has declined, the importance of self-expression has increased. The demand for plain, but direct, clear and cogent speech has greatly grown. Logic has taken the place of rhetoric, indeed, but speech, written statement, plans and specifications, are everywhere demanded. So these societies with their practical, earnest methods are among the great influences of Lafayette life.

Athletics has been elsewhere dealt with. There is no room to dwell upon books and reading, the Christian work of the students in mission stations and in the College itself, or the influences which determine the after life of the men. These words must suffice.

Lafayette's ideals are not many nor unreal. They lie in the small college, loyally Christian, devoted to true teaching, liberal in scope, but definite in plan, and conservative in spirit.

The Chicago Yale Association.

BY HARLAN WARD COOLEY, '88.

At no time have educational problems received more intelligent and serious consideration than at present. How to achieve, in the shortest time, the best results in securing for the youth in our schools and colleges a practical, thorough training, and an opportunity for more extended study and investigation in special branches, is engaging the attention of educators and thoughtful men. Higher standards are being required of all educational institutions, and the opinion prevails that much of the work of the college curriculum ought to form a part of the course of study of preparatory and high schools, leaving to the universities more opportunity for their peculiar functions. Hitherto, our scholars have gone in large numbers to foreign countries for that special training which our own universities have been unable to afford. De Tocqueville could not now say with absolute truth, "In Germany there are more educated men and more ignorant men than in any other country in the civilized world, while in America there are fewer of each than in any civilized country." Advancement along educational lines has become no less marked than material progress, and our institutions of learning are opening their doors to the specialist in all departments of intellectual investigation.

An impetus was given to educational questions in Chicago by the establishment of the new Chicago University, which has so quickly taken an advanced

place among our seats of learning, and there has been much ex-cathedra discussion here in the newspapers and otherwise as to the manner in which the city schools can best meet the obligations resting upon them. If there were no other reason for the existence of organized associations of college graduates throughout the country than the opportunity afforded at their meetings for the discussion of educational problems so vitally the concern of all citizens, that alone would be sufficient; but along with the pleasure of renewing old ties and the preservation and enjoyment of memories of college life, there is the proof that such associations are of practical value in their influence upon the colleges themselves.

When the local organization of Yale alumni was formed, the number of graduates of Eastern colleges in Chicago was comparatively small. It is interesting to note, as showing how rapidly the community of college graduates has increased, that during the month of February last, alumni associations of nearly all the larger Eastern colleges and universities held well-attended meetings there. At many of these gatherings the college presidents or other members of the faculties and representatives from other local alumni associations were present. By such means the governing bodies and the alumni of the colleges are brought into a mutually beneficial contact and the ties between the whole body of college men in the city strengthened.

The Yale Association is numerically

NOTE.—The publication of this article was postponed through the illness of Mr. Edward J. Phelps, '86, who was to have written it. To avoid further delay, Mr. Cooley kindly consented to prepare the article.