

Blair Hall  
 Goodnow Hall (Library)  
 Rand Gymnasium for Women  
 IOWA COLLEGE BUILDINGS

Chicago Hall

## CHAPTER XV

### *COLLEGE HISTORY CONTINUED. ITS GRINNELL PERIOD*

IN the preceding chapter there was but a slight reference to the first years of the college at Grinnell. It will be necessary, therefore, at the commencement of this to speak of these more at length. Its work at Davenport was closed, as we have seen, in 1858. For about a year there was a state of transition. What did it take from its old, and what receive at its new location? As to its taking, in material things there was but little. Started as it was at so early a period, before a building for the common schools had been erected in the place, eleven years before any other college was more than thought of in the state, much could not be expected. There were no buildings, of course; no teachers, for they had resigned when instruction ceased. The books gathered for a library were but few. Its apparatus, philosophical, chemical, etc., was but scanty. As for funds, after payment of debts, there were left about \$9000. But it went with a good history. In those ten years at Davenport good work had been done. There had been ten graduates who, with other

students, had been trained by its four professors of ability and fitness for their position. The majority of those ten graduates are still living, one of whom took an active part in the forming of an Alumni Association recently organized on the Pacific shore. Besides its character and history it took its board of trustees. There went with it, too, the loyalty of ministers and churches whose hearts were in it, and back of it. As it went, it found a young community of intelligence and enthusiasm for education, with open arms to receive it. They had already a high school of thirty-five scholars in progress, with studies shaped for a higher institution in view. There was a parcel of land set apart for it, suitable for a college campus, and a building thereon in process of erection. These, with money subscriptions, they transferred to the college, the estimated value of the property being at the time \$36,000. Such was its new home.

Like a healthy plant transferred to a better soil, it at once took root and commenced to grow. In 1861 there was a freshman class of twelve. But then the war came. Soon all but two were in the field. Other young men came, but their minds turned feebly to Latin and Greek, while their thoughts were following those who had enlisted in their country's cause. Sometimes, when the news was sad, the recitation room even had no place for the lesson either for student or teacher, but gave way to a discussion of the situation, its responsibilities and demands. One after

another was missing. Where gone? To the war. As the thickening conflict was prolonged and the call for men became more urgent, twenty-six enlisted at one time,<sup>33</sup> their teacher at the head. The time came when all the male students of military age were bearing arms. They were found in fifteen different Iowa regiments and in some of other states. Their record as soldiers, and a tablet hanging inside the chapel door on which is inscribed the names of eleven that never returned, are witness to noble service rendered.

But in due time the war was over and college work was resumed. New students came and new professors were added. In 1865 there was the usual number of college classes, the seniors to graduate numbering fifteen. On their commencement day a new presence that had come to the college stood before them, that of its first president, George Frederick Magoun. Take it all in all, he was a rare man for the position. "A superb leader," says one;<sup>34</sup> "a man of the largest mould, with the culture of Bowdoin and Andover broadened by contact with the world."

The college strengthened and grew. Friendly donors appeared at home and abroad. Able professors were added; the roll of students enlarged. Their record showed the institution one for sound learning and

<sup>33</sup> The teacher referred to is Prof. L. F. Parker. He left behind what was more like a female seminary than a college, the special burden of which, added to that of domestic duties, came upon his noble wife, and was heroically borne.

<sup>34</sup> J. Irving Manett, Prof. of Greek in Brown University, Providence, R. I. In *New England Magazine* for June 18, 1898.

good character. Yet it had its misfortunes. In 1871 its first building at Grinnell, started for the Grinnell University, was destroyed by fire. In 1882 came the cyclone. In its path of destruction, in which, as in a twinkling, homes, like paper houses, were scattered in fragments, leaving thirty-six of their inmates killed and a hundred others maimed, the college campus, too, was struck, its trees mangled, its buildings left in ruins. The storm was over, but the morning light revealed a scene of desolation. It was the 17th of June, and all things were shaping for another graduation day. All eyes were now turned to what the leader should say. Now was the time for what there was in him to show itself. "Will you have commencement now?" was the question put. "Yes," came the full-toned reply. "Yes, we will go right on." Nobly was he supported by the faculty, and as nobly by the students, as, after helping as best they could to care for the wounded and the dying, they rallied for commencement day. Nor, as the college year came around, did they forget to return. It was noble in those students so to do, and noble for the community to spare no pains in helping them to homes and recitation rooms till better times should come. And they came. The cry of distress was heard in the land and not in vain. The buildings were restored and the work of the college went on till, in 1884, that of its first president was done.

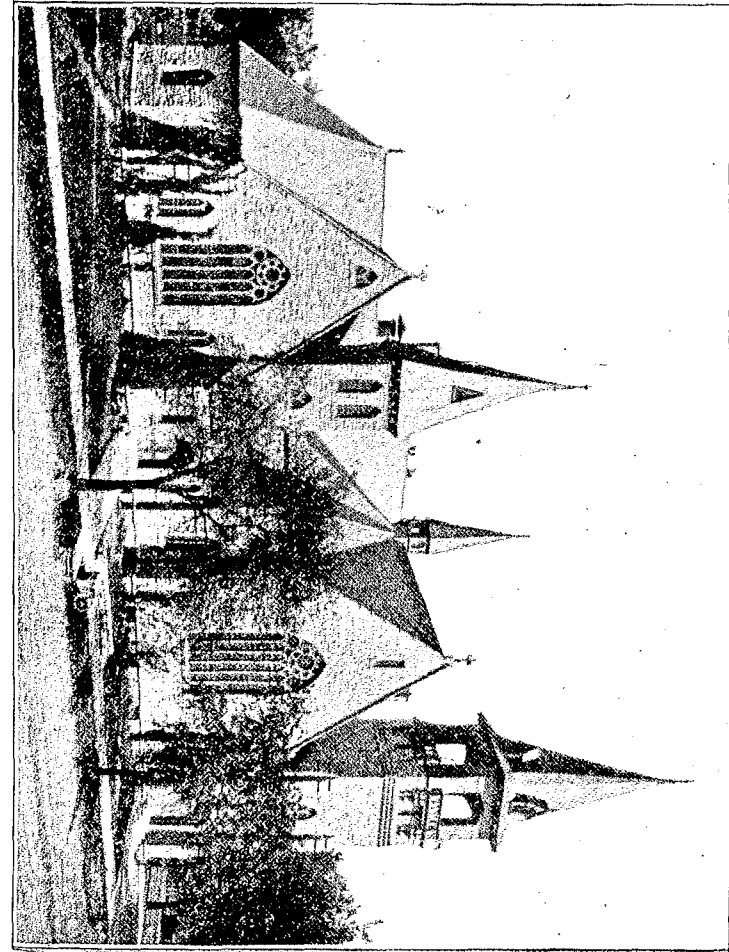
There was an interregnum of three years before

another was found. In 1887, the second president came, George A. Gates, just entering the prime of life. He came to the college as his life work. A man, the soul of honor, strong in his convictions and faithful to them. By his administrative tact and wisdom, trustees, faculty, students and graduates were brought into an increasing unity for the college. After thirteen years of faithful service it was a sorrow to him, as to all of us, that in 1900 regard for the health of his family compelled him to abandon his life-work and seek a different clime. During his administration there gathered over the college but one cloud. It rose from its connection with the chair instituted for "Applied Christianity." Here much in explanation could be written. Suffice it to say that the cloud has passed away. If the faith of any has been shaken by what has transpired, or through fears of what might be, let him be assured that the college has not been swerved from its old foundations. Neither faculty nor trustees have forgotten the motto upon its seal, "Christo Duce," as the only motto that can safely be followed in all our human affairs, educational as well as social and civil. For another leader under this grand motto the college is now looking.

It were easy here and pleasant, also, to note the names and characteristics of the different trustees, teachers and donors of the college, but brevity forbids. A few things only can be said and a few names called, mainly of those who have gone before. Of the trus-

tees, as the years have passed there have been seventy-six upon the Board, all of whom, with scarce an exception, have attended the meetings at their own charges, aggregating a pecuniary contribution to the college not unworthy of mention. At Grinnell, among the first to be added to their number was J. B. Grinnell, the founder of the place that bears his name, whose impulsive, pushing nature, with his enthusiasm and generosity, gave courage and hope alway. A man ever to be appreciated by town and college. There were, also, Holyoke, Herrick, Phelps; plain men of sound sense and good business judgment. Then in due time came Chamberlain, of clear judgment, also, who took to his heart the whole college—grounds, faculty, students and all—himself a sort of balance-wheel of the whole. The beautiful Chamberlain Park donated by him, on which was built the Mary Grinnell Mears Cottage, stands as his memorial.

Of the first teachers at Grinnell was L. F. Parker, who, though not in present service, yet continues till this day, professor emeritus, still sensitive to the life and interests of the college, respected by students and beloved by all. His two assistants, Herrick and Reed, have passed away. Another whose name stands upon every catalogue to this day is Prof. S. J. Buck, to the interests of the college ever faithful and true; the acting official between the two presidents. Afterwards came another Parker—H. W., the man of letters and poetic taste. We cannot help thinking of such superb



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teachers as Brewer and Crow and Simmons, who are no more. Others might be named, some living, some dead, some decoyed away by such colleges as Bowdoin and Dartmouth and Oberlin, by universities, as of Wisconsin and Nebraska—a loss yet a compliment to the college.

There is another class to be remembered, the alumni and *alumnæ*. Here, at last, as to the real worth of a college is where the test comes; in the character and work of those sent forth for the world's service. Where are they, and what are they doing?

Iowa College is young, but her record is well begun. School, pulpit and press suggest the three great lines of power. It is in these that, after careful examination, within a slight fraction two-thirds of her graduates are found, in thirty-seven states, while six are in foreign lands. As an educating force it is one of the recruiting stations for that grand army of common school teachers, so called, who are working at the foundation of things, furnishing in the meantime her measure of superintendents and principals; sending comparatively not a few of her sons and daughters to positions in some of our leading colleges and universities, who by their writings, scientific and literary, are well known, in some cases abroad as at home.

Names are not to be paraded, yet a few will be pardoned, such as, beginning with older graduates, J. Irving Manatt of Brown University in Rhode Island; Jesse Macey, in his Alma Mater; H. C. Adams, in

Michigan University; O. F. Emerson, in Adelbert College, Cleveland; William Albert Noyes, of Rose Polytechnic Institute, Indiana, whose various writings have made him prominent as a chemist; George M. Whicher, teaching Greek and Latin in Packer Institute in Brooklyn, New York; Mary E. Snell, Principal of Snell Seminary, Oakland, California; Mary E. Apthorp, fifteen years in Oshkosh Normal School, Wisconsin; Elisabeth H. Avery, in Redfield College, South Dakota.

These are of the older graduates, but there are others younger in life coming along, with nothing in the way of equaling, if not surpassing, those before.

Of occupations filled by graduates there are twenty-two, all honorable and useful. As to numbers, that of the ministry stands fourth in rank. Here, if there is not a show of star preachers, there is what is better, a body of faithful, good workers in the vineyard. And so of attorneys, not quite but nearly equal in number to ministers. Sound, high-minded lawyers are useful and needed; the Christian college helps to make such, and such there are. The roll of missionaries is gratifying, both as to number and character. It begins with Hester A. Hillis, sister of Dr. Hillis of Brooklyn, who went to India, followed by George E. White and his wife, also a graduate, who are at Marsovan, Turkey; George D. Marsh, of Bulgaria; Mary E. Brewer, in Sivas, Turkey; so on down to Henry H. Atkinson, now with his wife on his way to Harpoot

For journalists, the Review of Reviews at once suggests the name of Albert Shaw, as editor. The list here is not long, but a few there are scattered about as editors of their own or on the staff of city papers, as Davidson, Kasson, Bartlett, Ray, W. A. Frisbie at Minneapolis; and Warren C. Baker, whose pen did good service among the forces that prevented the Louisiana Lottery from getting a foothold in North Dakota.

Of physicians, the list again is not long. But here, at once, comes the name of Hill—Gershom H.—who for twenty years past has been Superintendent of one of our asylums for the insane, and is himself yet sane. By his name is suggested another (because in college parlance the two are connected as the Hill boys) Rev. James L. Hill, D.D., who can be classed neither as minister nor journalist because acting in both capacities; having in a measure left the pulpit after two pastorates, in an aggregate of nineteen years, to be identified with the organization, literature and work of Christian Endeavor societies at home and abroad—a world-wide movement for the world service.

But enough of names; enough to show what the college deserves, judged by her fruits. Her record and standing are good. We do not say that it is the best in the state, (others say so), but we may in modesty claim that, as the oldest she has kept pace in the foremost ranks, and stands among the best. Her alumni and alumnæ, mindful of the good received

from their Alma Mater, are loyal to her and she is not ashamed of them.

Figures and statistics often count for but little, but a few to represent what the college now is compared with what it was at the close of the preceding chapter, thirty-one years ago, must here be given. To the two buildings then, six others have been added, a house for the president included. To the campus of twenty-two acres, the beauty of which nature has kindly restored after the ravages of wind and storm, has been added Chamberlain Park of four acres on the east, and, for the athletic field on the north, fourteen acres, forty in all. Eight instructors then, its faculty now by last catalogue numbers thirty-six, besides eight other officials such as librarians, secretaries, etc. The four thousand volumes in the library have increased sevenfold and those of literary societies in like proportion. The catalogues of the college describing its astronomical observatory; its museum; its laboratories, biological, chemical and physical; its gymnasium (one for men and one for women); its library and reading room; its athletic grounds, etc.—fat volumes now compared to the lean ones of thirty-one years ago—are in evidence as to the apparatus and furnishings of a college. The total value of college property, in place of \$160,000 then, is now but a trifle short of \$800,000. Its list of graduates, not long then, is now nearing the thousand.

So stands the Iowa College of to-day, compared

with what it was when it began at Davenport, fifty-three years ago, in its two thousand dollar building, with one teacher and half a dozen pupils, no apparatus, no furnishings of any kind save the books to be studied. True, much toil, the lives even of some, and the best part of the lives of others not a few, have gone into it; and noble gifts, too, of the living and the dead. But who can say to no account—wasted, thrown away? No. In view of the past and what, by the eye of faith, is seen as yet to be, the sentiment of one<sup>35</sup> who in the enthusiasm of youth gave herself to Home Missionary work for Iowa in territorial days, in the words, "Somebody must be built into these foundations," was a noble one. In this part of our Home Missionary work may the race of noble givers to it and faithful workers in and for it, never cease!

<sup>35</sup> Words of Mrs. J. J. Hill, first wife of the one who gave the first dollar to the College, and engraved upon her monument, where with her husband she lies sleeping in the Grinnell cemetery.