A Venture of Faith

HARRY MOREHOUSE GAGE
AND THE GAGE YEARS AT COE

By
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Preface

What is written here is in no way intended to be a complete biography of Harry Morehouse Gage. That biography remains to be written, as it must be, for Harry Gage was a man of such stature and of such lasting importance to Coe College that memory of him must never be allowed to die. In the meantime it is my hope that this little piece will help to keep that memory alive among those of us who lived in his time, and in a small way make it possible for future generations of Coe men and women to know something of this remarkable man for whom their student union is named.

In the past year I have had a rare opportunity. In the early fall of 1976, I learned that there was work that needed to be done in the Coe archives. Being retired and looking for volunteering opportunities, I discussed the matter with Fred Borchuck, director of Stewart Memorial Library, which houses the archives, and he promptly put me to work.

There were boxes of material from several Coe offices that needed to be sorted and properly filed, including an extensive collection of Dr. Gage's papers. Dr. Gage's daughters also had donated a great many things which the family had fortunately preserved. These were made a part of the Gage collection.

I was of Dr. Gage's era and one of his ardent admirers. The Gage materials intrigued me and I concentrated my attention on them. I spent hours trying to read everything and put it into some kind of meaningful arrangement.
Harry Gage was the first president of Coe College whose term of office and life story are well documented. There is only the sketchiest of material about his five predecessors, hardly any correspondence or speeches, and practically no personal materials. The Gage files contain hundreds of letters, official and private, both by him and to him; some 150 of his sermons and other speeches; personal items including notes he took at Chicago and Columbia universities; and lecture notes from his teaching days at Parsons and Huron colleges. There are also extensive files of his work in the many state, regional, and national organizations which benefited from his wisdom and his labors.

I reiterate: This is not meant to be an official biography; it makes no pretense at being scholarly. It is just a gleaning from his files, with some quoting from his letters—all for the purpose that Harry Gage may hopefully remain alive, or come alive, for you. R.K.W. 9/15/77
HARRY MOREHOUSE GAGE
(1878 - 1961)
Churchman, Administrator, and Educational Statesman
A Venture of Faith

In the Coe College archives there is a faded carbon copy of a handwritten telegram form dated August 9, 1920. The telegram was sent by Harry Morehouse Gage, the 41-year-old president of Huron College in South Dakota, to Dr. E. R. Burkhalter, the long-time chairman of the Coe Board of Trustees. It begins, "I am sending you by letter a formal acceptance of presidency of Coe College."

The telegram was received by Dr. Burkhalter on the following day and this event should make August 10 one of the more important anniversary dates on Coe's calendar. For from the day he came to Coe in 1920 until he left 21 years later, Harry Morehouse Gage WAS, in a very large part, Coe College.

Although this was a time when Coe's faculty was made up of many unusually able and loyal men and women, and the Board of Trustees was a body of outstanding men and a woman or two who were successful in many fields and who gave liberally of their time, talent and money, Harry Gage was of such stature that they all moved under his shadow.

An early hint about the kind of man who was to become Coe College's sixth president is suggested in the further reading of that faded telegram: "I have come to a decision against many forces in opposition..... However, I am ready to make a venture of faith with high enthusiasm and firm conviction--the past and
future of Coe inspire me--also the evident sincerity of your invitation. I am therefore ready to join hands with you in the work to which you have called me. Mrs. Gage joins me in this decision and will be a partner in my work."

The Gage family moved to Cedar Rapids the first week in December, 1920, into the newly purchased, college owned house at 1945 Second Avenue SE. Formal inauguration ceremonies were held at Commencement time in 1921. His starting salary was $6,500 plus use of the home.

It is frightening to note how very near Coe came to never having President Gage. First, when the presidential vacancy occurred in 1919 the board voted unanimously to call a Reverend McAlpin, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Madison, N.J. Dr. McAlpin visited Coe, spoke at Chapel, and returned home, and in a few days wrote a letter declining the offer. It was several months, until the summer of 1920, before the board issued another unanimous call, this time to Harry Gage.

The other "almost" was that at the same time Coe was flirting with Dr. Gage, Lake Forest College on Chicago's North Shore was actively pressuring him for their top position--and almost got him. In fact, in the Coe archives there is at least one letter congratulating him as the new president of Lake Forest.

In his inaugural address Dr. Gage discussed his hopes and dreams for Coe and summarized in these words: "Culture, character,
citizenship—these three comprise my creed for Coe. Fail of
our ideals in this or that particular of application we may;
lose sight of them we never shall." Harry Gage never did.

This sixth president of Coe was born in Franklin, Ohio, on
October 15, 1878 to John Lambert and Mary Boynton Gage. About
his ancestry he once wrote:

"My ancestors were New England Puritans or
Congregationalists. My paternal grandfather
graduated from Amherst College and from
Andover Theological Seminary. My maternal
grandfather graduated from Yale University
and Seminary. Both went to Ohio in 1830,
moved by the pioneer home missionary impulse.
My grandfather Gage identified himself with
the group which founded Oberlin College and
my grandfather Boynton with the Western
Reserve University group. My own father,
John L. Gage, graduated from Princeton College
and Princeton Theological Seminary and came
west as a missionary under commission from the
Board of Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian
Church. In 1865 he was commissioned to itinerate
to 100 miles west and south of the projected
lines of the Northwestern and Union Pacific Rail-
ways. As the railroads extended west he went with
the builders founding churches in towns which were
being established."

It was no doubt this kind of work which placed John Gage and
his family in Central City, Colorado in 1878 where he founded a
church. A baby was due to be born in the fall. The family in
Ohio and the father, too, apparently felt that this rough mining
town was not the proper place for a baby's birth so the mother
made the trip back to Ohio.

Young Harry was educated at home until he was 13, then sent
to Iowa Academy, a part of what is now Grinnell College. It would have been expected that he would go on to Grinnell College, but his older brother, Wil, was already at Grinnell and it seems that what he took home convinced the father that Grinnell professors were teaching things that were "unsafe." One professor in particular was considered to be dangerously heretical. So the father decided that Harry would go to Wooster College in Ohio where he graduated A.B. in 1900.

At this point Harry made a decision that was to point the direction which his life would take. His favorite teacher at Wooster, a Professor Notestein, whom he greatly admired all his life, recommended him to the Rev. Calvin H. French who was president of the new and struggling Huron College, which had just recently been moved to Huron after having failed at Pierre University. Young Gage joined Dr. French as professor of Greek and the two established a deep and lasting friendship. Huron College was operating from one building, the former Royal Hotel, which had been purchased for $5,000. The building housed all of the college functions, dormitory, kitchen, classrooms and library.

Dr. French later referred to this time at Huron as a "blessedly illogical and splendidly unwise adventure." In the same letter in tribute to his young friend he said, "as Professor Gage turned his back upon 'dreams of avarice' which he might have realized to join the happy band."
While at Huron Gage studied Greek and philosophy in absentia with Chicago University. He was in residence for three summers there doing laboratory work in neurology. He was appointed a Fellow in Philosophy at Columbia on the basis of a paper written at Chicago. He taught at Columbia for two years and earned his M.A.

From 1905 until 1912 he was Armstrong Professor of Philosophy at Parsons College in Fairfield, Iowa, and during the last three of those years he served as dean of the faculty.

Gage's choice of Parsons instead of returning to Huron was a great disappointment to Dr. French. But in 1912 Gage did return to Huron as dean of the faculty and professor of philosophy. This was after Dr. French had told his young friend of an increasingly serious heart ailment which was going to force French to step down. French also expressed the fervent wish that Professor Gage succeed him as Huron's president, which he did the next year. Gage's seven years in that position were very fruitful ones and Huron grew and prospered.

Gage was married on August 7, 1912 to Florence Louise Avery, fellow instructor at Parsons; she in piano. It is interesting to note that John D. Rockefeller, Sr.'s grandmother was Lucy Avery of the same family. They had five children, all of whom are alumni of Coe: Mary, Avery, twins William and Elizabeth, and Florence. He once wrote: "Concerning my family, I may say
that, counting the twins as two, I have five children."

His years at Coe almost completely filled that fateful period between the wars. When Dr. Gage came to Coe, World War I had not yet been over for two years; when he left the first time in 1941, Pearl Harbor was a few months away. His first decade at Coe was the decade of the Roaring Twenties with its almost revolutionary post-war change of life styles, manners, and morals both on the campus and off. It was the era of the great College Humor magazine and of the brilliant artist-cartoonist John Held, Jr. whose popular art will for all time depict the long-legged, short-skirted, bobbed-haired, cigarette-smoking coed, and her bell-bottomed, slick-haired, rather dumb looking boyfriend of that jazz age. It was the time of "flaming youth," of prohibition, the bootlegger, the hip flask—and at Coe the days of "spiked" near-beer at the Campus Drug across the way.

But it was likewise the time of T. S. Elliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, George Gershwin, Sinclair Lewis, H. L. Mencken, Joan Crawford, Clara Bow, Greta Garbo, Rudolph Valentino—and of Charles Lindbergh. And in sports it was the heyday of such all-time greats as Bobby Jones, Jack Dempsey, Babe Ruth, Red Grange, Bill Tilden, and Knute Rockne. What decade has produced their equal?

It was the decade of the beginnings of radio, the first talking pictures, and of the ever-rising stock market; "two chickens in
every pot"—a heaven on earth that was never going to end.

Then all at once it was over. The stock market collapse of October, 1929, ushered in the great Depression of the 30's which was severe, tragic, and far reaching. Far reaching, not so much because of the millions of personal and corporate tragedies, but because it produced Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal which so completely changed American attitudes as to the role of big government in the daily lives and work of all of us.

Harry Gage, incidentally, was highly suspicious of, and often severely critical of many of the aspects of the New Deal. His semi-annual report to the college Board of Trustees dated May 9, 1934 is devoted exclusively to a study of the New Deal with all of its government controls and feared loss of individual liberty. His lengthy analysis of it, especially of its possible meaning to higher education, is scholarly and remarkably accurate.

It would take many pages to list Harry Gage's accomplishments for Coe, so I will list just the highlights. Unfortunately these are just dollar and cents, brick and mortar things and say nothing of the many intangibles which make up the real character of a college. Many of his plans for better salaries, his dreams for regular faculty sabbaticals, and for many other good things fell victim to the hardship of the Depression—some were postponed and some had to be forgotten altogether.
This is the record:

1922 Announcement that $200,000 has been subscribed by the trustees toward a $1,500,000 campaign.

1922 Announcement that $200,000 on the same campaign has been raised in Cedar Rapids.

1923 The Rockefeller Education Board made a conditional gift of $200,000 provided the college would secure gifts of $400,000—including $75,000 to be secured from the Carnegie Foundation by December 1, 1925.

1925 The above campaign was successfully completed.

1925 $25,000 gift from Carnegie Corporation for purchase of library books.

1925 Women's Field and Fieldhouse completed at a cost of $40,000.

1928 A gift from four prominent citizens of a 23 acre tract somewhat north of the campus. This was to be developed "for recreational purposes"—which was never done.

1928 $250,000 was raised in Cedar Rapids—from 1,601 givers—for a men's gymnasium (now Eby Fieldhouse).

1930-1931 The old gym (where Peterson Science Hall is now located) was remodeled and converted to a women's gym.

1930 An additional gift of $10,000 from Carnegie for purchase of library books.

1931 The Stewart Memorial Library, a gift of Colonel Robert W. Stewart, Coe '86, of Chicago, was dedicated. This was the culmination of a long-time close friendship between Colonel Stewart and Dr. Gage which began when Stewart was a rising young Dakota lawyer and Gage a young college president at Huron. Colonel Stewart went on to become chairman of Standard Oil of Indiana and a wealthy man. In the files are 115 interesting letters between these two men.
1937 $25,000 was spent on purchase of property and development of an athletic field.

1938 Cornerstone of Greene Hall, men's residence, was laid. Greene Hall was named for Judge Greene, Cedar Rapids' most illustrious early citizen and first president of each of Coe's corporate predecessors, Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute (1853), Parsons Seminary (1866), and Coe Collegiate Institute (1875). In Dr. Gage's very early listing of Coe's needs, one of the most important was the furnishing of housing for men. It took until 1938 for the dream to become reality.

1939 Announcement of a $2,000,000 10-year Forward Program.

1940 First steps of above, a $200,000 Living Endowment campaign was completed among alumni and friends.

1941 Dr. Gage resigns to become president of Lindenwood College for Women in St. Charles, suburban St. Louis, Missouri.

Dr. Eric McKinley Erickson, distinguished professor of history at Coe in the late 20's, wrote several small books on Coe's early history. According to material in the archives, Dr. Erickson in 1931 was writing what was to have been the complete history of Coe to that date—a task which was never finished. There are manuscripts for five chapters, one of which is entitled, "The Era of Greatest Progress - Under Harry Morehouse Gage."

Already in 1931 this able historian was calling these the years of greatest progress—and the Gage term was just at midpoint. Many of his finest achievements were yet to come, the most notable of which was bringing the college alive and
reasonably well through the Depression. This was an unbelievably
difficult time for Coe College. For several years the day-to-day
financial situation was so critical that most of Dr. Gage's time--
and that of many of his staff--was spent in just the daily raising
of funds so that the semi-monthly payroll could be met.

Apparently each morning a slip was placed on Dr. Gage's desk
telling the current status of the College bank account. His
correspondence is full of items like this one from April 3, 1935.
"I found Monday that we were $3,700 short of having enough to pay
salaries on April 15. Since that time I have received gifts of
about $1,200. As I write there is still a shortage of several
thousands of dollars which will be necessary to pay salaries and
all current bills by the 15th."

It is small wonder that he wrote in several letters, "I think
that the Lord did not intend me to be a beggar. He could have
produced a better one."

In spite of all of the problems and scarcity of funds, Dr.
Gage was able to write on October 22, 1935, "For four consecutive
years we have balanced our operating budget, a thing which had
not been accomplished, save in one year, in any of the 50 years
preceding."

And fortunately he could find some humor in these difficult
days. In a letter of December 28, 1935, after discussing his
financial problems, he wrote, "Many years ago a Japanese student
wrote me about his trip in a stage coach across the Oregon mountains, 'Much time it was smooth and pleasant. Most time I had to sit urgently and with great courage.'

The story of the loyalty and sacrifice of the college administration, faculty and staff in those days makes one of the finest pages in Coe's history. In his report to the board of February 8, 1933, Dr. Gage wrote, "To meet the situation, deductions in expenses were devised. In addition, the faculty loaned the college $16,500 for last year's deficit and scheduled gifts from salaries amounting to $29,500 for this year's deficit (this at a time when most faculty salaries ranged from $1,000 to $2,500)."

Later in this same report he states, "It may be within reason to say to the faculty--and I must make a statement in the near future--that salaries can be paid in full in February and March after deductions already agreed upon have been made. According to this plan the faculty and employees would have to be told that in April and May, and possibly in June, only half salary could be paid."

At the time Dr. Gage resigned in 1941 a long-time friend and former trustee wrote to ask why. In reply he spoke of his concern about his personal finances: "My own financial problems became very acute in the three years following 1931 when my income here was reduced to almost nothing and when for a time I lived almost
entirely on cash and loan values of my life insurance."

His leaving Coe in 1941 was a very difficult decision, but many of his letters tell why. He was fearful that the grueling work load would become physically impossible. He was almost 63 and he hoped his few remaining productive years could be a bit less demanding, as they promised to be at Lindenwood. In a letter to a protesting Cedar Rapids friend he wrote on March 3, 1941, "If I were 10 years younger I would not think of leaving Coe and Cedar Rapids. I am now in a state of good repair and do not think it would be wise for me to attempt 10 more years of such physical exertion as has been required of me during the last 10 years."

In another letter written a few days later he said, "My judgment is that the work will be less wearing, will require less travel, with regularity of eating and sleeping." In regard to travel he had written in 1937, "It seems that I am always on the way to or from Chicago."

He retired from Lindenwood College in 1946 and returned to Cedar Rapids where he and Mrs. Gage lived in the Commonwealth apartments. He was very much sought after as a consultant for colleges in difficulty. He served as interim president of two, one of which was Huron. Then in 1956 Coe College once again called on Harry Gage. At the age of 78 Gage returned to the Coe campus to do what Charles Lynch, Coe '26, former chairman of the Board of Trustees, so well summarized in a tribute published at
the time of Gage's death:

Mr. Lynch said,

"But the greatest service he rendered Coe in all the years of his labors was the service he rendered after he had passed well beyond man's allotted time on this earth. In responding the second time to the call from this college he reassumed, on an interim basis, the duties of the president's office to administer its affairs pending the selection of a new president. This was a position no other man could have filled, whatever his executive capacities. What was needed at that moment was a calm, experienced pilot to whom the board, the faculty, student body and alumni could look with complete confidence and assurance that a sure course would be steered through disturbed waters. How well he filled that position needs no words of description."

It is said that no man is indispensable - but surely some are more nearly so than others. When Harry Gage left Coe the first time, his shoes proved to be very hard to fill; in fact it took 17 years to get the job done. In those 17 years Coe had four acting presidents and four full-time presidents before at last a man of the stature of Harry Morehouse Gage was found.

Perhaps Dr. Gage's finest legacy to Coe was that he, more than any other, was responsible for bringing to Coe Dr. Joseph E. McCabe, who was to launch and to direct another of Coe's greatest eras.

Dr. Gage died on March 18, 1961.

Harry Gage was a firm believer in the value of personal friendship. He had many longtime friends from whom he drew strength and
courage in times of stress and whose company he greatly enjoyed in times of relaxation. At the time he agreed to go to Lindenwood he wrote in a letter to the Lindenwood Board:

"I have been singularly blessed by my friends and the confidence they have reposed in me. Each position I have occupied has come to me as a personal and sacred trust from a dear, wise, and trusted friend. My teacher of Latin, a great man, Professor J. O. Notestein, personally committed me, a boy fresh from college, to the tutelage of Dr. C. H. French with whom I joined hands in founding a college on the prairies of South Dakota. Later on a Sunday afternoon he informed me of the nature of a heart affliction from which he had begun to suffer, asked me to return to his side and be prepared to take the helm when his hands should fail. In that way I first became a college president. My work at Huron was entirely the fulfillment of Dr. French's plans and prophecies. This has been a source of personal, as well as professional, satisfaction to me. In June 1920, Dr. John A. Marquis, my distinguished predecessor at Coe who had given me the Charge to the President when I was inaugurated at Huron and who was then serving as General Secretary of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., called me to his office in New York and said, 'Harry, I want you to become my successor at Coe and to commit you to the care of the saints in Cedar Rapids!' He had received a similar trust from his friend, Dr. S. B. McCormick, and Dr. Marquis always supported me at Coe. In fulfillment of their hopes and building on the foundations which they laid I have found my chief satisfaction and my only success during the last 21 years. I should add, too, that 'the saints in Cedar Rapids' have never failed me."

Despite his great responsibility at Coe and his demanding work load, Gage found time to respond to calls for his time and talent
in many important regional and national organizations. He served as president, secretary, and chairman of the Committee on Higher Education of North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools; member and Chairman of the Board of Chicago's Presbyterian Theological Seminary; president of the National Conference of Church Related Colleges; member of the Commission on Teacher Education of the American Council on Education; chairman of the Commission on Teacher Education of the Association of American Colleges; chairman of the Commission on Preparation of High School Teachers by Liberal Arts Colleges; and a member of the Presbyterian National Board of Christian Education.

He was long a member of the board of Huron College and, after leaving Coe, was continuously a member of Coe's board. He was a major in intelligence, U. S. Army Reserve Corps.

He was an active Rotarian, club president at both Huron and Cedar Rapids, and District Governor in 1938.

He was a member of Phi Gamma Delta and of both honoraries, Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi, and belonged to Chicago's University Club and City Club of New York.

His distinguished career was recognized by honorary degrees from six colleges.

Another hint as to his wide ranging reputation is this. His correspondence files reveal that during just his first 10 years
at Coe he was scouted for, recommended for, corresponded about, or firmly offered the presidency of these schools:

James Millikin University, 1923 and 1924; Ohio State University at Springfield; University of Tulsa, 1925 and 1927; University of Oregon, 1926; University of Idaho, 1926; Louisiana State, 1926; University of Chicago, 1928; Parsons College, 1928; Western College for Women, Oxford, Ohio, 1938.

In 1926 some strong friends of Louisiana State wrote him urgent letters and in reply to one of them he wrote a letter which shows the kind of men with whom he rubbed shoulders in the field of education. He listed these men as references and said, "They all know me; most know me well."

He listed the presidents of the Universities of Iowa, Minnesota, and Chicago, of Northwestern, Lafayette, Carleton, Miami of Ohio, and McCormick Theological Seminary. Also the presidents emeriti of Ohio State and Western Reserve, and vice president of Chicago University and the deans of Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois. To this distinguished list he added from the business world, Cyrus H. McCormick, Sr., president of International Harvester Co., Robert W. Stewart, chairman of Standard Oil of Indiana, and Ralph Van Vechten, first vice president of Continental and Commercial Bank of Chicago.

This, then, is a brief glimpse of this man, Harry Morehouse Gage. I have not gone into his deeply religious nature and his
firm and life-long commitment to the Christian faith, and the application of its principles to the education of young men and women.

Space does not allow a discussion of him as a scholar. He was one. The worlds of philosophy, history, religion, and good literature were at his fingertips. His writings are full of quotations from all of the areas where men have thought great thoughts. His letters are gems of English writing.

At the time of his death a memorial tribute was written by Mr. Hal Lainson, chairman of the Board of Hastings College in Nebraska. It beautifully speaks of Harry Gage the scholar --

"Dr. Gage was a scholar of the classics, and as scholars can skillfully do - he would lift out the true word, find the important concept, and reveal the unique contribution of a thinker - and then make such a bit of truth his own. His writings and lectures, and even his daily conversations, were replete with these magnificent gleanings of a searching mind; and as the years went by his continuing scholarship and his cordial personality blended to become warm compassionate wisdom - a wisdom always with tolerance.

"His search for truth was insatiable - constant and life-long. His advice was always sound, seasoned, and profound - resting on a broad base of understanding.

"The ever-rolling years have taken this man of the church from us. But to those of us who knew him, he has left an inspiration and a high example which surely will remain."

As one of Sir Thomas More's contemporaries said of him, Harry
Gage was truly a man for all seasons - as near probably to the
Universal Man as Cedar Rapids has ever seen.

One characteristic of Dr. Gage which often amused his
associates was what at times seemed to be a sort of philosophical
evasiveness. Someone once said that if you went to Dr. Gage's
office to ask him what time it was, you might get a scholarly
dissertation on the history of time keeping. But as you closed
the door on the way out, you would suddenly realize that you
hadn't found out what time it was. I thought of this as I read
a 1926 letter from the president of Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt.
Pleasant. This man had written to Dr. Gage complaining that he
was working his territory. "What does Coe College mean by coming
clear down here in the extreme southern part of Iowa and giving
scholarships to Methodist youth who do not need them, to get them
to enroll in Coe College?"

Dr. Gage's reply was beautifully roundabout; he neither
exactly admitted the charges nor did he promise to stop, to which
the Iowa Wesleyan president replied, "Pardon the levity when I
say that you ought to have been a lawyer. The courtesy of your
letter and the skillful evasion caused me to almost lose sight of
the question in hand."

Dr. Gage had a keen understanding of young minds and a
realization that change is inevitable. In a listing of his first
impressions at Coe he said of the students: "They are so anxious
not to appear more righteous than they are, that they pretend to be worse than they are." In 1935 he wrote, "It seems to me that the college is a splendid battleground for the inevitable encounter between the viewpoints of age and youth." He commented in another letter of 1935. "Out of my experience I pass on to you a second conclusion, 'youth must be served.' Oncoming youth always make demands for innovations. When something shockingly new is demanded, conservative wisdom, because it is conservative, will resist, and because it is wise will say, 'if not now, eventually.'"

Those of us who remember him know that Dr. Gage was at his very best in the pulpit; especially so at Chapel time - back in those days when daily Chapel attendance was compulsory. Who of us can ever forget the power of his speaking - the rather surprisingly high pitch of his voice - sometimes seeming almost a monotone, but always so completely convincing?

One of his beautiful invocations was fortunately recorded by Harris Lamb, alumni director emeritus, so that for all time his voice can be heard. The recording is nearly perfect - introduced by strong chords of an organ, which I like to think is the one in the old Sinclair Memorial Chapel before its destruction by fire. (It isn't.) Here are the words which make up Harry Morehouse Gage's eternal dream for Coe:

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord
and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High;
to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning
and thy faithfulness every night.

"We now lift our hearts in prayer, praise and
thanksgiving for our fellowship in high en-
deavor; for our students, teachers, alumni,
trustees and friends, who perpetuate the tradition,
and progressively realize the ideals of Coe College.

"We give thanks and praise to thee, our Father,
for the founders of Coe who breathed the breath of
life into the institution and gave to it an im-
perishable endowment of Christian purpose.

"May all of us in our day prove to be worthy of
our inheritance. Hitherto Thou hast blessed us.

"May truth coming from any source whatsoever,
and freedom which knows no bounds, save those
which have been set by the truth, continue to be
the light and inspiration of our life.

"Now, may He who is the truth and in whose
spirit alone there is freedom, clothe and crown
us with all good to all coming time."