

TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF

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OF THE

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
1/

FOR THE YEAR 1897,

AND REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN CONNECTION
WITH THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF
THE OPENING OF GIRARD COLLEGE,
JANUARY 3, 1898.

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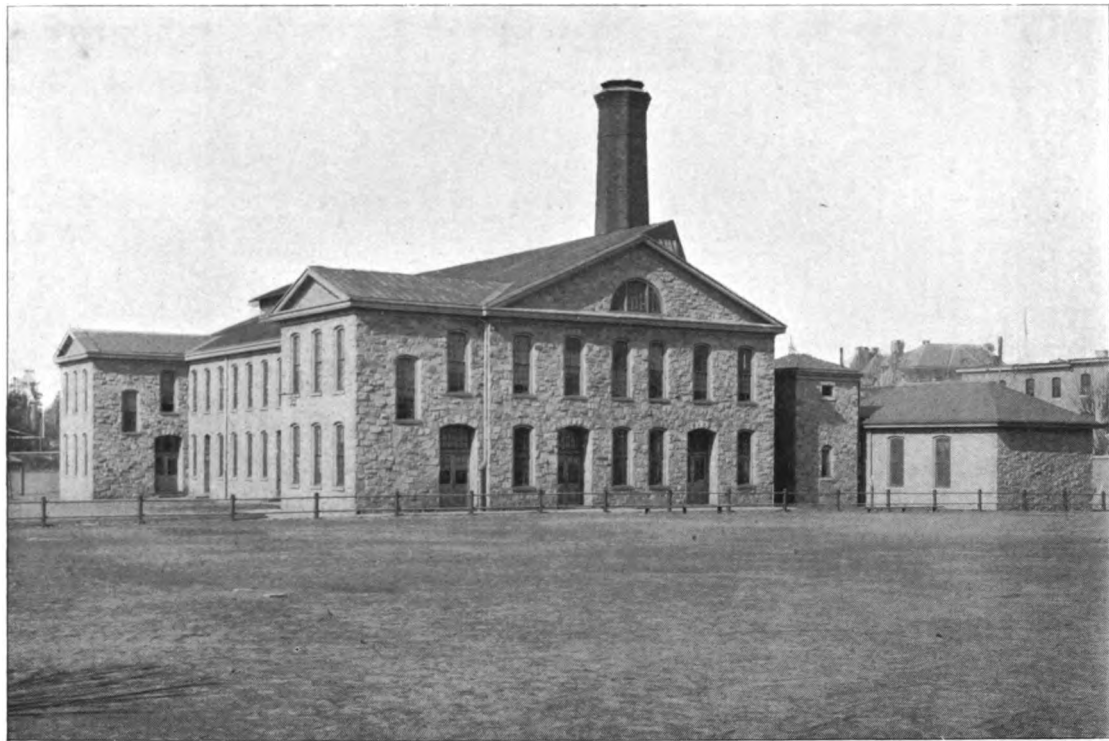
BY ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD, LL.D.,

President of Lafayette College.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—It is very evident that we have another Presbyterian ruling elder here, and that he has been practising on this audience. I thought he would have a good deal of “nerve” who would dare to stand up before so large an assemblage of citizens of Pennsylvania and undertake to say which one of all that noble army of martyrs, too numerous to be named, who are reluctantly expecting to be called upon to take the place of Governor Hastings, is indeed the man.

I am only surprised that you have so readily acquiesced in his nomination. As a Presbyterian, I not only believe in foreordination, but also in “election.” Hence I, too, must acquiesce in General Wagner’s selection.

I can assure you, however, that I am not a preacher. I recall with approval the reply of an old darky down in Kentucky, who, when asked if he were not a preacher, replied, “Oh, no, young massa, I ain’t no preacher; I is a ’zorter. You know a preacher is bound to stick to his text, but a ’zorter, he can branch.” It is a very great privilege on such an occasion to be able to “branch,” especially when you haven’t a text. I looked on the programme, and I couldn’t see what Governor Hastings, or I, or anybody else, was expected to talk about. So I



GIRARD COLLEGE. MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL BUILDING.

thought that, in commemorating the great work of this College, its high moral attitude, or something of that sort, was surely in keeping with the occasion. Then I thought of the distinguished Frenchman who died a few days ago, and concerning whom we have been hearing so much in the newspapers,—Mr. Alphonse Daudet,—and I remembered a little incident connected with him when he came in contact with our American ideas of morality. You will recollect, perhaps, that when he was writing his novel, “Sapho,” in which he undertook to teach his sons, and the French nation generally, sound morals, Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls, the eminent publishers of *The Voice* (a paper well known in connection with its interest in the morals of another college, which will not now be mentioned), heard that Mr. Daudet was about to publish a novel to teach morality, and contracted with him for the American rights of “Sapho.” “Sapho” when finished was sent to them. Then Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls drank in draughts of morality, such as they are so constantly receiving from their special agents, and for once they must have reeled. We can scarcely suppose that they were intoxicated, but it was something a little stronger than they had been accustomed to imbibe as pure morality. So they cabled to Mr. Daudet, “‘Sapho’ will not do.” Mr. Daudet was completely overcome at the idea that anything he wrote could be rejected. Therefore he hastened to an English friend, and asked him what on earth this meant. The friend looked at the cablegram, and said, “Why, it’s perfectly plain. You French spell ‘Sapho’ with one ‘p,’ while the English spell it ‘Sappho,’ with two.” The result was that Mr. Daudet cabled back to Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls, care of *The Voice*, New York, “Spell it with two p’s.”

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The effect on Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls has happily not been recorded. Such apparently is the danger of reflections upon moral questions which involve more than one nationality.

In venturing to speak at such a time to such an audience as this, I am reminded of the old saying, "Who shall speak after the king?" We have all been transported by the eloquent words we have listened to, and I am sure we have all been made to feel that he is indeed daft who dares not only to speak after the king, but after the "czar." He is not, it is true, one of the boys of this College, but what we have heard from him further proves what we have long known. He knows his "three R's": he is always *ready*, *resolute*, and *right*. And I, as a Presbyterian elder, am prepared to give him my benediction on what he has said this evening.

What a splendid inspiration it is for us to speak one with another of this College, and what it has done and what it represents! It awakens in us a sharper realization of the fact, that from far beyond the seas men reared under such different intellectual conditions, under such different moral aspirations, and under such different religious teachings, have come to this country and lighted here lamps for the illumination of this new world. How often have I rejoiced, in the days that I have been permitted to preside over our lovely college, amid the hills that overlook the upper Delaware, to think of the young man who, fired with the love of liberty, left home, family, country,—everything that was dear to him,—and came to this people who were as yet not a nation, and who had but a little land upon the border of an unexplored forest and set upon the margin of a mighty sea! With prophetic instinct he

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looked beyond the years that were and beheld, as we have been told that Stephen Girard saw, the years that were about to be. How great was the heritage which he perceived that not only this people, but the universal hosts of liberty were about to enter into in America! Think of him and of his devotion to this country; of how he went back and tried to reason with "that rabble devil-born," as they raved in the streets of Paris, mistaking the outcry of mad social discontent for the glorious voice of liberty; think how he suffered, how he was imprisoned, how he endured everything, and never once permitted himself to desecrate the principles of freedom as he had been taught them in this country by Washington and his glorious comrades! What a wonderful thing it is to think that we, in this day, have built a college in the midst of a Pennsylvania-German population, under the control of a Scotch-Irish *clientèle*, and dedicated to the name of a Frenchman! It seems incongruous, no doubt. But, after all, it is true that here under the great pavilion that has been spread in the name of Liberty, practising that pure morality which was so dear to Stephen Girard, we are gathering together the children of all the nations of the earth, and men like Stephen Girard are providing for them an education, and a training in right principles, that they may all grow up to be free men and true Americans. It is sweet to tell the tale of liberty, and to count its heroes from the first who came to these shores. Many of them have received but little recognition for what they were and what they wrought. It was with peculiar delight that I read, in the last few days, the splendid defence which Professor John Fiske, from his study in Boston, has made of doughty Captain John Smith, one of the beginners of the story of free-

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dom in America. I love to recount that story, taking within the compass of my thoughts not only the Cavalier of Virginia and the Puritan of Massachusetts, but also the Huguenot of Long Island and the Hollander of Manhattan, the Friend of Pennsylvania and the German of Germantown (not even forgetting Bucks County), the Scotch-Irish of the Cumberland Valley and the Scotch of North Carolina. Every one of these nationalities, whatever they may have been, are all parts of the great American people. God bless them all! Each has contributed men of mark, whether they were of that class that came already blessed with something good and gracious, or of that to which Abraham Lincoln belonged, who came out of the silent squalor of the mountains of Kentucky, and wandered through the swamp-lands of the Indiana and Illinois of early days, and thence down the Mississippi on its flat-boats, learning with painful industry the way of knowledge, that he might tread the path of righteousness. When we think of what such men have accomplished for themselves; when we think of the pain, the agony, the self-denial of the struggle which they had to undergo; when we think of how Lincoln and his fellows rose and stood face to face with intrenched falsehood, and mastered it in its intrenchments, is it any wonder that we rejoice that colleges like this have been founded by the munificence of men like Stephen Girard, that they may point not only hundreds but thousands, every year, along the way that is most certain and sure to useful citizenship in this great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania? Oh, that such an institution might be imitated in the other States! Oh, that Pennsylvania might make more of Girard College!

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The work that is being done here is too little known and recognized.

I remember very well that, when a little boy, I found in a scrap-book a picture of Stephen Girard and of this beautiful first building. The building so impressed itself on my mind that I have never forgotten it. It has always stood out before me as the very ideal of a college; and in my happy college days, when I was a student in one of the universities on the other side of the ocean, to which reference has been made this evening, not even Oxford, with its lovely monuments of Gothic architecture, ever seemed more beautiful than this first building here. How little we appreciate the importance of such a building as a centre of association in the mind of youth and as a formative ideal! When at home I look out from our fair hill upon the mountains around about, upon the river flowing seaward, upon the clouds sailing through the blue heavens, which bend above the purple hills, and I think that surely such associations must uplift our boys, even as the scenes in the hill country of Judæa uplifted the heart of David, to a serene walk with God. How wonderful such associations are! What an undying influence the mere communion with yonder building must create!

Again, how wise was Mr. Girard's provision for instruction in the principles of a pure patriotism! I can remember, as I can remember nothing else from those days, when it was a question whether Kentucky was a State of the Union or not, when John Morgan and his rough riders again and again rode through the streets of our little city, how my mother, with most strenuous intensity of feeling, taught me to love *our* flag. There were few, in the Reconstruction days that followed, who really clung with

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unfaltering affection to that dear old flag. I was only a child at the time, but under such teaching my affection for the Stars and Stripes grew deep and strong. With what a thrill of joy, in later years, have I seen unexpectedly in the ports of Europe that emblem of liberty! Surely our hearts should feel a thrill of gladness for what America is; for what men like Stephen Girard have done their part to make it; for that yet nobler, higher, dearer thing which it is the privilege and the possibility of this generation to make it in the interest of peace and prosperity, of the welfare of men and the service of God.

Up yonder on that hill at home, where there was once a monument to one of the benefactors of Pennsylvania, there is now a blackened ruin. How my heart sinks every time I go by it, and I think again of that day, just two weeks ago, when that beautiful building went up in flames! But I never pass it by that I do not say to myself, "Look forward and not back, look up and not down." And surely that is the motto for America. We can make of these institutions, as has been made of this College, a wonderful power for good. It is a thing for us all to be proud of that the management of this Institution has fallen into such good hands, and that the direction of the youth within its walls is in such excellent keeping. I am sure we all rejoice with President Fetterolf and the representatives of the City Trusts of Philadelphia in the work that we see, and that we know is going farther forward unto perfection.