COE COLLEGE  1881-1901

by

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Chapter I

Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute
1851-1866

Throughout the nation in 1851, higher education was still widely regarded as a function of the church, and the Presbyterians were a foremost group in establishing small church schools. The Presbyterians, like the Congregationalists who firmly believed in an educated ministry, had early seen the necessity of establishing schools to train a native-born population to be preachers and pastors. The Presbyterian Church became, accordingly, one of the most active churches for the cause of education on the western frontier. As the denomination grew in numbers and in power, it exercised increasingly greater influence upon the development of higher education in this country. The Presbyterians had established more schools of higher education in this country than any other church by 1851, but they were closely followed by the other denominations in this work, notably the Congregationalists and the Methodists. Most of the colleges that survived from this period were founded by

1. Donald G. Tewksbury, The Founding of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War (New York, 1932), 92.
church groups.

Higher education in Iowa, certainly, was provided by denominational schools. Only five of the twenty-five private colleges and so-called universities established in Iowa by 1890 were not directly affiliated with a denomination. Yet three of these were definitely Christian colleges. The Columbus Seminary at Louden was designed to attract Methodist sponsors, and ministers were the heads of the Iowa Female Collegiate Institute and the Mount Ida Female College.

At least a dozen denominational schools were established in Iowa prior to the Civil War, but only six survived. Cornell College (1854), Iowa Wesleyan College (1855), and Upper Iowa University (1856) were established under Methodist auspices. The Baptists founded Central College (1853), the Presbyterians and Congregationalists established Grinnell College (1847), and the Presbyterians

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4. Parker lists this many schools. However, Tewksbury does not include Lenox or Simpson in his list of surviving colleges so there is some discrepancy in the dates of establishment. Tewksbury gives the date of establishment in law; Parker, the earliest known date of organization.
instituted Coe College (1851).

Even though the denominational schools were established for the education of a ministry, they required help from capitalists as well as from the church to be successful. The founders and college leaders labored under great difficulties, mostly financial, and many of them found it easier to give up entirely than to continue and maintain their ever-insolvent institutions. If the academies and colleges did not close, it was frequently found necessary to resort to a variety of devices to keep them operating. Indeed, H. P. Tappan, the first president of the University of Michigan, spoke truly when he wrote,

"...and we get under the same pressure of debt, and make the same appeals to the public to get us out of it; and then with our cheap education, to induce many to get educated, we experience the same anxiety to gather in as many students as possible; and since, where we cannot get money it is something to get appearance, we show the same readiness to educate for nothing those who will submit to be educated, but who cannot pay." 5

Coe College and its predecessors followed the general pattern of small denominational colleges so described by

5. Neither Tewksbury nor Parker included Coe College in their lists of schools established before the Civil War. However, Williston Jones founded the first of a series of schools that developed into Coe College, and hence the above listing.

Mr. Tappan.

In 1851 Cedar Rapids was a small community of less than three hundred set upon the east bank of the Red Cedar River. It would not be incorporated for another five years. The main connection with the outside world was by wagon trail over which the settlers might journey to Dubuque or Muscatine, the nearest markets. Occasionally, a steamboat would churn up to the rapids from the Mississippi. As early as 1842 the "Maid of Iowa" won fame by being the first steamboat to reach Cedar Rapids. Eleven years later, when the 109-ton "Uncle Toby", a veteran Mississippi steamboat, docked at Cedar Rapids, the citizens boasted that "water transportation had progressed farther upstream on the Cedar than on any other river in the State except the Des Moines." A wooden bridge would be constructed over the river in 1852, but before this, the only way to cross to Kingston, a hamlet on the west bank, was by ferry.

In 1851 Cedar Rapids gave no promise of becoming "the Parlor City." Living on the mounds near the Cedar River,

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7. The History of Linn County, Iowa (Chicago, 1878), 501.

8. Luther A. Brewer and Barthinius L. Wick, History of Linn County from its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time (Chicago, 1911), 311.

9. William J. Petersen, Iowa; the Rivers of her Valleys (Iowa City, 1941), 133.
the villagers struggled amidst sand, sandburrs, and fleas. Houses were open to the cold of winter and to the summer heat, and, between the sand and the weather, life was frequently difficult and unpleasant. Yet Cedar Rapids could boast at least two saw-mills and a grist-mill, a hotel, and a post-office. It also had a dam constructed ten years earlier. For leadership, the community turned to a physician, Dr. E. L. Mansfield who had settled permanently in Cedar Rapids in 1847, and to Isaac Cook, the first attorney in Cedar Rapids. There was a blacksmith, a justice of the peace, and a constable. Cedar Rapids was definitely established as a thriving village.

The religious influence was strong among the majority of the people, and they were not long in organizing churches. The first sermon of which there is record was delivered by one Hodges, an itinerant Methodist minister, in 1840, and a Methodist church was organized in 1842. The Presbyterians organized in 1847 and had their own building in 1851. The Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Baptists, United Brethren, and Catholics all organized in the decade of the fifties. A second Presbyterian church, this one of the


11. History of Linn County, 501.

Old School, was organized in 1855.

Miss Elizabeth M. Shearer began the first school in 1843, five years after the earliest settlers had come to the site of Cedar Rapids. Later on, the school was moved from its original location in a frame house to a building popularly known as "Long Ornery" located on the north-east corner of Second Street and Third Avenue where the Granby building now stands. In 1846 a company composed of George Greene, N. B. Brown, and Alexander Ely, among others, erected a building that was sold to the school district and subsequently used for classes, church gatherings, and for other public purposes. Ten years later, Mr. W. W. Smith constructed a building that was known for a score of years simply as "The Schoolhouse." In 1875 it was officially named the "Washington School."

By 1853 the public schools had won popular favor. They were supported by local taxes and by allotments from the interest of the State School Fund established by the State Constitution with lands donated by the federal government. In 1856 Linn County received $3,616.80 as its share

13. Records of the Presbytery of Cedar, Iowa, 144. These records are in the possession of the Reverend Donald Paul Chapman, First Presbyterian Church, Bettendorf, Iowa.


15. History of Linn County, 490.

of the School Fund interest.

There were many small towns that did not have satisfactory public schools, so Miss Elizabeth Calder established a school in Cedar Rapids for girls from such communities, as well as for the girls of Cedar Rapids who did not wish to attend the local public school. Miss Calder, who came from central New York, opened her school in 1850 in a large room of a three-story brick building constructed the year before on the corner of First Avenue and First Street. Later on, she conducted the school in her own residence where it became popular as "Calder's Cot." Miss Calder herself taught French and drawing while her two assistants gave piano lessons and instructed the English classes. Her pupils came not only from Cedar Rapids, but from as far as such Iowa towns as Dubuque, Vinton, Burlington, and Muscatine.

There was not any school remotely resembling higher


18. Calvin Greene, John Fellows Ely and Mary Ann Ely, address delivered December 4, 1913, pamphlet (Cedar Rapids, 1913), 35-36. Calvin Greene was the son of Judge George Greene. According to both Greene and John S. Ely, the son of Dr. John F. Ely, there is basis for considering Miss Calder's school the original predecessor of Coe College rather than the school established by Williston Jones in 1851. See also John S. Ely, George Greene, address delivered December 3, 1914, pamphlet (Cedar Rapids, 1914).
education in Cedar Rapids until 1851. In 1848 the Reverend Williston Jones came to Cedar Rapids as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. Three years later he established the school that provided the foundation for higher education in the community. Williston Jones was born in Holland, Erie County, New York on February 6, 1814. He was a graduate of Illinois College and Lane Theological Seminary. In 1846 he was working in St. Louis where he met and married Miss Elizabeth Shearer who had been the first teacher in Cedar Rapids. Two years later they returned to her home in Cedar Rapids where Jones was to spend the next eight years of his life and perform some of his most outstanding work. The congregation had been organized just one year before Jones came to Cedar Rapids, but he, soon after his arrival, assumed the task of erecting a church building for his small congregation. In 1851, the new church was dedicated, the first church building in Cedar

19. A series of schools for young ladies was held during the next twenty years, but all of them were rather short-lived. Misses Carriel and Huntington established a female seminary in the basement of the Episcopal Church in 1857. In the early sixties the same church was the locale of another school for young ladies, this time conducted by a Miss Winchester and, later, a Miss Jennie Carpenter. See the Cedar Rapids Democrat, May 19, 1857 and George Greene's address on John F. Ely.

20. Notes for the commemoration program of the Reverend Williston Jones, February 22, 1926. These are in the Coe College library.
Rapids. This building was a modest structure. The walls were made of thin cobble stones mixed with lime mortar. Since the mortar was quite a dark color, this house of God was laughingly baptized "Little Muddy" and the cognomen remained.

Jones, a man of "great energy and untiring zeal," is said to have possessed the "true missionary spirit in every sense of the word." As a young man he had come under the influence of professors at Illinois College who themselves were directly influenced by the zest and enthusiasm of the "Yale Band." It was this missionary spirit that led indirectly to the founding of Jones' school. He was eager not only to convert people to the Christian faith, but also to persuade likely young men to enter the ministry. The Reverend Samuel Storrs Howe, in later years, wrote that Jones "...was wont to scour the Cedar Valley with his mules, wearing out a span or two every year, was never satisfied if he did not see sinners converted all the time. He went straight from a protracted meeting to his Savior, with these words on his lips; "May they all be converted.""

To carry on these conversions more ministers were needed, and so it happened that Jones persuaded young George Carroll


22. Ibid.

23. Joseph W. Hubbard, The History of the Presbyterian Church in Iowa, 1837-1900 (Cedar Rapids, 1907) 206.
to enter the ministry. First, however, Carroll had to receive an education. Since neither Miss Calder's female seminary nor the public school offered the preparation necessary to enter a school of theology, the Presbyterian minister decided to prepare Carroll for college himself. Other young men of the neighborhood heard of the plan and were eager to take advantage of this educational opportunity and therefore persuaded Mr. Jones to admit them, also, to the class. As a result, the unfinished parlor of the parsonage was prepared for the classwork of eighteen students and the young men took turns being monitor. During the day Mr. or Mrs. Jones would come in to hear the recitations.

The Joneses offered their young students classes in reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, Latin, and Greek. Among the scholars who studied so diligently were George R. Carroll, James L. Bever, George W. Bever, Mortimer A. Higley, George Weare, and Edwin Kennedy, all of whom came from Cedar Rapids families whose support helped the school.

Mrs. Jones, writing sixty years later, recalled the hard work and busy days that the school created.

"...all the events of those busy months of a 'Higher School' in a Pastor's house where the housekeeper had to take the morning sessions to

give the pastor time for his legitimate work, the sermon, weekly lecture etc. which must not be neglected, /sic/ for was not this a 'free will offering' to special effort in the cause of Christian education with the prominent view of preparation for the Gospel Ministry? So that first year then was much hard work of hands and brain with much faith and prayer that this offering would be accepted of the Giver of all good and used for His glory. And do not the results up to this time abundantly prove that this little effort put forth in weakness but in great faith and much prayer was not in vain? It may interest you (seeing Coe is a Co-educational College) to know that in my a.m. sessions that first year were three little girls between nine and twelve years of age Mary Shearer (elder sister of Elizabeth's whom you must remember as almost a lifelong invalid) /sic/- Dr. Kennedy's second daughter Emma and our own adopted daughter 'Emalie' who studied and recited in the primary department with the Mathers /?/ boys—while the afternoon sessions were devoted to Latin and higher mathematics—and commendable progress was assured!"25

The school continued for a full year under the care of the Reverend Jones. He was doing his part in helping to provide the Midwest with the gospel ministry which he believed to be so important. After that first year, Jones no longer conducted the classes himself, for the school was too large for him to manage if he were to be an effective pastor, also. Therefore, he secured an assistant, young David Blakely, a graduate of Knox College. Blakely maintained the tradition of an education in an atmosphere of the Christian spirit which Jones had felt to be so

25. Mrs. Williston Jones to Dr. E. R. Burkhalter, November 23, 1911. The letter is now in the Coe College library.
important, a tradition which was to remain the primary purpose of the institution for long years to come.

In May of 1853 Williston Jones met Daniel Coe, one of the most important meetings in the lifetime of either man. Jones had gone to Buffalo, New York to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (New School) where he met the minister of the Congregational Church of West Durham, New York. On a subsequent Sunday he made a plea from that pulpit for funds to send three Iowa boys East to be educated for the ministry. Daniel Coe, a deacon of the church, became much interested in the sermon and after church he waited for the Reverend Jones.

Daniel Coe, the son of Daniel and Martha Coe, was born at Durham, Green County, New York May 26, 1784. As a young man he taught school, but after a few years he turned from teaching to farming and remained a farmer for most of his life. He married three times, but had only one child, Mary Rebecca, the daughter of his second wife, Mercy Wattles Cowles Coe. In 1854 he visited his sisters in Michigan and was highly impressed with the favorable farming conditions there. Upon his return to the Catskills, he became extremely disgusted with farming "in those rocky hills" and often told his daughter that he wished he had gone west as a young man to farm. In 1864 he visited Dr. and Mrs. John F. Ely, long-time supporters of the Coe institution at
Cedar Rapids. In his later years Coe became interested in the education of southern Negroes, and in 1829 he sold his farm in New York and moved with his daughter and her husband to Talladega, Alabama where he took charge of mission work among the colored people. He died March 3, 1872, "a man of religious and philanthropic disposition."

This was the man who listened to Jones' sermon on that spring Sunday and waited for him after church. He asked Jones why the boys had to be sent east to school, and Jones replied that there were no theological seminaries in Iowa. The following Monday afternoon, the two men conferred at length and Coe offered to contribute fifteen hundred dollars [part of which he was forced to borrow] toward the establishment of a Christian college in Cedar Rapids.


28. In his plea the previous Sunday, Jones had requested subscriptions toward a fund of fifteen hundred dollars. Coe's offer, therefore, was a windfall which obviated any further plea on Jones' part.

29. James Ralph Jewell to writer, July 20, 1949. In this letter Mr. Jewell states that Coe believed that Cedar Rapids would become a railroad center. He does not elaborate upon any possible relationship between a railroad center and a college, but this situation was capitalized upon by Coe officials after 1881 since the railroads made the college easily accessible to students. Also, George Greene, a generous trustee, was deeply interested in railroads.
In bestowing his gift upon Cedar Rapids, Daniel Coe made certain stipulations and these he drew up in a formal "instrument of writing" on July 2, 1853, two months after the articles of incorporation were written. He provided that in order to secure the first five hundred dollars of the grant, the Board of Directors of this "Institution of Learning" would have to erect a building which would cost at least two thousand dollars. Four hundred and twenty-five dollars was to be expended for the purchase of as large a "suitable tract of land as practicable as a site for the location of the Institute and Seventy Five Dollars... for fencing of the same." He further provided that a farm should be purchased with the remaining one thousand dollars, "the avails of which are to be appropriated to the best advantage for the benefit of such students as may need to assist themselves by manual labor." The one thousand dollars for the farm would be turned over to the school as soon as it was in "successful operation." Coe continued by stating that after 1860, if the site for the Institute were larger than needed, village lots might be sold therefrom, and "the avails invested for the endowment of a Professorship in said Institute." He added that he "strongly desired" the Institute to be coeducational. Coe concluded his statement by saying that in the event the Institute were diverted from its original design, or failed altogether, the
donations were to return to Coe or to his heirs.

The provision for a farm so that indigent students might aid themselves by manual labor was not a novel one, for the manual labor movement was popular during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. In 1826 the school system of New Harmony, Indiana was based upon this principle, and a "Manual Labor Department" was incorporated and systematized with the literary department of Oberlin College in 1833. As the years advanced, the manual labor movement pushed westward. Sometime between 1836 and 1843 the Leeper brothers and Asa Turner, all of whom had been closely connected with Illinois College, moved from southern Illinois into eastern Iowa and established an academy at Denmark. Their plans included the founding of a "Philandrian College," incorporating manual labor, but the college developed no further than the conversation stage. The academy, however, was chartered in 1843. At an earlier date, in 1838, the Davenport Manual

30. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 4-5.


32. Robert Samuel Fletcher, A History of Oberlin College from its Foundation through the Civil War (Oberlin, 1943), 2:634.

33. George F. Wagoun, Asa Turner, a Home Missionary Patriarch and his Times (Boston, 1889), 247.
Labor College was founded by law and placed under the direction of twenty-two trustees. These plans, like Turner's, were not carried beyond the planning stage. Another manual labor scheme was projected at Wittenburg College at a point four miles north of Newton, Iowa. It was active in 1857, but the Civil War prevented further development. The manual labor system also played an important role in the organization of the Iowa State College at Ames. Here a manual labor program was carried on with greater or less success from 1869 to 1884.

In due course of time, the Board of Trustees of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute did purchase a farm for the aid of the poorer students in accord with Coe's instructions, but the design for manual labor was to develop no farther than those of Turner and the Leeper brothers or of the Davenport Manual Labor College. The farm was a farm in name only; no chick ever scratched gravel nor was an acre of corn ever planted in its sandy soil. The manual labor movement was no more successful in Cedar Rapids than it had been in Denmark or Davenport.

When Jones returned home, he had a completely new

35. Ibid., 403.
36. Ibid., 4:196-235, passim.
proposition to bring before the Iowa City Presbytery and his fellow townspeople. He had hoped only for sufficient funds to send three young men East for theological training; he came back with an offer of fifteen hundred dollars with which to establish a school. This change of plan, however, met with great approval in Cedar Rapids, and a corporation was immediately formed to establish the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute. The articles of incorporation stated that the object of the new organization was the establishment of a "College and Seminary of Learning" to be called "The Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute." The capital stock was not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars and was to be divided into shares of twenty-five dollars each. There were to be twelve directors, including a president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The original board members were George Greene, president, Sampson J. Beyer, treasurer; David Blakely, secretary, and Williston Jones, John F. Ely, William W. Smith, Seymour D. Carpenter, Addison Daniels, Isaac Cook, William Greene (brother of George Greene), William L. Shaver, and Aaron Von Dorn. The stockholders were to elect the directors "from among their own number on the third Monday in July A.D. 1853, and on the same day of every third year thereafter." The directors would hold office until their successors were chosen. The directors also had the right to fill all vacancies on their board. A majority of the
stockholders had the privilege, at the time of the triennial election of the Board, to alter or amend the articles of incorporation "in any manner not inconsistent with the obvious purposes of this Incorporation."

Articles seven and twelve left no doubt about the nature of the school. Article seven read, "The Teachers to be employed shall possess evangelical piety; and the reading of the Sacred Scriptures and prayer shall be regarded as one of the daily exercises of the Institute; and the students shall be enjoined to attend some church on the Sabbath." The twelfth article specified that "The Iowa City Presbytery, in consideration of a Donation of One Thousand Dollars, and a pledge of five Scholarships for the first five years, and of ten Scholarships thereafter, shall have the right to nominate all Teachers of the Institute, subject, however, to confirmation by the Board of Directors, but this right shall be forfeited if said consideration should at any time fail." This article was not enforced because the Presbytery was unable to meet its obligations.

On December 5, 1852, five months after Coe had promised his fifteen hundred dollars for the Cedar Rapids

37. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, July 18, 1853, pp. 1-3.
Institute, an eighty-acre farm was purchased for the specified one thousand dollars. Two lots on Fifth Street between Third and Fourth Avenues were bought at about the same time as a site for the school.

Having received the promise of money from Daniel Coe and having purchased two lots and an eighty-acre farm, the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute next considered building plans for their school since Coe had stipulated that a building worth at least two thousand dollars had to be erected on the site before the first five hundred dollars could be "secured." After eighty shares of stock at twenty-five dollars a share had been sold, the building committee conferred with the architect. On February 20, 1854 the Board of Directors approved a plan of construction which, it was estimated, would cost thirty-four hundred dollars. On May 30 the committee was given "discretionary power to put the whole building under contract."

However, this was the last action of the Board in regard to a building, and the entire plan to house the Cedar Rapids

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38. December 5, 1852 is celebrated as Founders' Day at Coe College. The present campus occupies the southwest corner of the original farm. Lots nine and ten of block forty-two which were purchased originally as a site for the institution were sold later on, one to the first Presbyterian Church and the other to St. Paul's Methodist Church.

39. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 19.
Collegiate Institute fell through. There simply was not enough money to insure completion.

While the building plans of the Board of Directors did not materialize, the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute did actually operate for two years in the Presbyterian Church under the guidance of David Blakely. Under Blakely's direction, the school had two terms of twenty-two weeks; this was a calendar that applied to all courses. Blakely offered three courses of study of apparently varying value, for in August of 1853 the Board ruled that the tuition for the "English branch" would be five dollars a term, whereas the "Natural Science Course" was eight dollars, and the "Language and Mathematics" course was ten dollars per term. All tuition was payable in advance, but not always collectable then. There is a receipt in the Coe library which testifies to the fact that students, then as now, did not always have ready cash.

The Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute almost expired in June of 1854. David Blakely had been taken under the care of the Iowa City Presbytery as a candidate for the ministry that spring and since he was no longer sufficiently interested in the school to run it a third year, and since there was no building in which to house the Institute anyway,

it recessed for an indefinite period.

Eventually, however, the Board did secure the services of Mr. D. B. Nash who continued the school for one more year. After June, 1855 no more classes were held under the auspices of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute even though the Directors continued to meet at irregular intervals. The Board did not abandon hope of one day constructing a building suitable for the Institute, and the ways and means for building such a structure were the principal topic of business at the infrequent meetings. As long as the Board continued to meet at all, the Institute could not be said to have failed completely, and so Mr. Coe did not withdraw his donation. Perhaps this tacit generosity on the part of the New Yorker did more to encourage the supporters of the institution than any other single action.

The possession of the eighty acre tract was a constant incentive to Cedar Rapids people to build a school of some kind. It explains, too, perhaps, why no other school with a similar purpose was established to compete with the Institute or its successors. If anyone were to build a school, it would be foolish not to build upon the Coe donation. There was no other college in Cedar Rapids until 1928

41. Records of Iowa City Presbytery, 3. These records are in the possession of the Reverend Donald Paul Chapman, First Presbyterian Church, Bettendorf, Iowa.
when Mount Mercy Junior College was established. However, as early as 1876 the Catholics had established St. Joseph's Academy. This academy did not seriously compete with Coe or its predecessors since the primary purpose of the latter remained for a long time the preparation of young men and women either for the Protestant ministry or missionary work. This is demonstrated by the close relationship of the Presbyterian Church to the college until after the turn of the century.

The twelfth article of the articles of incorporation had stated that the Presbytery was to donate a thousand dollars to the school and to provide scholarships for the first fifteen years of the Institute's existence. A committee representing the Presbytery had agreed to this arrangement, but the Presbytery itself felt totally unable to contribute anything like one thousand dollars to the school. They did offer to contribute half that sum. The Board of Directors accepted the proposition and also agreed that the Presbytery might use all the "rents, forfeits, and benefits that might be realized from the farm" for the benefit of such indigent students as the Presbytery might designate.

42. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 3.

43. Records of the Iowa City Presbytery, 11.

44. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 15.
The Board and the Presbytery reached these agree-
ments in August and September of 1853, but less than two
years later, the Presbytery found itself unable to fulfill
the conditions to which it had agreed. Therefore, the
Presbytery proposed that while it could not contribute the
five hundred dollars to the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Insti-
tute as it had promised, it would accept a transfer of the
Institute, its donations, and benefits from the Board of
Directors, promising to "do all we can to carry out the
design of the endowment." The Board accepted the proposal
with the provision that "said Presbytery shall establish and
ever maintain at Cedar Rapids an Institution of Learning to
which all benefits arising from the Coe grant and all other
grants to said Institute shall be exclusively applied," and
also provided that if these conditions were not carried out
within the next two years, the Institute and all of its
benefits would revert to the Board.

A year passed and the Institute had not resumed
operations under the Presbytery. In May, 1856 the Presby-
tery, in violation of their agreement with the Board of
Directors, instructed a committee to throw open the loca-
tion of the Institute to competition from Vinton, Waterloo,
Lyons, Cedar Falls, Newton, and Iowa City, all within bounds

45. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar
Rapids Collegiate Institute, 20.
of the Presbytery. Vinton and the village of Comanche were very interested in obtaining the Institute and made substantial offers for it. In the meantime, a second committee had written to Daniel Coe to request his permission for the use of the donation even though the school might not be located in Cedar Rapids.

All of this activity on the part of competing communities caused the Board of Directors in Cedar Rapids to call another of their infrequent meetings and to pledge themselves to raise twenty thousand dollars within the next three years, thus outdoing any previous offer made to the Presbytery. The Board of Directors was still desirous of maintaining a close relationship with the Presbytery in spite of the fact that that body had seriously considered removing the Institute from Cedar Rapids. In a resolution passed April 20, 1857, the Directors requested the Iowa City

46. On February 4, 1857, Comanche citizens offered "a site and subscriptions to the amount of ten thousand dollars." The following April the people of Vinton offered forty acres of land, appraised at four thousand dollars plus an actual subscription of eight thousand dollars and gave "responsible representations as ready to guarantee fifteen thousand dollars, including the forty acres." See the Records of the Iowa City Presbytery, 110, 124.

47. Ibid., 21. The policy of asking communities for land and funds in return for locating the school was not original with the Presbytery. Such methods were commonly used by the railroads in determining through which communities the railroad would run.
Presbytery to nominate a "suitable Professor and general agent" for the organization. They added that they would be pleased to have the Reverend Samuel Storrs Howe, a minister active in the Presbytery, appointed "general Superintendent of this Institute."

Two days later a special committee reported to the Presbytery the fact that Daniel Coe did not wish the Presbytery to change the location of the school from Cedar Rapids. If there were to be any changing done, he would do it himself. In spite of this letter, however, the Presbytery voted to change the locale of the school to Vinton, and instructed the committee to write to Mr. Coe accordingly. There was some discussion of the vote concerning the projected move, so the yeas and nays were ordered. Those in favor of keeping the institution in Cedar Rapids lost by a slim margin. Both David Blakely and Williston Jones voted to move the school to Vinton, an indication of their probable discouragement with the institution in Cedar Rapids.

The Directors of the Institute, however, were not discouraged, but highly irate. In reply to the action of the Iowa City Presbytery, the Board adopted the following report:

43. Records of the Iowa City Presbytery, 21.

49. Ibid., 124.
"Response. The Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute having received through the stated Clerk of the Presbytery the minutes of that body relating to the transfer of the Coe fund or property now deeded to the trustees of the said Institute do feel constrained to say that they deem the late action of the said Presbytery to have been adopted under a mistaken apprehension of the facts in the case and not by a fair and full expression of that body itself in favor of the removal of the fund, inasmuch as it appears from the minutes that only five out of eleven members present voted for the transfer, and doubtless others were absent who if present would have waived the result of the vote. Consequently as the other party to the trust fund or property of Mr. Coe, having it now in legal possession and responsible to him, the Directors of the Institute now located here, cannot in justice to Mr. Coe the donor, nor in justice to the corporation of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute give consent to the transfer with such a divided expression of opinion of the other party to the trust."

The Board then decided to "build up and sustain" the Institute by the "speedy erection of suitable buildings and the employment of suitable professors and teachers."

Three days later the executive committee of the Board met and not only appointed Mr. Howe "general superintendent" to raise money for the Institute, but also decided to ask Mr. Coe if a portion of the eighty acre farm might be used as a college site.

This friction with the Presbytery did the Presbytery no harm, and served the purpose of reminding the citizens

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50. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 22-23.
of Cedar Rapids that they had the elements of a college in their midst and that if they did not want it, other people did. The Presbytery, quite probably, was in no position to maintain another institute, anyway. It already had an academy at West Liberty under its care and a Female Seminary at Lyons. In 1861 the West Liberty school closed for lack of funds, and in 1864 the Female Seminary had to reorganize.

The Institute at Cedar Rapids survived primarily because Judge George Greene wanted it to survive. There were many citizens in Cedar Rapids who were interested in the school, and a few who were generous, but no one exerted greater efforts to keep the school in the community than did Greene. It is entirely possible that without his enthusiasm and interest, all efforts to have such an institution in Cedar Rapids would have been abandoned.

George Greene was born in Staffordshire, England on April 15, 1817, the eldest of three sons, all of whom eventually settled in Cedar Rapids and became prominent in the community. His father, Robert Greene, brought the family to the United States in 1820 and settled in Buffalo, New York. After the death of the elder Greene in 1830, the

family was left in straitened circumstances. For the next four years George alternately attended school or taught at other schools to support himself. Later, he studied medicine with a Dr. Chapin in whose home he lived in Buffalo, but he gave this up in favor of law. He therefore read law with Mr. George Baker, a prominent attorney in Buffalo. In 1838 he married Miss Harriet Menitt, the daughter of a Buffalo physician. Shortly after his marriage, he left his wife with her family and journeyed west to the Territory of Iowa. He arrived at Davenport and there became associated with David D. Owen whom he assisted in making a geological survey of the new territory for the government. The purpose of the six-month survey was to determine what lands should be opened for settlement. This work completed, he began to teach school in Ivanhoe, a town no longer in existence, but once located where Mount Vernon now stands. This was the first school in Linn County and he shortly thereafter opened the county's first store. In 1840 he moved his family to Marion and there practiced law for the next five years. In 1847 at the age of thirty he became a judge of the State Supreme Court, a position he held for eight years. The record of his decisions compiled while he was a member of this court was published as George Greene's Reports and was said to have become standard equipment for
every law office in the state.

Following his service on the Supreme Court, Greene, who had by this time moved to Cedar Rapids, started the first bank in Linn County in partnership with John Weare, Jr. and David O. Finch. The panic of 1857 forced the concern to liquidate. Banking, however, was only one of many enterprises to which Greene devoted himself. He was interested in the Star Wagon Works, the Iowa State Fair, Greene's Hotel, Greene's Opera House, Cedar Rapids Water Works, and the Oak Hill Cemetery Association. He established the first newspaper published in Cedar Rapids, The Progressive Era, and later was president of the Republican Printing Company which published the newspapers that preceded The Progressive Era. He was also interested in businesses in New York City and Joliet, Illinois. Greene, incidentally, was nearly always chosen president of any company in which he was interested.

Greene's chief interest was in railroads. At one time or another he promoted the Dubuque and Keokuk Railway Company, the Iowa Central Airline Railroad Company, and the Cedar Valley Railroad to Cedar Rapids. There probably was not a period in the last twenty-five years of his life that he was not interested in pushing one railroad or another.

52. John S. Ely, George Greene, 7-9.
Before his death, in 1880, he had been associated with at least a dozen railroad companies, and president of several of them.

George Greene played a highly important role in the business of Cedar Rapids and was a man of great influence in the community. Greene's interests were not limited to business. He was president of the Board of Trustees for Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, Parsons Seminary, and Coe Collegiate Institute. For more than a quarter century he was the guiding spirit of those institutions destined to become Coe College. Greene was a man of deep religious faith and boundless generosity. Although he was an ardent Episcopalian, he contributed funds to help build every church edifice in the community. He also helped to establish St. Luke's Hospital, the first such building in Cedar Rapids, and contributed heavily to educational institutions. The citizens of Greene, Iowa named their community after him. Greene's influence and leadership in public and private affairs was all pervading and he continually sought to bring the best that he knew to Cedar Rapids.


Financing a small institution, as has already been suggested, is rarely a simple undertaking and the history of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute is silent testimony to the fact. In the first place, tuition, as usual, did not begin to cover the expenses. The tuition of the Institute varied from ten to twenty dollars a year and was not always easily collected. Furthermore, not all pupils felt the necessity for remaining a full term, much less a full year. This did not smooth the way for the treasurer. And even though the Board of Directors had specified that "all persons wishing to become members of the School" first secure a certificate from the treasurer stating that their respective tuitions had been paid, this rule was more honored in the breach than the observance. In February of 1854 the Board decided to add a "Juvenile Department" to the Institute in which tuition would be two dollars per term. The reason for such action is not explained, but the additional revenue would be most welcome to the indigent Institute.

The school year of 1854-1855 was to be the last for the Institute. In January of 1855, Williston Jones, in a meeting of the Board of Directors, stated that "very material

56. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 14.
57. Ibid., 19.
changes had occurred in public sentiment in reference to public schools." George Greene added that he understood that the "number of schollars attending [the Institute] was totally inefficient to pay expenses," and Jones concluded the discussion with the discouraging news that the "number of schollars was about 25, mostly small, that Mr. Nash [Blakely's successor] had informed him that he was out of funds and that no provision had been made to collect tuition." Whereupon the Board authorized Nash to collect the tuition fees. In short, by 1855 the Collegiate Institute was only a parochial school on the elementary level and could not compete with the growing popularity of the public school system.

The school did not function after 1855 although the Board of Directors continued to meet sporadically until 1859. In November of 1855 Williston Jones reported to the Presbytery meeting at Pleasant Prairie that the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute was still suspended and asked for advice in "future proceedings in the matter." The Presbytery then appointed a committee to correspond with Daniel Coe "in relation to placing his donation at the disposal of the Presbytery, for the purpose of endowing a

58. Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, 20.
Literary Institution within our bounds, and to receive propositions from different places in regard to its location." Then followed the abortive attempt to move the Institute from Cedar Rapids which has been discussed earlier.

Williston Jones, fired with a great enthusiasm to obtain young men for the ministry, had first to educate them for seminary training. His zeal plus the generous fifteen hundred dollars of Daniel Coe got the Institute started. In years to come, however, it was the continued moral and financial support of Judge Greene that helped to sustain the school through many precarious years. Judge Greene's support and the fact that Daniel Coe did not, in spite of the many vicissitudes of the Institute and its successors, remove his donation from Cedar Rapids were two deciding factors in the development of the college. In spite of the Presbytery, the financial foundations for an "institute of learning" remained in Cedar Rapids.

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59. Records of the Iowa City Presbytery, 80.
Chapter II

Parsons Seminary
1856-1875

The Board of Directors of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute knew little activity from 1855 to 1866. It met infrequently until 1859, but did not meet after that until 1866. The farm lay dormant, and even the lots on the square were forgotten, for they were sold for back taxes in 1863 and 1864, and the directors did not discover their loss until three years later. Fortunately, Judge Cook was able to recover the lots for the Board, but they should not have been lost in the first place. Not until the directors heard of the Parsons legacy in 1866 were they roused from their lethargy.

In the meantime, the citizens of Cedar Rapids were far more active about their community than the Board was about the Institute. There were many civic improvements, ranging from the establishment of a pound for stray hogs to the organization of a musical association for the "progress and perfection of music." The "Public School"

1. Records of Parsons Seminary, 64.
2. The Cedar Valley Times, September 3, 1857, June 21, 1866. Small boys received ten cents a head for all stray hogs they brought to the pound. An agile youngster could make a dollar and a half before dinner.
became sufficiently well established to offer algebra, geometry, Latin, physical geography, and natural philosophy. However, there were no other efforts to establish any kind of school besides the public school in Cedar Rapids during this time. In 1860 the editor of the local paper did commend "Professor Bolton's" series of penmanship lessons for he was "a thorough master of his profession in theory, in practice, and as a teacher." Aside from the penmanship, there were no other classes, and even the public school enrollment was small. The town had grown, but the educational facilities had not increased.

After the Civil War was over, there was a new interest in education, and four different schools were organized, all in the fall of 1866. A Miss Rogers from New York established the Cedar Rapids Female Seminary in September. She advertised "all branches usually taught in the best Female Seminaries," but added that there would be a department for boys. On November 14, 1866, the Reverend and Mrs. S. C. Percival opened a school in the Episcopal Church. Tuition rates were from five to ten dollars

3. The Cedar Valley Times, December 27, 1860.
4. Ibid., September 20, 1860.
5. Ibid., September 5, 1861.
6. Ibid., August 30, 1866.
"according to the age of the pupils and the studies pursued." The following month "Stephenson and Hammersly" opened a commercial college with instruction in "Bookkeeping, Banking, Forwarding and Commission, Penmanship" for thirty-five dollars a term.

The fourth and most important of the four schools organized in the fall of 1866 was Parsons Seminary. It was formally incorporated in October. Classes, however, were not held until eleven months later. This Seminary was, in a sense, a revival of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, for most of its sponsors were the same men who had served as directors for the Institute, and it, again like the Institute, was sponsored by the Presbyterian Church. A bequest of Lewis B. Parsons was the immediate incentive for the organization of Parsons Seminary.

Lewis Baldwin Parsons, a son of Charles Parsons, a captain in the Revolutionary War, was born at Williamstown, Massachusetts in 1793. He became a successful manufacturer in Buffalo, New York and was well-known for his philanthropy. He made large investments in government lands in Iowa, and in 1855 left a portion of them for the foundation of "an institution of learning [under Presbyterian auspices]"

7. The Cedar Valley Times, November 3, 1866.
8. Ibid., December 6, 1866.
in the State of Iowa." The desire to obtain these lands for a college in Cedar Rapids was the motivation for many prominent citizens to work to establish and maintain the Parsons Seminary.

The Board of Directors of the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute still held title in 1866 to the eighty acres of land purchased with the Coe donation even though the school itself had closed in 1855 for lack of funds. On October 30, 1866 this Board, learning of the Parsons legacy, re-organized as the Board of Trustees of Parsons Seminary and drew up articles of incorporation, with the acknowledged design of attracting the legacy to Cedar Rapids. The object of the corporation was to be "the establishment, endowment and maintenance of a Seminary of Learning at Cedar Rapids, Iowa." The capital stock of the new corporation, like that of the Institute, was not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars; unlike the previous corporation, however, the stock in the Parsons Seminary was divided into shares of one hundred dollars each. There were fifteen trustees.

9. Joseph W. Hubbard, The Presbyterian Church in Iowa, 28, Cedar Rapids Times, February 2, 1871, Parker, Higher Education in Iowa, 165, Edward R. Burkhalter, History of Coe College, 8. Typed copy of the Burkhalter history is in the Coe College library. The lands bequeathed by Parsons were estimated to be worth between thirty-five and forty thousand dollars. Eight hundred acres of the land was in Lee County, four hundred acres in Jasper County, one hundred sixty acres in Polk County, and the remainder in Cerro Gordo, Worth, and Hancock Counties.
who were to be elected at the annual meetings of the stockholders "from among their own number." The trustees, moreover, could fill any vacancy on the board themselves. There would be no dividends from any profits the corporation might realize, the founders declared optimistically, but such profits would be added to the funds of the Seminary and "expended for the promotion of its interests."
The fourteenth and last article identified the school with the Presbyterian Church as a further inducement to the executors of the Parsons legacy who were instructed by the will to found a Presbyterian college. This article was "unalterable," and provided that a majority of the trustees would be identified with the Presbyterian Church. It added that the seminary would "be in connection with, and under the care and control of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids."

The first officers of the corporation were four of the city's foremost citizens; the Reverend James Knox, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, was president, George Greene who had served as a director for the Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, was vice-president, Dr. John F. Ely, who had also served the Institute, was secretary, and S. C. Bever, who had been treasurer for the earlier Board, was chosen to hold the same office on the new

10. Records of Parsons Seminary, 39-42.
At their first annual meeting, the Trustees instructed the secretary to forward a copy of the articles of incorporation to the sons of Lewis Parsons in St. Louis "with a view of obtaining said legacy for the Endowment of this Seminary." At the trustees' meeting in January, 1867, George Greene, who had been elected president in December, announced that he had visited Coe at Durham, New York, and had obtained from him a deed for the eighty acres of land for the Parsons Seminary. Whereupon the trustees voted to send Greene and two others of their number to St. Louis to see the Parsons about the legacy. The Board was not unaware of Coe's generosity in deeding the land to this new corporation, and so they voted to call the "first endowed professorship in this Institution secured by miscellaneous contribution" the "Coe Professorship."

In the meantime, Dr. Ely had written, as instructed, to Charles Parsons. The reply was circumspect.

"Dear Sir, Your favor of the 6th of Dec. received with enclosure—I handed the letter to my brother Genl. Parsons and he did not inform me but that it was answered until a few days since—I have just sent to Keokuk

12. Records of Parsons Seminary, 58.
13. Ibid., 61.
for a full accounting of the Estate and propose to arrange it so we can get a statement of the assets on hand. Land etc.—My brother then proposes that we should offer the result to the people who will raise the most money to carry out the designs of our Father. We have no wish except to meet his desires in the matter. As soon as we get things in shape we will give you the statement to look over. We desire the thing to be permanent and not to be spent and lost. "14

At the same time that the Board of Directors of the Institute was reorganizing, the Presbytery and the Synod were manifesting equally great interest in the projected institution. The Presbytery and the Board of Trustees of Parsons Seminary were independent of each other, but they performed parallel functions as far as the school was concerned. On April 13, 1866, the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids appointed a committee to do what it could "to commence in Cedar Rapids a school of a high grade as speedily as possible." The next fall another committee reported that Daniel Coe had promised to "give a bond for a deed of these lands provided a school-building be erected on the same of the value of at least three thousand dollars previous to the sale of 1867." This was the same month October, 1866, that the Board of Trustees of Parsons Seminary adopted the articles of incorporation, so at the next meeting of

14. Charles Parsons to Dr. John F. Ely, January 26, 1867. The letter is now in the possession of the Coe College library.

15. Records of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids, 1:11-20, passim.
the Presbytery in April, 1867, a special committee reported that it had "effected the organization of a Board of Trustees, and the appointment of a 'Financial Secretary'" [the Reverend G. E. W. Leonard] who had already succeeded in raising fourteen thousand, five hundred dollars in subscriptions. The following December a committee from the Synod conferred with the trustees and urged the latter to develop the Seminary into a college as soon as practicable. There was a prolonged and fruitless discussion about the Parsons legacy. Ten months later the Parsons still had not bestowed the legacy.

The Synodical committee, meanwhile, was considering the Seminary as a possible institution for their auspices. So it happened that on February 1, 1869, the trustees were informed that the committee had, after considering various localities, decided upon Cedar Rapids and had "Resolved formally to locate their Preparatory Department and College here—accepting thereby the property and franchise of the Parsons Seminary". In June the trustees heard that the


17. Records of Parsons Seminary, 85, 117. It is possible that the Synod desired the Seminary to be a college so that it might establish a theological seminary in connection with it. The Synod contemplated founding such a seminary in Cedar Rapids in 1867. See the Cedar Rapids Times for December 5, 1867.

18. Records of Parsons Seminary, 127.
Synod had confirmed the action of their committee to establish "Parsons College" at Cedar Rapids, and that the trustees of the college were "now ready to receive the transfer of the property of Parsons Seminary".

Following this decision, a committee from the Synod visited the Parsons Seminary on a tour of inspection in the spring of 1869. Charles Deacon, a student on campus at the time, recalled in later years that a "large representation of the Synod visited the College...and addressed the students.... They said to us that we were now a College, that whereas yesterday we were a Seminary, today we were a college. There was much enthusiasm manifested among us by this sentiment, and we all felt satisfied that the matter had been practically settled. Subsequent facts proved that their statements were a little premature."

The Parsons by March of 1870 still had not granted the legacy to any community, so Judge Greene and Dr. Ely, ever hopeful, traveled to Keokuk to present the claims of Cedar Rapids before the Parsons brothers. They received "considerable encouragement," but no promises.

However, soon after their trip, a committee repre-
senting the Parsons did visit the campus for purposes of examination. Deacon described them, too.

"The committee made a very thorough examination of the buildings and of the grounds and of the location generally. I distinctly recall their walking over the grounds. The trustees of the Seminary, being informed in advance of the coming of this committee, were preparing to create a good impression. A few days before their expected arrival, the grounds, which had been leveled off in front of the college, and which consisted of coarse sand, was ornamented by some fifty or sixty evergreen trees, and a large amount of black dirt was hauled in to present a surface of good soil with a large number of evergreen trees set out in ornamental order. Unfortunately, however, the committee arrived earlier than was anticipated and the black dirt had not been spread over the sand. To render the situation still worse, a high wind was blowing the day the committee were here and the sand was drifting over the dirt piles and filling up against the lower board of the fence." 22

The committee did not commit itself one way or another even after its visit to Cedar Rapids. In July George Greene was writing of a "meeting of friends of Parsons College," but added that nothing was accomplished since General Parsons was absent.

That fall the Presbytery, impatient for a Presbyterian college in Cedar Rapids, voted to request the Synod to organize a Synodical College "as soon as possible" and to request the Parsons to turn over their father's bequest to the Synod of Iowa North and South for

22. Quoted from Burkhalter, History, 10-11.
23. Diary of George Greene, July 7, 1870.
educational interests. They also decided to ask Mr. Coe "not to alienate the property which he has donated for educational purposes situated in Cedar Rapids from the Presbyterian Church." Only the last part of the resolution was to any avail, for Mr. Coe did not "alienate the property." The portion of the request directed to the Parsons was ignored.

As late as 1874 the Presbytery was still inquiring about the Parsons Seminary and the Coe property and the rights and duties of the church in regard to them. Clearly the church continued to maintain an interest in and a desire for a school of higher education within the limits of the Presbytery. Cedar Rapids was always considered the desirable site since the Coe donation was located there.

One of the conditions of the Coe grant had been the stipulation that a building worth at least two thousand dollars be constructed by the Board. With the Parsons legacy still a will o' the wisp, the Board felt that a solid structure would invite the coveted bequest to settle permanently in Cedar Rapids and, incidentally, fulfill the Coe condition. On this premise, there was much discussion.

25. Ibid., 241.
of the building later to be known as Main Hall.

To begin with, the Board agreed that this initial building should "provide first and mainly for school and recitation rooms." At a later meeting they decided that they wanted the building to include facilities for the boarding of the students and the lodging of the college women. In February, the Board, feeling very expansive, voted to have Mr. L. B. Dixon, a Chicago architect, design a building for them which would be forty-eight by eighty feet, three stories high, with a mansard roof and include, in addition to classrooms and a dormitory, a suite for the principal's family. All of this was not to cost more than twenty thousand dollars. In March the Board decided to place the building near the "Southwest corner of the Coe Eighty" and have it face First Avenue. In May of 1867 the Board discovered that the structure which met their specifications would cost thirty-two thousand dollars; they therefore dispatched John Weare to Chicago to confer with Dixon upon a design which would cost not more than twelve thousand dollars. Bills were submitted at the end of May, and the trustees let the contract to William Richmond for $14,461, the lowest bid.

27. Ibid., 72, 77
The editor of the Cedar Valley Times, writing a few months later, reported that the basement was completed and contained two large rooms and a furnace room. He predicted that the hall when completed would be "not only the best but the neatest and most substantial structure of the kind in Linn County." His predictions were fulfilled and, for the times, Main Hall was indeed an imposing building. The brick building was fifty-six by sixty-six feet and was three stories high. It contained a large chapel and twelve rooms above the basement. The basement was designed to house a primary department and a suite of rooms for the principal's family. The hall was completed in August, 1868.

Parsons Seminary opened officially September 18, 1867. While the new building was under construction, classes were held in the Wadsworth Block, "a row of unpren- tentious buildings resembling a barracks," on Second Street and Fifth Avenue. The trustees paid the thirty-five dollars monthly rent, moved in furniture and stoves, and issued circulars advertising the school. The Reverend Alva Goodale, a Presbyterian clergymen and an Amherst graduate,

28. The Cedar Valley Times, August 22, 1867.
29. Ibid., July 30, 1868.
30. Records of Parsons Seminary, III.
was engaged as the Seminary principal, a position he held for most of the time the institution was in operation. Mrs. Goodale, who had been educated at Mt. Holyoke, was an instructor. Mr. Goodale was paid "not more than $1500," had a rent-free suite in the building, and free fuel. In return, he furnished, at his own expense, a teacher of drawing and painting, and kept the building warm and clean.

In 1868, after the school had moved into the new building, the faculty was expanded. The "first assistant" was Professor Augustus Maasberg who had his Ph. D. from the University of Halle, Prussia. He taught all of the modern languages offered in the Seminary. The "second assistant" was Miss Addie Kelsey, a graduate of Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary. Miss Emma Linsly of New York taught drawing and painting. If the advertisements were true, there was also a music department under the direction of the "best musical talent that can be obtained."

The trustees' committee on the curriculum introduced a resolution that "the course of studies shall comprise the higher branches usually taught in the best academies so as

31. Burkhalter, History, 9. See also Records of Parsons Seminary, 105.

32. Records of Parsons Seminary, 112.

33. The Cedar Valley Times, August 6, 1868.
to prepare Students for the Junior class in Colleges." The Seminary did not pretend to be a college. In an advertisement which appeared in the local paper shortly before school began in the autumn of 1867, the faculty offered a "thorough education in all branches of study, both solid and ornamental. Religious or Biblical (not sectarian) instruction" would occupy a prominent place. Music, painting, drawing, and modern languages were offered for an extra fee. The school had three departments, primary, preparatory, and collegiate. There were four sessions of ten weeks each year, and the tuition for each session varied from five to ten dollars, increasing with the successive departments. Latin, Greek, mathematics, and botany were included in the regular tuition.

The second year opened auspiciously, for there were over one hundred students enrolled for classes at the Seminary. They were largely from Cedar Rapids, but there were also students from the surrounding towns of Fairfax, Springville, Center Point, Central City, and from nearby farms. There were a few students from Vinton and Marengo, two from Illinois, and one from Nebraska.

The year did not close as happily as it began, for

34. Records of Parsons Seminary, 112.

35. The Cedar Valley Times, September 5, 1867.
the Board found it necessary to change the administration. It is not clear whether Mr. Goodale was asked to resign or whether he left voluntarily, but the fact remains that he did leave at the end of the winter quarter. He was replaced by Mr. J. W. Stephens "at a salary of Two Hundred and fifty Dollars for the last quarter of the current school year." The enrollment decreased somewhat for that spring term, and a year later there were just forty students in attendance, including several small boys of seven and eight years.

The Seminary continued until June, 1871 under Mr. Stephens. He conducted the school in a competent and satisfactory fashion, but there was a continuously decreasing enrollment. He was undaunted, however, and continued to offer four terms a year. His great object in all of the work at the Seminary was to train "the mind and heart in such directions and with such persistency as will tend to produce men and women of power and influence for good in the community," and to prepare them for "business and the practical duties of life."

The Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute had closed

36. Charles J. Deacon in History of Linn County, Iowa, (1873), 221. True D. Coe to George W. Bryant, November 15, 1932. The letter is now in the files of The Coe alumni office.

37. The Cedar Rapids Times, August 12, 1839.
its doors in 1855 because it could no longer compete with 
the public schools. Eleven years later the Parsons Sem-
inary was organized with the purpose of securing the Parsons 
legacy for a Presbyterian College, but it, nevertheless, 
was no more a school of higher learning than was the Insti-
tute. There is no evidence that it was organized as the 
result of any demand on the part of the community for any 
further educational opportunities.

The enterprise began enthusiastically enough even 
though there was no mention of the intellectual stimulation 
that might result from such a project. The first notice 
of the school in The Cedar Valley Times did not mention the 
desirability of education per se. The editor was pleased 
to note that the Reverend G. W. Leonard had been appointed 
financial agent for the projected institution since the 
latter was well-known for his financial ability and for the 
deep interest he had in the educational affairs of the 
county. The editor concluded by urging his readers to con-
tribute to the school when called upon "as it is very 
closely allied with the interests of every one in this 
community." In a brief article the following month the 
editor pointed out that there would be a "pecuniary reward" 
for the business men of the town if there were a college 
in the community. It is curious to note that no one

38. The Cedar Rapids Times, December 13, 1866.
thought to question the superiority of the Seminary over
the public school. No one asked what advantages it would
offer, or what purpose it would serve. A group of zealous
citizens who were determined to have a college of some
kind in their town did their best to achieve this goal.
Practically speaking, Cedar Rapids did not need a college.
The State University was located at Iowa City, twenty-
eight miles to the south, and Cornell, by then a definitely
established college at Mt. Vernon, was but twelve miles
away. But there was still the Coe donation, and George
Greene still wanted a college. Hence there were tremendous
efforts to attract the Parsons legacy.

The Cedar Rapids Times printed the names and gifts
of the principal contributors and regularly reported the
total subscription to date. John F. Ely and George Greene
headed the list with eight hundred dollars apiece. Other
major contributors were Dr. E. L. Mansfield, S. C. Bever,
William Greene, John Weare, and the Reverend Leonard, all
of whom gave five hundred dollars except the last two who
promised three hundred dollars for the cause. In an arti-
cle entitled "The College" the editor reported that "The
financial affairs of the college stand thus:—
Quit Claim Deed for 80 acres of land,
adjourning City Plot, estimated cash value———$10,000
Three City lots, fronting on public square,
Cedar Rapids, estimated cash value---------- 2,000
Cash subscriptions to this date-----------------$13,000
Total to date---------------------------------------------------25,000

And then he added, very truthfully, "The ultimate benefits of an enterprise of this character depend very much upon the influence it is capable of exerting, and the public interest it attracts; and money only at this time can make this college what it should be."

The campaign for subscriptions to Parsons Seminary continued fitfully for about seven years. Even though the Parsons brothers had not committed themselves as late as 1870, George Greene still carried high hopes of securing the legacy for Cedar Rapids. On February 12, 1870, he wrote to Dr. Ely from New York City,

"I do hope you are pushing subscriptions for the Parsons College. We must not let it go. I think Rev. Mr. Knox, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, and a trustee of the Seminary, had better call a special evening meeting of your congregation and present the subject to them with all his power and earnestness. Have the other Presbyterian clergymen also convene their congregations and have Mr. Knox present the matter to them. Let these two meetings be followed up with a public meeting at Browns, or some other Hall....

So important do I consider this Parsons legacy to the growth and prosperity of our town that I hereby authorize you to increase my subscription to eight thousand dollars [he had originally subscribed eight hundred]. I hope you and Mr. Walker will increase yours at least to six thousand dollars each. I truly regret that I

39. The Cedar Rapids Times, January 17, 1867.
cannot be with you to aid in getting up the subscriptions. But above all things let it be done. It is of paramount importance to you and to your church [First Presbyterian] and to all friends of education, Christianity, and progress at Cedar Rapids.  

Subscriptions were more easily promised than paid. The subscriptions, for the most part, were pledged in November, or December of 1866, or in January of 1867. By July, however, the Board found it necessary to appoint a special committee to wait upon one H. G. Angle who refused to pay his subscription. Not until the following November was Mr. Angle prevailed upon to make good his pledge, and then only a compromise was achieved. "The financial agent was instructed to accept the proposition of Mr. H. G. Angle to pay three hundred dollars of his subscription now and the balance when another building was commenced." Since the next building was not started until 1881, Mr. Angle had fourteen years to complete his pledge. Mr. Angle was not the only recalcitrant subscriber. The Board found it necessary in January of 1868 to direct the financial agent "to proceed vigorously to collect all past due subscriptions, and to employ an Attorney to sue all subscribers

40. Unpublished letter from George Greene to Dr. John F. Ely from New York City, February 12, 1870. It is now in the Coe College library.

41. Records of Parsons Seminary, 79.

42. Ibia., 82.
who refuse payment." Mr. Leonard must have begun prosecution on some sincere friends of the college, poor but honest, for the trustees, only a month later, ruled that the financial agent should not prosecute "any party delinquent in payment of subscription to the Parsons Seminary until he shall receive a special order from the Board of Trustees so to do."

Construction on the Seminary building had started in August of 1867. It was completed a year later, but in the course of the intervening months the trustees were hard-pressed to meet the payments due the contractor. In February the president of the Board was authorized to negotiate a temporary loan "for a sufficient amount to pay the balance due the contractor on his estimate of work and material furnished of date January 10, 1868," and in March the trustees instructed the committee on ways and means to "negotiate temporary loans from time to time, as may be necessary to meet the wants of the Building contractors." In July the Board requested the finance committee to make a loan sufficiently large to pay off the indebtedness of the Seminary. That autumn the trustees borrowed three

43. Records of Parsons Seminary, 93.
44. Ibid., 95.
45. Ibid., 101.
thousand dollars from Calvin Graves of Cooperstown, New York, a brother-in-law of Judge Greene, so that they might settle claims against the Seminary. Three separate notes of one thousand dollars each were drawn and signed by various members of the Board with the condition that they should be executed by the President of the Seminary, Judge Greene. Therefore, Messrs. Isham, Walker, Kingman, Goodale, Knox, Ely, Fish, and Greene made themselves personally liable for the welfare of the Seminary.

The day after Christmas the Board met and decided to request "funds and material aid" from the Presbyterian Churches throughout the state for the benefit of the Seminary. They further resolved to solicit the citizens of Cedar Rapids so that a "Cedar Rapids Professorship" might be established. In other words, the trustees were discovering that a building and grounds were only the initial expenses of a school; they now had to buy equipment and pay a faculty. In fact, most of their financial worries in 1869 were concerned with payment of teachers' salaries. At the February meeting Mr. Goodale stated that he and his wife were greatly in need of the money due them. While the Board directed that they be paid one hundred fifty dollars

46. Records of Parsons Seminary, 117.
47. Ibid., 123.
from the "first funds realized from old or new subscriptions," it is significant to note that the Goodales' services were dispensed with at the close of the winter term.

In June, 1869 the Board found that they owed four instructors a total of $722 and they therefore directed Mr. Leonard to make a special effort to raise funds to pay these debts. At the same meeting they agreed to pay Mr. Stephens, successor to Goodale, one thousand dollars cash plus rent-free quarters in the Seminary building plus space for a garden and a supply of wood for the coming year. Mr. Stephens, on his part, agreed to take charge of the school, to furnish a teacher of drawing and painting, to prepare the wood for fuel, and to pay for the services of a janitor. How many drawing lessons he or his wife would give, and how much janitorial service he himself would perform one may only surmise. The next day the Board borrowed money to pay Professor Maasberg one hundred seventy-four dollars which the poor man needed greatly. The Board still owed him an additional two hundred dollars.

In February, 1869 the indebtedness was about one thousand dollars and the amount of old subscriptions


49. Ibid., 139. See also Judge Greene's diary for June 29, 1869.
collectable was about twice that much. There is no explanation for the discrepancy, but at their meeting in May, the trustees discovered that their indebtedness amounted to six thousand dollars, whereupon they immediately voted to re-engage the Reverend George Leonard as financial agent. They also decided to request Mr. Coe's permission to sell one of their lots across from the square so that they might improve the grounds of the Seminary.

Just when the idea for a farm to aid indigent students was given up is not clear, but by 1867 the idea of any kind of a farm at all had been abandoned. In that year the trustees decided to have the eighty acres plotted into town lots. The expenses incurred by the new building plus the regular running expenses proved so great that the Board realized the farm would have to serve the students in another way. The move was financially expedient, but it did not contribute to the making of a beautiful campus.

Classes were well under way in the new building when the chairman of the grounds committee reported that the "Avails of the two lots in Cedar Rapids sold to the Presbyterian Church for one thousand dollars were being applied to the improvement of the grounds." About ten acres around

50. Records of Parsons Seminary, 133.
51. Ibid., 90.
the Seminary building had been cleared and was being fenced. "Grading to the amount of about six hundred dollars was also nearly completed around the building, and... the committee in view of the demoralizing want of privies had ordered the construction of two vaults intending to make payment for the same from the funds in their control."  

A building had been constructed and the grounds surveyed so that Parsons Seminary might exist as a physical entity. The committee for the Parsons legacy would be able to see that the school was a thriving institution with the earnest approval of the community to support it. But all of this effort incurred debts and debts were not easy to pay, especially when pledges were not honored. For the next eight years (1868-1876) the trustees devoted most of their meetings to the arduous and unpleasant task of figuring ways to meet expenses. The eighty acres, even though platted, failed to bring in any great amount of revenue, and the Parsons legacy remained nothing but a glittering hope, a hope shared by several communities in the state at that. So the trustees struggled on into increasingly greater indebtedness.  

In spite of all of the labors of the trustees, the

52. Records of Parsons Seminary, 136.  
Seminary seemed destined for oblivion. Principal Stephens had told the Board that the tuition fees did not meet the current expenses, that the enrollment was decreasing, and that there would be a seven hundred dollar deficit at the end of the term in March, 1870. The Board, consequently, sadly voted to suspend school at the end of the winter quarter. They gave permission to Mr. Stephens to teach an additional term "on his own responsibility" and with no compensation save tuition fees. A special committee was appointed to secure subscriptions so that the teachers might be paid. Financially and educationally, Parsons Seminary seemed to be a failure.

Then, in February, 1870 fresh efforts were made to increase the subscriptions to the "Parsons College." The new term was used since the Parsons money would create a school of higher learning. At the same time Marshalltown and Des Moines were lively contenders for the funds and there was great rivalry among the three communities. Cedar Rapids made heroic efforts and succeeded in raising the total subscriptions to between seventy-five and ninety thousand dollars. No two authorities agree on just how much was actually subscribed.

54. Records of Parsons Seminary, 141-142.

55. The Cedar Rapids Times, February 24, 1870.
The month of May, 1870 was a time of jubilation for Cedar Rapids, for on May 14 Dr. Spees, chairman of the locating committee for Parsons College, wired Dr. Ely to the effect that the college had been "permanently and forever located at Cedar Rapids." In an article in a local newspaper it was stated that the

"natural advantages, and liberality of the citizens of this city, have induced the committee to locate it [Parsons College] here. Ninety thousand dollars have been pledged by the citizens, which together with the Parsons legacy, valued at about fifty thousand dollars, and moneys which the committee expect to secure from other sources, will place the school on a financial basis of about $250,000 to start with. It is expected that the institution will become the Presbyterian College of the State, and under their care become one of the finest schools of the West."56

On July 30, 1870 the Board of Trustees voted to transfer all of the "Real and Personal property" of the Parsons Seminary to the Parsons College provided the college was incorporated by September 15, 1870. However, the transfer was never made since the college was not incorporated by the specified date. Ultimately, in spite of the efforts of the citizens of Cedar Rapids and the Presbytery, and in spite of the Coe endowment, the Parsons legacy was bestowed upon Fairfield, Iowa. Nowhere is it entirely

57. Records of Parsons Seminary, 143-144.
clear just why Fairfield received the favor in preference to Cedar Rapids. It is true that the citizens pledged twenty-nine thousand dollars for the support of the college, and it is equally well-known that Senator James F. Wilson desired the legacy for Fairfield. But Cedar Rapids could offer more than Fairfield in every respect. Certainly the citizens of Cedar Rapids who had worked so desperately for nine long years to win the legacy were bitterly disappointed, and the memory still rankled a quarter of a century later.

The creation of Parsons College in Fairfield meant that a third Presbyterian college had been established in the state. Since the Presbyterians did not support their schools in the whole-hearted fashion of the Methodists, three Presbyterian colleges in Iowa were entirely too many. In 1874, after the Cedar Rapids citizens had abandoned hope of acquiring the Parsons legacy, there was discussion of uniting Lenox College in Hopkinton with Parsons Seminary, strengthening them both by the union. A committee of three from Cedar Rapids, including the Reverend Knox, visited the Lenox campus in the spring of 1874. John W. Shearer, a student at Lenox at the time, described the

58. Burkhalter, History, 12.

59. Lenox College in Hopkinton was the second Presbyterian school.


Thus in 1875 there were three small and struggling Presbyterian schools established within the state.

The Parsons Seminary closed in June, 1871. It had been outstanding only for its poverty, known only for its subscriptions. It had been founded for the sole purpose of snaring the Parsons legacy and had completely failed in its object. Yet it was not a complete fiasco. The efforts of men like George Greene and John Ely to acquire a site and construct a building were not completely in vain. The building and campus served as ever-present incentives for future college builders.

60. John W. Shearer to Dr. E. R. Burkhalter, December 2, 1911. Letter is now in the Coe College library.
Chapter IV

Cedar Rapids in 1881

Cedar Rapids, Iowa is located on the banks of the Cedar River which flows southeast through Linn County and divides the city into the east and west sides. The business district lies in the wide flat valley, and north and south on the flatlands are the larger manufacturing plants and railroad yards. Today the city has a population of seventy-four thousand, but in 1856, the year the town was incorporated, there were but twelve hundred inhabitants, and four years later there were just four hundred people more. In 1870 there were six thousand, and by 1880 there were ten thousand people living in Cedar Rapids.

Along with the human population, there was an almost equally large contingent of livestock, equally free and independent. In 1870 the cattle were numerous and hungry and roamed the streets at will. When sufficiently starved, they would, it was reported, even eat soft maple

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wood. Certainly the cattle were independent enough. On one particular day one of the

"city cows was quietly walking along the rail-road track near the Depot. An engine came up behind her, snorting and tooting at a lively rate, but she walked along as calmly as if out on a prairie. The cow catcher touched her gently on the heels and she responded with a vigorous kick, and kept on her way; again the whistle screamed, but to no effect in changing her gait or course; again the cow catcher struck her on the heels and again she saluted it with a kick. How long this would have continued, we know not, had the Engineer not clubbed the cow off the track." 3

During the decade of the seventies, wolves were a menace near the city. They came nearer to the barns and homes than they had formerly, and sometimes groups of the men organized to hunt them.

Hogs were in as plentiful supply as cattle and wolves. The packing plant stacked its supply of hogs outside in the winter time and left the bodies there until they were sufficiently thawed by a warm spring sun to cut up. The animals were frozen so hard that even stray dogs did not bother them.

By 1880 the livestock situation in Cedar Rapids had not improved. The editor of The Times wrote,

4. Ibid., February 13, 1873.
5. Ibid., February 1, 1872.
"Our city is rapidly becoming noted and notorious for the herds of cattle and horses which browse upon her streets, make their nightly deposits on the sidewalks, break down fences and shade trees and serenade our citizens with their melodious bawls and the discordant tinkling of their bells. It is estimated that there are not less than five hundred cows, two hundred yearlings, one hundred calves and fifty horses running loose, day and night, within the city limits."  

Cedar Rapids in 1880 possessed more of the rural disadvantages of livestock than cosmopolitan advantages of education.

By 1878 the city was organized with a mayor, recorder, treasurer, marshal, and six aldermen from the three wards to govern it. The city council, police department, and superior court room were all housed in the upper story of a "large two-story brick structure" on South Second Street. The city had a police force of nine men "including the chief," and a fine system of fire protection.

The streets in Cedar Rapids during these years were not good. The streets which were originally of sand, were surfaced with cedar block paving, but as these blocks became swollen and worn, they, too, were as undesirable as the sand. In 1885, however, the "Davis Grade" was adopted and the streets improved steadily after that.

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6. The Cedar Rapids Times, August 19, 1880.

7. History of Linn County, 1878, p. 489. See also Laurance's Pioneer Days, 65.
The first bridge across the Cedar River was erected in 1852. Thirty years later, the city had three "wagon and foot" bridges and two railway bridges, all constructed of iron.

In the late fifties and early sixties citizens of Cedar Rapids might leave their home via stage or steamer, but after the advent of the railroad, both of these modes of travel were abandoned. The Chicago, Iowa and Northern Rail Road was organized in Clinton, Iowa on January 26, 1856. Most of the money was furnished by eastern capitalists, particularly John I. Blair, but many Cedar Rapids men put up money and notes to have the railroad come through their community. In June of 1859 the road was completed to Cedar Rapids, and its coming was the "beginning of the end in the unique struggle for railways in Linn County...." In later years the Iowa and Nebraska and the Cedar Rapids and Missouri Railroads were united under one management and became the Chicago and Northwestern Railway.

By the time Coe College was established, Cedar Rapids had become a railroad center. It was the center of the


10. Ibid.
Chicago, Cedar Rapids, and Nebraska Railway Company, and it was on the main trunk line of the Chicago and Northwestern. It was the "southwestern terminus of the Dubuque branch" of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, and was also connected with the Chicago, Council Bluffs and Omaha Short Line of the Milwaukee road.

Since Cedar Rapids was a railroad center, it was easily accessible from many parts of the state and the college early capitalized upon its location as an inducement for attending Coe. The railroads, in turn, kindly granted special rates to vacationing students, charging "one and one-third rates" for the round trip.

Cedar Rapids was a good location for a college not only because it was readily available, but also because the community was prosperous enough to support such a school. Coe College and its predecessors consistently received the greater part of their financial support from the local citizens who firmly believed in the value of a college in their community. The fact that the school was located in a prosperous community was frequently of direct help to the students themselves. Countless Coe students earned a large part of their expenses by working at part-

time jobs within the city.

Cedar Rapids was a prosperous business town as early as 1861. The assessed valuation of property within the city corporation for taxation in January, 1861 was $1,674,250. As the rate of valuation for taxation was about one-third of the estimated commercial value, the real value of the property was considered to be between five and six million dollars. The revenue from taxation was $62,572.92. In addition, there were church, school, and city properties worth $408,000 that were exempt from taxation. In 1861 the total city debt was $44,000 and the total city assets were $121,000. The citizens were proud of this financial standing, and invited other businesses to their community, assuring them of low taxes and a desirable location.

At that time there were thirty-four manufacturing concerns in the city, among them a broom factory, a vinegar works, a soap works, at least two iron foundries, two oatmeal mills, a wagon factory, a shoe factory, and a farm implement factory. The capital invested in manufacturing was $1,577,000, and the aggregate value of the products


In the decade of the eighties there were two major enterprises in Cedar Rapids which still play a vital role in the city's economy. One was the pork-packing plant of T. M. Sinclair, and the other was the North Star Oat Meal mill established in 1872 by H. W. Higley and Robert Stuart. In 1874 George Douglass purchased Higley's interest in the oatmeal mill, and the concern expanded "to facilitate the manufacture of this important product" which was fast becoming highly popular with the American public. Today the Quaker Oats plant is the city's greatest industry and is one of the largest cereal mills in the world.

The owners and officials of many of the important businesses and factories of Cedar Rapids have long been associated with the college either as trustees or patrons, and this has been especially true, at one time or another, of the packing plant and the cereal mill. Officials of these two plants from T. M. Sinclair who established the


16. Laurance, *Pioneer Days*, 31-32. *The Iowa Guide* states that the mill was not established until 1873, and then only by Robert Stuart. But inasmuch as *The Times* reported the sale of Higley's interest to Douglass in 1874, we must accept Laurance's date and statement.

17. *The Cedar Rapids Times*, November 12, 1874.

18. *The Iowa Guide*. Any employee of Quaker Oats in Cedar Rapids will tell you it is the largest oatmeal mill.

was $5,984,469.
pork-packing plant, to Arthur Poe who, until recently, was the general manager of the Quaker Oats plant, have frequently identified themselves with the college.

In the decade of the seventies, there were at least four different land companies with headquarters in Cedar Rapids. Their purpose was to lay out towns and to sell lots along one railway or another, principally the Chicago and Northwestern routes, but also along the lines in the northern and western part of the state. Their capital stock varied from two hundred thousand dollars to seven million dollars, and shares sold for fifty or one hundred dollars each.

If Cedar Rapids had speculators in 1881, it also had educators. In addition to the public school system which maintained eight buildings and whose total value of school property was eighty-six thousand dollars, and Coe College, the city had a private kindergarten, an industrial school, a business college, and a Catholic seminary. The kindergarten was managed very successfully for a number of years by Mrs. C. F. Madeira who also instructed young ladies in the skills of kindergarten pedagogy. T. M. Sinclair was one of the sponsors of the kindergarten normal

19. History of Linn County, 1878, p. 519.
school. The industrial school was a charitable enterprise designed for paupers and combined "common school instruction with industrial pursuits." The Cedar Rapids Business College was established in 1880. Austin N. Palmer was the instructor in penmanship; in later years he was to win national prominence for his "Palmer method" of penmanship. This business school, like the Catholic seminary, did not offer college work. Certainly there was not a dearth of educational institutions in Cedar Rapids.

Cedar Rapids was a prosperous community in 1881 and its citizens liberally supported many "cultural activities." The college, of course, is a prime example of this sort of interest, but there were other organizations which also gained local support. One of the best examples of the tastes of Cedar Rapids citizens was Greene's Opera House. The Opera House opened in December of 1880, six months after Judge Greene's death, and functioned until the cinema replaced vaudeville in the next century. It had a seating capacity of two thousand, a stage forty by sixty feet, fifteen dressing rooms, and was considered beautifully decorated. It was reported to be the "finest and largest

21. Ibid., January 20, 1881.
opera house west of Chicago." The bill for opening night, December 23, 1880, was "The Bohemian Girl" presented by the Emma Abbott Grand English Opera Company. From then on, the managers presented a wide variety of entertainment, some of it rather mediocre, but much of it excellent. They presented lecturers and operas and plays, ranging from Joseph Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle" to the Cherry sisters, from Robert Ingersoll who was not very favorably received to the Reverend Stephen Phelps who was. The most popular form of entertainment at the Opera House was the play, and "Maggie Mitchell," "Annie Pixley," "East Lynn," and "Uncle Tom's Cabin" were all presented from its stage.

The Opera House was very useful as a meeting place, the citizens decided, and there were frequent gatherings in this auditorium to discuss local issues. More than one meeting was held in the interests of the college. In later years, when the students were capable of sponsoring rather ambitious productions, these, too, were presented in the Opera House.

Another local organization which generously offered its facilities to the college was the Cedar Rapids Y.M.C.A.

24. The Daily Republican, May 1, 1881.
It was organized April 19, 1876 with a membership of sixteen headed by T. M. Sinclair. For a time the association held regular meetings in the various churches in the community, but eventually the Y.M.C.A. had its own room in the "Waterhouse Block" provided by Mr. John T. Waterhouse. The Y.M.C.A. held Sabbath school and prayer meetings every Sunday afternoon in a school house located in one of the poorer districts.

The Coe Y.M.C.A. was closely affiliated with the downtown Y.M.C.A. and membership in the college organization usually meant special privileges in the city association. In due course of time, the city Y.M.C.A. had a fine gymnasium, among other assets, which was used extensively by the college members.

One other institution which began serving Cedar Rapids shortly after 1881 was the Iowa Masonic library located on First Avenue, two and a half blocks from the Coe campus. It was established by the Grand Lodge of Iowa in 1848 and led a nomadic existence until, under the care of Theodore S. Parvin, it was moved to Cedar Rapids in 1884. The editors of the Coe Cosmos repeatedly urged the college students to utilize one of the oldest and largest Masonic libraries in the country, for it was far superior to any

facilities the college could offer during its early years.

In nearly every edition of the Coe College Catalogue, the editors stressed the fact that the college was located in Cedar Rapids. In 1881 the college trustees emphasized that Cedar Rapids was a city of "good intellectual taste," and that it was a religious city containing or central to "many of the strongest churches of the Synod." In 1896 the catalogue still boasted of Cedar Rapids as a

"large, beautiful city of over 20,000 inhabitants, and most favorably located as the seat of a College. It is a railroad center, easily accessible, only a few hours either from Chicago, St. Paul, Sioux City, Omaha, Kansas City or St. Louis. It is crowded with churches and schools and moral organizations. It is a city of broad avenues and beautiful homes. In view of the above facts, and its stirring activities, life in such a city becomes a most important factor in the education of young men and women. The students, in their busy college days, need the zest that an active city throws into the routine of life, in order to make them thoughtful, practical and observing, and to hold them in sympathy with the great world which they must soon enter."28

Cedar Rapids could get along nicely without Coe College, but Coe College definitely needed Cedar Rapids.


Chapter V

Buildings, Campus and Finances

When Coe opened officially as a college on September 13, 1881, it possessed a brick building on a sandy campus located what then seemed a great distance from the center of town. The business district was clustered about First Avenue and First Street, and there was a good residence district in what is now the "loop." The college campus, located between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets on First Avenue, was considered to be cut in the country. After 1881, many people began building their homes in the college neighborhood, and the campus gradually lost its rural atmosphere.

One way to attract students to the college was to make the campus and the buildings as pleasing as possible. Certainly the students who attended Coe in its formative years came to the campus because they desired an education and not because they found the environment particularly inviting. The campus was sand and gravel without a trace of grass or flowers. It was desolate. There were sand-burrns on the western half of the campus and sand hills on the eastern half. There were a few trees, but most of the vegetation consisted of fox-tail and weeds. In fact, the
campus was considered the dreariest part of town and it compared most unfavorably with the grounds about the packing plant. The trustees and administration made periodic efforts to improve the appearance of the campus, but they did not begin a concerted program until 1888. During that year vines were planted around the Main building and carefully tended by President Marshall. One of the trustees secured trees of uniform size, six inches in diameter, and set them out at regular intervals on the parking in front of the campus. He watered and fertilized them carefully so they grew to maturity and did not die as so many of their predecessors had done. The grounds were graded in 1889, and a number of interested citizens contributed trees for the greater beauty of the campus. The soil, however, was not fertile, and it was "difficult to keep vegetation alive around the college." Nevertheless, through the persistent efforts of three or four trustees, the appearance of the campus improved markedly and by 1891 the Board was able to state that the buildings were "clean and imposing without, and beautiful and convenient within."

The grounds around the buildings no longer bear quack grass

1. The Cedar Rapids Times, September 8, 1888.
2. Alice King, Memories, 8.
3. The Cedar Rapids Times, October 10, 1889.
and sand burrs, but on the contrary, are covered with grass, growing trees, shrubbery and vines. The College lawn will compare favorably with any of the home lawns of the beautiful avenue on which the College is located, of this beautiful city—the New Haven of the West. 4

But a beautiful campus did not necessarily create a college. A student body, always a necessary ingredient for a school, was not as easily procured as a beautiful campus. Until shortly before the turn of the century, the enrollment at Coe varied greatly. The enrollment for any given year is difficult to know, for there are several discrepancies, even, in one instance, within the same catalogue. Furthermore, the catalogues sometimes gave enrollment figures in terms of departments and sometimes according to classes. For example, the catalogue for 1881-1882 listed the students by classes, thus,

"Sophomore Class....................... 3
Freshman Class.......................... 11
Prep Dept.................................. 119"

On another page, however, the enrollment is given according to department,

"Literary Department....................... 155
Art Department............................ 37
Music Department.......................... 43
Whole number of students in attendance.. 199"

Later on, in 1899, the trustees, the *Cosmos*, and the catalogue all gave different figures for the enrollment. The trustees reported that on October 10, 1899 the enrollment totaled one hundred eighty-five; the October *Cosmos* stated that the total enrollment was "about 250," and the 1899-1900 catalogue placed the number of students at two hundred eighty-six.

According to the catalogue, the enrollment for the first year was one hundred thirty-three. The second year the college claimed two hundred thirty-four students, but the third year the enrollment dropped to one hundred ninety-one. The enrollment remained at about this figure until the fall of 1888 when no junior or senior students returned to the campus. [See chapter six] There was a definite drop in the enrollment for the next several years, possibly due to the depression of 1893, and as late as 1896 the students at Coe numbered only ninety-six.

In 1897, the student body numbered one hundred thirty-five, supposedly, but the trustees reported to the Synod in October, 1898 that the enrollment of one hundred ten students for the opening day of the term was a larger

5. In an interview July 25, 1949, Dr. Charles T. Hickok stated that it was difficult to know to what extent the figures were inflated, but he knew that they were.
number than during the whole of the previous year. The catalogue claimed over two hundred students for the next three years, with a steadily increasing enrollment until 1901 when the total number of students was three hundred twenty-six.

In the autumn of 1899 one hundred fifteen of the one hundred eighty-five students were enrolled in the college proper with a minority of seventy in the preparatory department. This was a complete reversal from 1881-1882 when there were one hundred nineteen pupils in the preparatory department and just fourteen students in the sophomore and freshman classes.

One other interesting feature about the enrollment is the fact that by the turn of the century students came to Coe with the intention of staying as long as possible. They no longer left in droves at the conclusion of the first term or of the first year. The trend was toward graduation.

In 1882 the college had a new "boarding hall" for young ladies, which was named for Williston Jones, the

7. Coe College Catalogue, 1900-1901, p. 117. See also the Coe College Courier, June 4, 1901, p. 135.
8. Ibid., 1881-1882, p. 5.
9. Coe College Courier, April 24, 1900, p. 3.
paster who had established the classes which developed into Coe College. This new building, erected behind Main Hall, was built soon after the college was established, and in January of 1882 the young ladies who attended Coe but who were not residents of Cedar Rapids moved into their new abode. Williston Hall was constructed of red brick, was four stories high, and contained "twenty-five private rooms of good size, each suitable for two persons." Each room was furnished with a double bed, a husk "matress" and two very small pillows. A few years later a pine study desk and two straight back chairs were added to each room. The girls provided all other furnishings. Writing years later, one resident of Williston remembered that

"...father bought us a small chest of drawers and a small folding rocker. Our roommate brought her furniture from home. She lived near Fairfax which made it convenient for her to do so. She also brought a rag carpet for our floor, so we lived in luxury compared with some of the other rooms. When our trunks and a rented piano were added to the room, we could just move between objects and it was impossible to move things around on cleaning day." 11

The ground floor of Williston housed a kitchen and dining room which served the girls living in the hall and


the men who resided in nearby houses. Each student brought his own napkin and napkin ring from home, and the length of time the napkin was used depended upon the number that could be spared from the family linen supply or the regularity of one's laundry service.

Williston Hall was new, but it was not especially inviting. Miss Alice King, who joined the faculty as "Lady Principal" in 1886, wrote that her room in Williston was furnished with dark furniture and a cheerless kerosene lamp. The walls were covered with a dark paper, "part of which inclined to sag and drop off." Conditions had improved by 1894, however, for the catalogue stated that the rooms were "well furnished with heavy furniture, well lighted, and heated by steam supplied by the Electric Light Company of the city." This steam heat, incidentally, was something of which the college was inordinately proud. It meant that both Main and Williston could be kept at a healthy "uniform temperature" and free from the danger of

12. For the first few years after Williston was built, "carefully selected" male students were permitted to live on the fourth floor. This was until the enrollment of young women increased sufficiently to fill the hall with women only. Interview with Professor Emeritus Edward A. Ross, University of Wisconsin.

13. Taylor, Star-Clipper, October 8, 1943.

14. Alice King, Memories, p. 3.
In 1900 a veranda was added to the west end of the building which did not improve its appearance especially, but it did provide a place for the young women to "pass a few hours outdoors on warm evenings." That same summer a bathroom with hot and cold water was constructed on each floor. Prior to this time, Williston Hall had offered only bowl-and-pitcher accommodations with a single faucet on each floor. The bathrooms, then, were a great boon, for heretofore the girls had had to secure all of their hot water from kettles on the kitchen stove and lug it up to their rooms, no mean feat if one lived on the fourth floor. However, even this was preferable to cold Saturday night ablutions.

Further improvements in the hall were made in 1900 when electric lights were installed in the dining room and kitchen and corridors, and a new floor laid in the dining room. The attic was floored so that trunks might be stored there, and the store room was made over into two bedrooms for servants. In short, college officials felt that with these new improvements Williston was a "commodious and

15. Coe College Catalogue 1894-1895, p. 11.

16. Coe College Courier, September 1, 1900, p. 9.
delightful home."

Soon after the completion of Williston Hall in January, 1882, the Board of Trustees opened a subscription for the erection of an addition to Main, to cost about thirty thousand dollars. Their efforts were not immediately successful, and in August of 1883 there was a plea in the local paper for financial aid for this undertaking. "Do our citizens realize the fact that the success of Coe College is second to no other interest in the city—the extension of the C., M. & St. P. not excepted? Is there not danger, if the matter is dropped now, even temporarily, that it will be hard to revive it again?" the editor inquired, and added, "It is certainly a great mistake on the part of our wealthy citizens to let this college drag along for want of the aid they could so easily provide."

As if in reply to the article, funds were raised by the following October, and construction began the next spring. The addition to Main Hall was completed in the summer of 1884.

With the addition, Main contained "fine large classrooms, Society Halls, complete suite, of six rooms for the

17. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1900, p. 382.
19. The Cedar Rapids Times, August 13, 1883."
department of Natural Sciences, a large and cheerful Assembly Hall, and an attractive Reading Room and Library." The building was now forty feet wide and one hundred twenty feet long. The addition, like the west half, was four stories high. The catalogues consistently reported that Main was "very beautiful and attractive," but Miss King had a less favorable opinion. She wrote that the furniture in the Hall parlors was "very scanty, and inclined to totter when used, and the solitary furnishing of the entrance hall was a strip of narrow, cheap carpeting, and a lamp hanging somewhere along its dismal length."

There is no written comment of student feelings about the furnishing of Main, but there was an expressed desire for a waterpail and tin cup to be placed at a convenient spot in the hall where a thirsty student might have "free access to plenty of H₂O."

After 1884 there were no more additions to the Coe plant until the summer of 1900 when a "society hall" was erected. The enrollment fluctuated considerably in the course of that time, and college facilities, as far as room

21. King, Memories, p. 3.
22. Coe Cosmos, November, 1890, p. 3.
was concerned, did not prove inadequate until 1898. In that year, the trustees reported to the Synod that "The first day of the fall term witnessed the registration of 110 students, a larger number than were enrolled during the whole of last year, and this number has since been increased to 152. This is an increase of nearly 50 per cent." In 1898 the college made a general request for funds with which to erect a new building to meet the demands of the large increase of students. College officials were successful in raising the necessary money and Marshall Hall was completed in the fall of 1900. It was a small brick building forty by sixty feet, and two stories high. It was placed behind Main and a few yards east of Williston. Originally, it was not called "Marshall Hall," but "Society Hall," for each of the four literary societies occupied a room on the second story. The first floor was devoted to the preparatory department and contained a large assembly room, a class room, and an office for the headmaster.

Attending the "Princeton of the West" as some fond friends of the college called it in the "New Haven of the West" was not a particularly expensive undertaking.

23. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1898, 174.
24. Coe College Courier, September 1, 1900.
Tuition for three terms in 1881 was thirty-five dollars, room rent was eighteen, and board was ninety dollars. These expenses plus a fee of six dollars meant that a student could attend Coe for less than one hundred fifty dollars a year. There were, of course, extra fees for laboratory and graduation. The college recognized the fact that many students left school at the close of the winter term and therefore offered an inducement to counteract that tendency. Any student could procure a "scholarship ticket" for the three terms and save six dollars thereby. This offer was made only for one year, 1881-1882. After that, the only inducement to stay for the spring term was cheaper rent.

Students who lived in nearby towns received special consideration in that board cost two dollars and fifty cents a week, but if one boarded at Williston only from Monday noon to Friday noon, he paid just one dollar and seventy-five cents per week.

General expenses were never especially high throughout the twenty year period from 1881 to 1901, although there was a gradual increase in rates. By 1901 tuition had raised from thirty-five to thirty-seven dollars, and

26. Ibid., 1882-1883, p. 35.
room rent had increased from eighteen to twenty [or a possible sixty] dollars a year for women who lived in Williamson. Men could still live in private homes for as little as two dollars a month. Board remained at two and a half dollars a week, and meals cost just twenty cents each.

There were many part-time jobs in Cedar Rapids for those students who could not afford to pay all of their college expenses without some self-support. Indeed, in 1884 President Phelps went so far as to offer to find employment for prospective students if they would just come to Coe. "Those needing such [pecuniary] assistance are invited to correspond confidentially with the President, before deciding not to attend college. He may be able to secure it for them." Even as late as 1901 President McCormick encouraged prospective students with hopeful words about the great number of odd jobs "going begging."

During the first twenty years of its existence Coe College, for the most part, was composed of poor Presbyterian students seeking a Christian education and willing to work for it.

In many respects Coe College had many of the char-

27. Coe College Catalogue, 1900-1901, p. 87.
28. Ibid., 1884-1885, p. 44.
acteristics of the typical small college in the west; it had a small enrollment, it offered a liberal arts curricu-
lum, it was established by a church group, and its problems, for the most part, were financial. The one respect in which Coe was different was the fact that it relied upon and received its financial support from local sources rather than from the East. It is true that the original funds came from a New Yorker, and twenty years later, Mr. Ralph Voorhees of New Jersey contributed twenty-five thousand dollars to the endowment fund. But the college owed its existence to the efforts and aid of men like George Greene, T. M. Sinclair, George Douglas, C. B. Scudder, and Dr. John F. Ely. Without their aid, the college could not have been established.

Even with this generous help, there were periods when the college operated on a very narrow margin. At the close of the school year in 1881, Dr. Burkhalter stated that the trustees had used most of the income from a thirty thousand dollar endowment fund to erect "suitable buildings" [Williston Hall] and had little left for current expenses. Fortunately, a local citizen paid the president's salary for the first two years so that, at least, was one expense the trustees did not have to meet.

The following year Mr. Scuttter and the Sinclairs offered to build a chapel as a memorial to T. M. Sinclair, but since the college needed the money much more than it needed a chapel at the time, the twenty thousand dollars was set aside as part of the endowment fund until such time as the trustees wished to construct the chapel. The chapel was not built until 1911.

In 1884 the financial secretary announced that although all of the money for an addition to Main building had been subscribed, the college still needed about five thousand dollars to furnish it, and also needed a "complete chemical apparatus" as well as a "complete mathematical outfit." He added that an endowment of the president's chair and for two professors' chairs would secure a "much-needed relief." Several months later the trustees appointed the Reverend Phelps, C. E. Scuttter, and S. L. Dows a committee of three to raise the five thousand dollars so that Main Hall might be furnished and heated. There is no record of their success, but they were not complete failures if for no other reason than that Mr. John T. Waterhouse donated a thousand dollars to Coe in one generous gesture.

32. The Cedar Rapids Times, March 20, 1884.
33. Ibid., September 19, 1884.
Considering the fact that Coe College was under the care of the Synod, it received rather little aid from the Presbyterian Church. In 1883 the Synod did recommend to the Board of Aid to Colleges that three thousand dollars be donated to Coe to assist in meeting the current expenses. 34

How much rivalry for support from the church existed among the three Presbyterian colleges in the state would be difficult to say. Coe did not receive any direct aid from the Synod or the Presbytery with the exception of the single recommendation for three thousand dollars. Parsons College in Fairfield and Lenox College in Hopkinton received considerably more help, but they needed it more than did Coe, poor as Coe was. In 1889 Coe's real estate value was estimated to be sixty thousand dollars, and its productive endowment was seventy thousand, whereas Lenox had real estate estimated to be worth just fourteen thousand dollars and a productive endowment of only ten thousand. Parsons did have an estimated real estate value of sixty-five thousand dollars but its productive endowment of forty-five thousand dollars was less than that of Coe. 35

A big effort to raise a fifty thousand dollar endowment fund for Coe was made in January, 1892 under the

34. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1883, p. 68.
auspices of five of the most prominent business men of Cedar Rapids. A large banquet in Wilston Hall initiated the drive and, possibly under the influence of a good dinner, more than twenty-seven thousand dollars was pledged to the fund in one evening. Although the panic of 1893 was blamed for preventing the complete success of this project, the trustees did make an optimistic report to the Synod in October, 1893.

"The many improvements are furnished by funds raised especially for the object needed by gifts from generous friends of the College. While the College is beyond the point of anxiety as to its future, yet it needs money. It has nearly $100,000 as endowment. It has about $50,000 worth of real estate in city lots to sell; $20,000 are left to the College of the O. N. Hull estate; $20,000 are on interest for a memorial building; $29,000 subscriptions are bringing an annual interest, and the balance of the $50,000 would have been raised this season had the money stringency not interfered. With its ten acre campus and well equipped building, the future of the College is bright and secure." 37

The college continued to ask for money for one purpose or another and the editors of the local papers always supported the requests. In 1884 the editor of the Times wrote that while the business interests of the city should be supported, these were not more important nor would they aid more in the future development and prosperity of Cedar


37. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1893, p. 142.
Rapids than would the "building up of Coe College into a strong, healthy, active, progressive educational institution."  The editor of the Republican printed a strong editorial in 1900:

"But the time has arrived when strenuous efforts must be made with a view to putting the institution upon a solid financial basis. To this work the trustees and the president intend to address themselves immediately. The place to begin this work is at home, and the purpose of this article is to again call the attention of the people of Cedar Rapids to what would seem to be their duty in the premises.

Coe College is one of the institutions of which we ought to be proud, and in whose future we ought to be interested. Coe College is worth a great deal to Cedar Rapids in a financial sense, and the value of its influence ethically and intellectually is still greater. It ought to be made one of the substantial conservative educational institutions of this splendid state. Those who have the interests of the institution most nearly at heart are not ambitious to build up a great university, but simply to make Coe College one of the best 'small colleges' so-called in the country."  

And the citizens of Cedar Rapids did support the college. Sometimes the gifts were very large, like those of the Sinclairs, the Douglasses, the Greens, and the Scutters; sometimes they were quite small. About thirty men contributed a thousand dollars to the college in 1895, 

38. The Cedar Rapids Times, June 19, 1884.

and, in that same year, three different churches gave from ten to twenty-three dollars apiece for books for the college library. The gifts were small, but the community approval they represented was important.

In 1900 the trustees decided that in recognition of its approaching fiftieth anniversary as an institution, the college should seek an additional endowment of two hundred thousand dollars. This amount was later reduced to one hundred fifty thousand dollars, and was finally completely raised, but not until 1905. The president and trustees felt the additional endowment was necessary since the college had little income-producing endowment, and eight or ten thousand dollars had to be raised every year by subscription to meet the current expenses. The underlying theme for this drive, as for all others, was "Let every citizen of Cedar Rapids, and every friend of Christian education respond to this appeal at once and do what he can to place this College upon a strong financial foundation."

In addition to monetary gifts, the college officials were continuously soliciting and receiving other donations. The college maintained a museum, a library,

40. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1895, pp. 320-321.
41. Coe College Courier, October, 1901, p. 2.
and a laboratory which were the most frequent recipients of a wide variety of gifts. The museum had a large natural science exhibit and a geological collection of about two thousand specimens of fossils and minerals. There was also a zoological collection which contained over one hundred species of mounted birds, a collection of marine invertebrates, a botanical collection, and an archaeological exhibit. Friends of the college were continually adding to the museum with gifts that included such choice items as a shark's tooth, a cannon ball from the Cortez expedition, a Persian table, and a French Huguenot Bible. There were other gifts, of course, but these were typical; some were very lovely or valuable; some were just dust-catchers.

The library was small and sadly in need of generous friends. John S. Ely was the library's most loyal supporter, for he kept it supplied with subscriptions to the North American Review, the Forum, the Cosmopolitan, the Century, and several newspapers. In spite of the Ely gift, however, the library continued to be inadequate, and students were frequently urged to go to the Masonic Library where Theodore S. Parvin presided, or to the newer public library

42. Coe College Catalogue, 1889-1890, p. 10.

43. Ibid., 1895-1896, p. 12.
downtown.

The chemical laboratory contained a "Bunsen furnace, a 50 c.m.m. endiometer, a Pepy's gas-holder, a set of measuring flasks, a set of pipettes, and 1 [one] lunge nitrometer, among other things." Various gifts presented to the laboratory were "twenty 4 oz. reagent bottles for each student's desk, 100 2 lb tincture bottles, 16 Mohr's burettes, 12 Bunsen burners, 12 test tube racks and 12 ring stands" and a host of other equipment.

Friends of the college were generous and if the college received shark's teeth and cannon balls, it also received carpeting for the president's office and a baby grand piano. Through the efforts of the trustees and other Cedar Rapids friends, the physical plant of the college slowly expanded as the demands of the students were expressed and as the conveniences of the times were developed.

44. Coe College Cosmos, January, 1897, p. 47.
46. Ibid., pp. 38-41.
Chapter VI

Student Activities

During the first fifty years of its existence as an institution, Coe College did not have an exceptional plant, an imposing endowment, or a remarkable faculty. It did possess, however, an activity program sufficiently broad to keep even the liveliest student busy and interested.

Literary societies played the highly important role on the Coe campus that they did on so many other college campuses during the latter half of the century. On many campuses the literary society was the only extra-curricular activity sponsored by the school. The society was therefore not only a means of fellowship, but also the major outlet for student expression. And so the societies became increasingly important and fathered many a project. The ostensible purpose for such a group was to further the literary interests of its members, but this activity was soon expanded to include debates, original oratory, public lectures, and the establishment of libraries and literary

1. The early catalogues for Ripon, Beloit, Lawrence, and Carroll Colleges mention the literary society as the only student organization. In most of these schools, however, soon after the advent of the literary society, a Christian Association or Missionary Society was also established.
magazines.

Alpha Nu was the first literary society at Coe. It was organized in January, 1882 for the men on campus. Within the next year a group of young women formed a similar organization and named their society after Mr. T. M. Sinclair, a Coe patron who had died in 1881. In 1885, a second society for men, the Olios, was established, but another group for the women was not formed until nine years later. This was the Carleton Society.

The general purpose of a society was to provide experience in declamation, composition, oratory, debate, parliamentary tactics, presiding over assemblies, keeping minutes, keeping accounts, and managing funds. The officers of a given society varied somewhat, but in general they included a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, critic, and curator. Some societies also had a chaplain and a "prosecuting attorney."

The activities of a literary society at Coe included weekly meetings, usually held on Friday evening, "publics" held at stated intervals, parties, graduating exercises, and, later on, banquets. Students placed great

3. Ibid., 1891, p. 19.
stress on debates and orations and exhibited their talents for forensics in frequent programs open to the public. These were held at announced times in the college assembly hall or in the society's room. Originally, the "public" was held once a year in the assembly hall, but by 1891 each society gave an open program at least once a month. On occasion, the scheduling of the programs created a serious problem as an article in the Cosmos bears witness:

"There have been some very disagreeable remarks made recently concerning the Ladies' Literary Society. [Sinclair]. If they come from a member of the Alpha Nu society, we have nothing to say, for they have held to the bargain which was made early in the term, namely that open programs should be given once in three weeks by each society in regular rotation. The Sinclairs have attempted to do the same, but owing to the fact that the Olios persisted in giving their programs once in two weeks have been obliged to retire or else produce a conflict. We appeal to your chivalry, gentlemen!"

In a "public" program, a society presented its choicest talent in oration, poem, music, and debate. The assembly hall was usually full and the programs were followed with interest by the citizens of Cedar Rapids.

Debating was one of the principal activities of the literary society and an intense interest was taken in inter-

5. Coe Cosmos, November, 1891, p. 5.
society debates. Sometimes one group informally challenged
another, and at other times an organized inter-society
debate tournament was held. Debate topics were of a seri-
ous nature and included such questions as "Whether the
future greatness of the State of Iowa shall depend on its
agriculture, or on its manufactories," and "Resolved, That
the Interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine should be so ex-
tended as to permit the United States to interfere to com-
pel arbitration between the South American Republics."
In such tournaments, a man and a woman from two societies
would meet representatives of the other two societies.
The Alpha Nus were considered the "brothers" of the Sin-
clairs, and the Olios of the Carletons, and they usually
deleted together as teams. The debates were always spirit-
ed affairs and on a few occasions almost ended in fists-
cuffs. They were a splendid discipline, in any event, and
made the shyest student capable of speaking well extem-
poraneously.

Frequently, in order to raise money, the liter-
ary society presented professional talent either on the cam-
pus or, on occasion, in Greene's Opera House. The imported

7. Coe College Courier, March 19, 1901, p. 115,
and Coe Cosmos, January, 1900, p. 20.

8. Interview with Mr. Edward A. Ross, Professor
Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, October 26, 1949.
talent usually offered dramatic readings, a lecture, or a musical program. Members of the society interspersed their own talent throughout the course of the evening.

Every spring every society had a "graduating exercise" for its senior members. These programs were highlights of the spring calendar and were consistently well attended. The order of the evening included an invocation by a member of the faculty, music by members of the society, recitations, orations, essays, and solos by the departing seniors, and "presentation of diplomas" by another faculty member. Even though different students participated in the program with each passing year, the content of the programs did not change.

The banquets, also held in the spring, were strictly private affairs, usually held in the home of a Cedar Rapids member, and were highlighted by their fellowship, their food, and their toasts. These were always sentimental events, the climax of the year for society members.

Before the construction of Marshall Hall, the societies were housed in various rooms about the campus, usually not the largest or the most desirable. However, with the completion of Marshall, each society had its own room

10. Coe College Courier, May 21, 1901, pp. 120-121.
on the second floor. The members decorated these rooms in any manner they desired. Hence the Sinclairs carried out their color scheme of scarlet and white by enameling the woodwork and painting the walls white, and purchasing deep scarlet draperies and carpet. The furniture was a "dark cherry." The Olios bought new oak furniture for their hall and three and a half dozen cane-bottom chairs. The Carletons decorated their room in various shades of brown and were highly pleased with the general effect.

There was much rivalry between the various societies, and at one time the editor of the *Cosmos* felt moved to comment that "after you have done your best in rehearsing the merits of your society, and your words seem of no avail, cease urging and allow your rival society to be the gainer. And above all, do not ignore your friend for the choice he has made. Friends and acquaintances are too precious to be sacrificed for such a petty disagreement."  

Many of the Coe men participated actively in debate and oratory throughout the years they were in college. Women were equally interested, but played a lesser role. As early as 1894 there was a State Oratorical Association which sponsored inter-collegiate contests. With the

prospect of attending the state contest as an incentive, the Coe Oratorical Association held an annual home contest to decide upon a representative to the state affair. By 1891 the Bever Oratorical Prize Contest had assumed an important place on the campus calendar and subject titles were posted early in January for the spring event. There was a wide variety of titles from which to choose, including "The power of the great poet," "New England influences in the Mississippi valley," and "Oh, Liberty! What crimes are committed in thy name!"

The editors of the *Cosmos* were consistently earnest supporters of the oratorical contests and frequently printed a given oration in full. There was always a complete account of the state oratorical contests regardless of whether Coe's representative placed or not. Usually, in the accounts of local oratorical contests, the *Cosmos* editor had kind words for effort, if not for achievement. However, one young *Cosmos* critic felt that even the efforts of one "noble Senior" were unworthy of any praise whatsoever. He wrote,

"His subject, 'Saxon Literature,' is a mild enough subject, and certainly did not call for any extraordinary display of emotion; but

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in two minutes from commencement, he was roaring as if in the greatest passion. He routed the echoes from their corners (which the previous speakers for the most part had left in undisturbed repose) and corralled them all in the center of the room, where he kept stirring them up occasionally when he came to important passages in his essay."

Debate, both intra-society and inter-society, had held a large place in the student activity program ever since 1882 when the first literary society was formed. But an intercollegiate debating league was not organized until 1900, and the first inter-collegiate debate in which Coe students participated did not occur until February or March of 1901. This was a debate with Parsons College which Coe won "due to," a Cosmos reporter stated, "prepared speeches...and team work."

Speech activities have always played an important part in student life at Coe and for years were the chief means of self-expression for the student. Curiously enough, however, there was not any effort to coordinate the debates and the orations with the classwork. Nevertheless, these forensics were important not only for the possible prestige they offered, but also because of the discipline, sportsmanship, and self-expression which they provided.

A lecture series early became a part of the activities at Coe. The first series of lectures was inaugurated

in the winter of 1881. These lectures were delivered by citizens of Cedar Rapids and neighboring communities on various topics pertaining to law, medicine, and theology. These were for the especial benefit of the students, but townsmen were welcome to attend. President Marshall began the series of lectures, but they continued to be a part of the Coe calendar until long after his death, for President McCormick, successor to Marshall, supported them, too. Students were required to take examinations over the lectures, so, willingly or not, they heard talks on "Early Iowa," "Nutrition and Waste," "Business," and "Northern Italy, with Stereoptican Views."

College officials felt that these lectures were very valuable, for, "Audiences of students cannot listen to the best thoughts of experienced men and not have their education broadened and their appreciation greatly increased. The College is brought thereby into contact with representative men whose interest deepens in higher education, as they examine the working of the institution." Thus, the college flattered local men by inviting them to lecture and at the same time provided some useful information for

18. Ibid., 1894-1895, p. 23.
the student body.

The faithful reporter of all college events, both great and small, was the *Coe Cosmos*. It was a monthly magazine which included editorials, literary articles, copies of orations and essays presented by the students on different occasions, alumni notes, sports news, a Christian Association column, and innumerable "local" bits of news concerning the faculty and student body.

The first issue of the *Cosmos* was published in the autumn of 1890, and there were nine or ten issues a year, depending upon the ambition of the editor in the fall. Regardless of the number of issues, however, the subscription was always one dollar. Miss Alice King, professor of English and history, christened the paper.

Two columns, "Local" and "Personal," gave an intimate family air to the periodical. In these columns were items containing the news that "Mrs. Bryant, while on her way home from the Women's Synodical meeting, visited her son George," and added that George had been "happy ever since;" a note to the effect that "One of our most delicate Seniors took a swim in Cedar Lake recently. He did it with his skates on;" [this was in March], and the comment, "Rudyard

19. King, Memories, p. 5. Miss King stated that the *Cosmos* was first issued in 1892; she was in error, for the Coe Library possesses a complete file for the year 1890-1891.
Kipling and his writings are the latest. Have you read any of them?"

The editors of the *Cosmos* always set forth high standards for student conduct and thinking. For example, one editorial criticized the "chronic grumbler," another editorial quoted an article by Dr. Thwing, president of Adelbert College in Cleveland, Ohio which praised the value of a college education; a third editorial urged the student not to neglect outdoor exercise since recreation was important to good health.

Subject matter for editorials was not limited to one locale. In one issue in 1896 the editor urged all Christendom to unite to stop the Turks and give to Armenia the "religious liberty which is her right," advised the freshmen to get the most out of college life by joining several activities, and commiserated with the Spanish who were dying of fever in Cuba.

The editor of the *Cosmos* for 1897-1899 could be as passionate about cheating in examinations as about capital punishment. He was also vehement about the enthronement of reason. His editorials were similar to those printed

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in the Cosmos throughout that decade.

"The earnest inquirer after truth hears but little today of the sovereign grace of God and His eternal virtues, but instead is compelled to listen to the meaningless and impious boasting of self. The personality of God is obliterated by the bombastic blast of the ego and man is glorified while his Maker is forgotten. How long shall this evil be tolerated? There is but one remedy, viz; Self and selfish interest must be forgotten and man must reverently search the Word of Life and there at the feet of the Great Teacher 'buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction and understanding.' 23

Athletics were another activity on the Coe campus, but here, as on other small midwestern campuses, athletics did not assume a major role until after the turn of the century. Baseball and football became popular in the Middle West in the seventies and eighties, track events were widely adopted about 1900, and basketball, not invented until 1892, was firmly established in the Midwest by 1896.

In the decade of the eighties there was no inter-collegiate competition so far as Coe was concerned. The students "took their exercises in friendly games of tennis or ball without the competition and system of organization." 24 By 1891 Coe still did not have a proper athletic field, but that year did witness the organization of the

24. King, Memories, p. 9.
first football team. The general attitude of Coe officials was expressed by President Marshall in an annual report:

"We are not without athletics. Football and base-ball seem adjuncts of living colleges. The College teams practice, they challenge, they contest, they are beaten and they beat. But defeat inspires to closer practice, and keeps our athletes humble and willing to exercise on our fine athletic grounds for the sole benefit of their health." 25

The president's lack of enthusiasm about football was shared by the parents of the participating students. In 1896 it was necessary to cancel the game with Cornell College because parental objections to "'the most barbarous of all games'" were sufficiently urgent to cause the team to disband.

By 1899, however, the pendulum had swung in the other direction, and at least twenty-two men came out for football, and, moreover, they trained. Their record that season was not particularly impressive, but President McCormick was proud of them because they had played a pure and gentlemanly game that, he felt, reflected credit upon the college. The following year a college sweater of crimson was adopted for those men who had participated in inter-collegiate contests representing Coe. The athletic

25. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1893, p. 143.
board, however, reserved the right to refuse the privilege to any member who proved himself unworthy of the honor by his conduct on the field.

The first decade of football on the Coe campus was not auspicious. Coe teams met the team of Cornell College, Iowa State Teachers College, Loras College, Western College, Luther College, and the second team from Iowa State University. Sometimes Coe won, but more frequently it did not, and only the student body seemed to care one way or the other. Sportsmanship was not always displayed by either the officials or the players; Cosmos sportswriters frequently berated the officials far more than the poor playing of either team.

Although Beloit College had a baseball team as early as 1867, most small colleges in the Midwest did not take a serious interest in the game until the eighties. Coe students were not enthusiastic about the game until 1900 when the team won "a good proportion" of its baseball games.

Track events at Coe, as elsewhere in the Middle West, became popular at the turn of the century. There was no inter-collegiate competition in track and field events.

28. Coe College Courier, April 24, 1900, p. 5. The college colors of crimson and gold had been selected by Mrs. Marshall a few years earlier.

until 1900 when the Iowa Intercollegiate Track Union was organized in Cedar Rapids. Coe, Lenox, Western, and Des Moines College were the charter members of the organization. The first meet of the Union was held on the Coe field in May of that year. The Coe track team was highly successful in its second year of existence, for it won both the Union meet and a dual meet with Cornell. Coe men excelled in bicycle races, the quarter and half mile races, and the one hundred yard dash.

Probably the best athletic event of the year was not an inter-collegiate contest at all, but a game between the seniors and the faculty which the former won by just one point. The sports-editor commented,

"Although the greater number of the Faculty have never played ball, at least for a number of years, they evinced a lightness of foot and a scientific knowledge of base ball that was an eye-opener to the undergraduates, and came...near [to] defeating our beloved Seniors....While the Faculty did not possess a uniformity of costume, they appeared arrayed in sweaters, caps, belts, etc., in a manner that showed they were out for blood."

The fieldhouse was the climax to more than ten years' agitation to procure proper athletic facilities for the college. In 1891 there was an article in the Coe Cosmos which advertised the need and the desirability of an

30. Coe College Courier. June 4, 1901, pp. 139-140.
"out-door gym" on the Coe campus. An "Athletic Park" which would contain "a good running track, two or three tennis courts, vaulting and horizontal bar, jumping and pole vaulting, solid shot for throwing, hammer for throwing, [and] base balls would be highly desirable. The next year President Marshall reported that various business men of the city had subscribed liberally so that the athletic grounds might be graded. Once graded, the ground was prepared for a track, a baseball diamond, and a football field.

Possessing the playing fields, however, was not enough, for the athletic association lost money whenever it had a visiting team since there was no fence, and spectators could view the contests without paying an admission charge. A fence was finally erected, but only after many complaints from the students, for the trustees felt that a board fence did not add to the appearance of the campus.

32. In November, 1890, the editor of the Cosmos wrote, "The question of athletic grounds has been referred to the building committee, where it will probably remain for some time."

33. Cos Cosmos, April, 1891, p. 10.

34. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1892, p. 57, Coe Cosmos, October, 1892, p. 4.

35. Beloit College had a similar problem. Without a fence, the college authorities found it necessary to employ a number of policemen to keep the "deadheads" from swelling the crowd. Edward Dwight Eaton, Historical Sketches of Beloit College (New York, 1926), p. 124.
Slowly the athletic field was improved so that by 1901 there was a good track "carefully laid out and...on a dead level at the inner curb all the way around. The curves...laid with a generous radius and the banking on the curves...good." The football field was leveled and one tree which stood on the right field foul line was finally cut down. Both the football and baseball fields were placed completely within the track. Formerly, the track had intersected the gridiron in three places and it was ruined every autumn by the football squad. By 1901 the college had tennis courts which were "the finest in the state," and were popular throughout the summer as well as during the school year.

The new success and interest in the teams was manifested in the erection of an athletic fieldhouse in 1900. This was the gift of Mr. C. B. Soutter, a loyal and generous friend of the college. It was a small, one-story frame building placed near Williston Hall and close to the athletic field which occupied a large part of the remainder of the campus. The Board, in an annual report, stated that the fieldhouse was "beautiful in architecture and complete in every detail." The fieldhouse was thirty

36. Coe College Courier, September, 1901, p. 25.
38. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1900, p. 382.
feet square and had a large veranda facing the athletic grounds. Facilities included showers, toilets, and lockers for both the Coe players and the visiting teams. The floor was concrete and the walls were rough weather-boarding. It was the only building of its kind in the state.

Only gradually did athletics gain support at Coe. The administration seemed to agree with President Bascom of the University of Wisconsin who doubted "whether organized athletics of a competitive nature was likely to promote 'symmetrical mastery of the whole man'." However, through the generosity of Cedar Rapids citizens and the insistence of students and alumni, the college acquired an athletic field and a fieldhouse. Although Coe began to produce teams that, on occasion, were better than mediocre, athletics did not enjoy the prestige and acclaim during the first twenty years of the college history that they were to attain later on.

A record was kept of scholarship and general conduct. A detailed system of excuses and demerits was organized and after a student was unfortunate enough to receive four demerits, he was suspended from all college privileges until "satisfactory amends" were made. In the early years

39. Coe College Courier, September 1, 1900, Coe College Catalogue, 1900-1901, p. 71.

of the college, particularly, there were many irresponsible young people in attendance and the faculty had to establish a reputation for not allowing certain practices. Frequently, faculty meetings were completely devoted to a discussion of discipline problems. The faculty had the right to ask any student to leave the campus whose habits of drinking, gambling, profanity or generally improper conduct were incompatible with the welfare of the college.

The administration was particular about the deportment of the young ladies living in Williston Hall. The girls were permitted to receive callers only on Friday and Saturday evenings insofar as possible, and no calls whatsoever were made on the Sabbath. However, as one young lady remarked in later years, "But it receiving a caller hardly seemed worth the effort unless it was an especial occasion. It was much easier for the girl to go out for a walk after the evening meal and the boy to do the same, and maybe walk right into each other's arms."

The students were carefully supervised in other ways, too. All telegrams were directed to the president of the college or to the "lady principal," and the president was the only one with sufficient authority to permit a student


42. Ella C. Taylor, Traer Star Clipper (Iowa), October 8, 1948.
to leave town during the term. Parents of town students were requested to enforce college study hours in their own homes insofar as possible, and under no circumstances were social meetings of any kind to be permitted during the week.

The printed regulations in the catalogue make the college appear very austere and proper; actually, however, there were as many good times and as many improper occurrences as are present on the campus today. To illustrate, the girls were supposed to be in their rooms after ten o'clock on week-end nights. In practice, however, it was frequently possible to waken a roommate by throwing a small stone against the window and persuading her to unlock the front door. Similarly, the girls found frequent occasion to steal down to the kitchen to appropriate sugar for midnight feasts or to have equally forbidden slumber parties with numerous girls sleeping in one room. In the words of Professor Ross, there were "just as many pretty girls and just as many girls willing to raise cain then as today."

The men attending Coe were deprived of the pleasure of breaking dormitory rules since there was no men's hall, but they did find much enjoyment in harassing the members.

43. Coe College Catalogue, 1894-1895, pp. 42, 44.
44. Taylor, Star Clipper, October 8, 1948.
of another class. Throughout the eighties and the nineties there was much class rivalry, particularly between the freshmen and the sophomores. On one occasion, the freshmen had gathered for a hayrack party. Theoretically, the first class parties of the year were a secret from the rest of the student body, but in actual practice, the members of the other classes usually managed to intrude upon the proceedings. For this particular party, the sophomores and seniors descended upon the freshmen and there was a lively scrimmage with the freshmen defending themselves with "canes approximating in size to telephone poles." The upperclassmen were beaten back, but not until they had captured a lonely freshman. However, a big senior kindly returned him to his fellows once he had made a speech which amused the upperclassmen who "howled like a menagerie."

Another time, the sophomores succeeded in interrupting a freshman class meeting even though the door had been barricaded, and there was quite a skirmish until members of the faculty appeared.


46. Ibid., October, 1900, p. 3. In 1884, during the administration of President Phelps, a similar struggle, this time between the Democrats and the Republicans, occurred on the roof of "Old Main." The good Reverend Phelps attempted to stop the whole affair, but he was pushed gently aside by the boys who loved him and they went lustily on with their fight. Fortunately, no bones
By 1899, hazing had reached sufficiently great proportions that the editor of the *Cosmos* bemoaned the fact:

"There has been a good deal of this kind of thing [hazing and class fights] at Coe this year and we have heard the remark that, as Coe grows, more of the 'horse-play' must be tolerated. We trust that this statement will prove false, and believe that every student will see to it that he takes no part in such things. And by discarding this practice Coe will have taken another step toward her goal—the attainment to the rank of America's best colleges."47

If there was much rivalry between classes, there was an equal amount of camaraderie within the ranks of one class, on the other hand. The bonds among the members of a class were close and there was much social activity within a given group. In token of this class spirit, the class of 1887 began the custom of leaving a class memorial.

The juniors were the "sister class" of the freshmen, and the seniors of the sophomores. In accordance with this idea of 1891, the juniors invited the freshmen, class of 1895, to a reception in the latter's honor. Then, since the freshmen were uncertain about the proper response,

46. (Cont'd) were broken, probably due to the intercession of Mr. Phelps who had influence with the Lord, if not with the boys. Interview with Dr. Alfred Meyer, professor of physics, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, May, 1948.

47. *Coe Cosmos*, December, 1899, p. 11.

48. *King*, Memories, 7. The first memorial was a boulder placed near Main Hall.
the juniors called a class meeting of the freshmen and gave them full instruction on correct conduct. The juniors also frequently lent their support to the freshmen in their struggles with the sophomores and thus proved themselves a help to the younger students physically as well as socially.

By and large, class rivalry was a healthy situation, but in 1887, a new antagonism developed which superseded all class affairs and was far more serious. In September of 1887 the Reverend James Marshall came to the campus as the new president of Coe, the successor of the Reverend Phelps. Marshall came from the East where the tradition of coeducation was not well established, and he caused immediate dislike by announcing early in the fall that co-education at Coe meant only that the men and women were permitted to recite in the same classes. "No social affair was to be permitted beyond that." Logically enough, he succeeded in irritating all of the students, who were used to a great deal of easy social intercourse between the sexes. As a matter of fact, the discipline of President Phelps had been so lax at times as to be non-existent. Under him, the students were excessively noisy in the

49. Coe Cosmos, October, 1891, p. 11.

library, the halls, and the classrooms. According to some students, the new discipline of President Marshall was highly desirable, but the application was completely without tact. As a result of Marshall's new rules, three of the men students "swiped" the bell rung to call classes together. At Hallowe'en, the upperclass men hanged President Marshall in effigy on a line strung across First Avenue, the principal thoroughfare of Cedar Rapids. After that, the situation became increasingly critical until the men in the college classes wrote a letter to the Board of Trustees to call attention to the state of affairs that existed between them and the president. For this impertinence, the faculty expelled all of the men in the college except the freshmen who were deemed too young to be responsible for their actions. The Board of Trustees met very soon thereafter, for such drastic action on the part of the faculty was apt to lead to complete disaster for the college. The Board tactfully sustained the action of the faculty and then "recommended" to them that the penalty of expulsion be changed to suspension for four of the six offenders, and the faculty dutifully complied. However, only one of the culprits returned to the campus. He was a

51. Charles F. Clark, "The Missing Classes." See also the faculty minutes for April 11, 1908. There were six men expelled, two seniors, one junior, and three sophomores, and one young man was indefinitely suspended.
senior who desired his degree. Since the other students, including the women, did not go back, there was no junior or senior class the next September, and hence there is no class of 1889 or 1890 in the annals of the college. The sophomores who did return to school in the fall of 1888 immediately began to wear the Prince Albert coat, tall silk hat, and to carry a cane, all ordinarily considered the mark of the senior class, but now assumed by the sophomores as a perogative of their seniority status.

Not all of the activities of the students created such serious problems, of course. Their fun varied from filling gas pipes in the laboratory with water to holding a highly successful and thoroughly approved reception for Miss King when she came to the campus in 1886 as "Lady Principal" of Williston Hall. The dormitory was the scene of many social occasions, and, more than once, the girls entertained a victorious football team with an oyster supper as a reward for their efforts. The student body,

52. Charles F. Clark, "The Missing Classes." The mass exodus was not unique at Coe. Between 1765 and 1830 there were four student rebellions at Harvard; in 1808 about half the students were expelled from Princeton, and in the latter part of the last century a State university expelled an entire senior class. Earlier, there had been a mass exodus from Williams to Amherst. See Hall, "Student Customs" in American Antiquarian Society Proceedings, n.s., 14:107.

on the whole, thoroughly enjoyed pep rallies, football suppers, and the annual Washington birthday programs. There were those, however, who preferred to frequent a neighboring grocery store where they drew matches for "treats" and had "a little sport generally." It was not considered good taste, however, to take the college girls over there and "fill them up with peanuts and candy, moistened with pop."

With rather few exceptions, student life at Coe developed along the same pattern evident at other midwestern colleges during the last score of years in the nineteenth century. Oratory and debate, literary societies, and athletics developed with equal importance in most of these schools and rarely was there anything completely original on any campus.

54. Coe Cosmos, November, 1896, p. 21, December, 1896, p. 15, June, 1900, p. 34, April, 1891, p. 11.
Chapter VII

Religious Activities at Coe

From the day of its establishment to the first World War Coe College was definitely a religious school, and a highly orthodox one at that. In some respects it is rather difficult to separate the spiritual from the intellectual aspects of the college, for in many instances the one becomes the other. This is quite a logical and natural situation, for Coe was established for the primary purpose of training men and women for Christian service. Local church leaders supported the college because they felt that if the Presbyterian Church were to flourish in Iowa in the future, there would have to be a place that would encourage young men to enter the ministry, and that would prepare them properly for seminary training. A college such as Coe would develop a strong and educated laity for the Presbyterians as well as providing the necessary leadership.

1. Interview with Dr. and Mrs. Charles Hickok, July 25, 1949.

2. E. R. Burkhalter, a report on the future of Presbyterianism in Iowa included in the minutes of the Synod, October, 1887, pp. 90-91.
"A true college is a center of wisdom and piety." might well have been the motto of the Coe faculty and trustees. The college officials frequently professed that Coe was not sectarian, but certainly there was a decided Christian atmosphere about the campus. In a report to the Synod in 1891 President Marshall stated the aims of the trustees:

"We try in many ways to create, to cultivate, to develop the Christian manhood in life. Students hold to the theology of their homes, if they have them. We accentuate no church society, but always in all exercises try to impress on formative minds the value of Christian faith for the perfection of human character...Coe College is Christian in all its requirements. But students are not all saints. They harden in college as in the full world, and lapse from Christian habits as at their homes. Many, however, are saved.... Our work is to train and inspire."  

In keeping with this premise, the college, from the outset, required students to attend daily devotional exercises in the chapel and to attend the church of their parents' choice every Sunday. In addition, vesper services were held every Sabbath which the students were also expected to attend. There was a prayer meeting on Thursday evening for those who wished to go. These

3. Cedar Rapids Daily Republican, October 2, 1892.
Thursday evening prayer meetings were consistently well attended throughout the years. Miss King spoke of them as an influential factor in college life "where all came together in such a gracious, helpful way."

Religious exercises at Coe did not end with vespers, church, and prayer meeting. One of the important days of the year was the "Day of Prayer," usually held in January. This custom was started by President Phelps, and continued by President Marshall, but it was President McCormick who set aside an entire day for prayer. This day was usually preceded by group prayer meetings held for several days before the day itself. The students took this day of prayer very seriously and for many it was a time of decision to go into the ministry or the mission field or some other phase of Christian education. During one college meeting on the Day of Prayer there were "confessions of sin and shortcoming, resolutions for amendment in the future, requests for the prayers of fellow students...open confessions of Christ on the part of some who had not been his professed followers." Today the College has a

6. King, Memories, 10.
7. Ibid., 10.
8. Interview with Dr. and Mrs. Hickok.
"Spiritual Emphasis Week" on its calendar, but that week cannot compare to the day of prayer of fifty years ago. Of course, in those days, the majority of Coe students came from homes where morning worship and faithful church attendance were an established part of the family routine, and it was not difficult, as a result, to create enthusiasm for prayer meetings on campus.

Two groups that were very active on campus were the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. The Y.M.C.A. was organized during the first year of the college and the Y.W.C.A. a short time later. In 1887 the Y.W.C.A. was completely reorganized, all its debts cancelled, and its connection with the state and national associations definitely established.

In addition to the Thursday evening prayer meetings sponsored by the college, the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. held prayer meetings on Tuesday and Thursday noons. Men and women held separate meetings. These noon meetings were held until well after 1901, but were, apparently, not as popular as the Thursday evening meetings. Many of the students, men particularly, worked for their meals off campus and attending the noon prayer meeting meant forgoing dinner. As a matter of fact, the editor of the Cosmos recognized this situation, but failed to offer a satisfactory solution to a hungry boy when he wrote,


11. King, Memories, 5.
"You are willing to take the testimony of fellow students about other matters and why will you not believe their word that these meetings are a source of strength to them and will be so to you if such is your desire. What does a warm dinner amount to in comparison to your influence over your classmate?"

In addition to the noon prayer meetings, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. frequently took charge of the Thursday evening prayer meeting. Early in their history, the associations held daily prayer services, but these seem to have been discontinued by 1890. The Y.W.C.A. believed in parties as well as in prayer meetings, and held them at frequent intervals, but it extended its influence primarily through the latter agency.

The Y.M.C.A. on campus worked closely with the city association, and Coe men, for a special membership fee of five dollars, were granted the use of the facilities of the downtown group. These included, in time, the use of a reading room, gymnasium, and a swimming tank.

Both the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. held regular meetings and had active memberships. Every so often Cosmos reporters noted that various students had attended a state convention, that one association or the other had had a particularly fine speaker, or was having unusually interesting Bible classes. The Y.M.C.A. also endeavored to

13. Coe College Catalogue, 1884-1885, p. 44.
find employment in town for indigent college men.

Students, under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., were active in missionary work and especially interested in the Cedar Rapids field, such as it was. Their interest in mission work began sometime in 1886 with a mission Sabbath School held in the chapel. This proved so successful that "regular preaching" was requested by those attending, and, of course, supplied. This Sunday School, originally sponsored by the young men of the college for underprivileged children, became the nucleus for the "Sunshine Mission," now a downtown neighborhood house established a number of years later. Coe students had charge of the service there two Sunday evenings a month. One student usually conducted the service with the aid of several others who gave special music or presented short talks. "Coe night" was popular at the Mission. The college administration smiled upon this kind of work, for it promoted the spirit that would encourage young men to enter the ministry, the goal set forth by Dr. Burkhalter.

14. See the Coe Cosmos for March, 1891, p. 14 and for December, 1892, pp. 8-11, passim. See also the Coe College Courier, September 1, 1900, pp. 11-12.

15. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1886, Appendix, p. 5.

16. King, Memories, 10.

17. Coe College Courier, April 24, 1900, p. 3.
In addition to their work with the Sunshine Mission, Coe students partially supported George Dunlap, a Presbyterian missionary to the Philippines. Support for Mr. Dunlap came from the budgets of the Y.W.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A., and from faculty subscription. The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. were integral parts of student life at Coe because they promoted the essential purpose of the college, a strong and educated church.

Coe was serving its purpose well. All of the five young men in the graduating class of 1900 entered theological seminary, either attending McCormick, Auburn, Omaha, or Princeton. There were eight students in the class of 1897 and two of these entered Omaha Seminary. Three others entered medical colleges in order to prepare themselves to be medical missionaries.

This devout attitude on the part of the students was reflected in the pages of the Cosmos. There was a very lengthy editorial in one issue captioned "The Spirit of the Master." The author attempted to support the capitalistic theory by saying that only a master could direct modern industry successfully and such a master possessed

18. Interview with Dr. and Mrs. Hickok.
20. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1897, p. 71.
that spirit which knew no failure, which seized the present opportunity; "It is that spirit which manifests that greatness of soul, that power of purpose, which makes a man felt, makes him an influence, a leader among men. The Spirit of the Master."

Considerably less far-fetched and infinitely more to the point was an article in an earlier issue which urged students to attend prayer meetings because the meetings were the "secret springs of the motive power of the [Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.] associations" and "just in proportion as they are attended and earnest zeal manifested in them, will the individual members have power with God and power to lead their fellow students into a purer life." The writer concluded by saying that it was good to help to save a lost soul, but that this could be accomplished only if one were familiar with the word of God. Bible classes, he added, were held every Sunday morning at nine o'clock.

A third article pointed out the many advantages of the ministry and concluded with the argument that there was room in the ministry for "earnest consecrated men," and added, hopefully, that ministers' salaries were rising

22. Ibid., September, 1897, p. 3.
since the church members were realizing that the minister should have as good a living as they.

In emphasizing its non-sectarian status, the college received much encouragement from friends who would not have contributed to its welfare if it had been a purely denominational school. On the other hand, the Presbyterian Church gave the college little or no material aid. Off and on throughout the nineties a "Coe Day" in the churches was observed on which day the church offerings were contributed to the Coe library for new books. Nowhere is it stated just what churches participated in this observance. In 1890 the "pastors of Cedar Rapids" passed a resolution that one Sunday a year be set aside for college purposes. However, the several Presbyterian churches in Cedar Rapids and the English Lutheran Church are the only ones on record as contributors to Coe.

Perhaps this lack of sectarianism hurt the college in the long run, but it is doubtful; certainly the Presbytery and the Synod contributed little to the material well-being of the school. The Presbytery itself had no large sums to expend upon any project. Most of the money budgeted for educational purposes was used to help finance college


educations for divinity students. There were usually two or three of these young men receiving help from the Presbytery at a given time. The Presbytery, interestingly enough, did not insist that the young men whom it aided attend a Presbyterian school. One J. B. Cherry studied at Cornell College, in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, before entering McCormick Seminary, and the Presbytery helped him even though Cornell was an avowed Methodist college, and Coe sorely needed all funds available.

Usually the Presbytery did not make any financial commitments as far as Coe College was concerned. It did commend the college to the various congregations, and in 1886 it went so far as to adopt a resolution urging that pastors and sessions give the Reverend J. S. Dunning, Coe soliciting agent, a "hearty welcome" to their pulpits.

"We also desire to lay upon the hearts of our churches the interests of our Synodical Colleges, and inasmuch as their annual financial statement reveals a serious deficit, we earnestly commend to the churches the taking up of an annual collection for their wants." The college could not have survived had it depended upon the Presbyterians for any degree of support.


Relationships with both the Synod and the Presbytery were harmonious as far as written records are concerned. Whenever the Presbytery met in Cedar Rapids, its members were always invited to attend chapel services at Coe, and frequently a delegate from the visiting group would address the students. The trustees of Coe always submitted an annual report to the Synod, and the president made frequent reports before the Presbytery. Usually, after such a speech, the Presbytery passed an innocuous resolution that the Presbytery had heard the president's report with gratitude and was happy that the college was getting along so well.

Every so often a committee representing the Synod would visit Coe, and usually its reports were somewhat more informative in regard to the general situation than the president's messages. For example, in 1890, the committee was seriously concerned about the little enthusiasm manifested by Presbyterians in their own colleges. In 1889, eleven students in one Presbytery went to college, but only two of them attended a Presbyterian school (one of them Coe). The visiting committee stated, therefore, that classes at Coe had not been "what the advantages and the

27. Records of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids, 3:151-152.
28. Ibid., 1:15. (This is page 15 of the minutes of the spring meeting of 1893.)
demands of the institution would justify." Coe, the committee felt, did not enjoy a strong and favorable reputation.

Coe College was providing a liberal education in a Christian atmosphere conducive to encouraging young men to enter Christian service. Although under the direct supervision of the Synod until 1907, the college did not receive any substantial help from it or from the Presbytery. The college, stressing its nonsectarian character and the advantages of its location, received much greater help from Cedar Rapids citizens in its efforts to promote a place that would encourage men to enter the Presbyterian ministry than it did from the Presbyterian Church itself.

29. Minutes of the Synod, October, 1889, p. 236.
Chapter VIII

Faculty and Curriculum

Coe College offered the same course of study as other small midwestern colleges of that period between 1881 and 1901. From the time of its inception, it maintained a preparatory department. This was not in competition with the Cedar Rapids high school, but was established because there were so many students living outside of Cedar Rapids who had to attend a preparatory school before they could meet the entrance requirements of any college. Many small towns in Iowa had no high schools whatever, or else offered a very limited course of instruction. There were frequently so few pupils enrolled in many of the smaller schools that one or two teachers were required to offer the entire curriculum. Hence the necessity for a preparatory department in many colleges.

In the beginning, students were required to spend no more time in the Coe preparatory department than was essential to fit them for college courses. However, spending two years studying either a "classical" or an "English" course was standard practice. In due course, the

preparatory department was expanded to three years and, still later, to four years. By 1900 this department ran a three-year and a four-year course concurrently. The two curricula were identical, but the longer course was offered for the benefit of younger students, or for those who had outside employment.

Entrance requirements for the preparatory department were proficiency in reading, elementary English composition, arithmetic, geography, elementary bookkeeping, elementary algebra, American history, Latin, and elementary physiology.

The college faculty members always devoted part of their time to the Academy, as the preparatory department was known, but there was no one person solely responsible for this department until 1893 when Professor J. A. Rockfellow came to the campus as headmaster of the Academy. Certainly students could not complain that the quality of instruction offered in the Academy was not equal to that of the college.

Until Marshall Hall was constructed, the Academy

2. Coe College Catalogue, 1900-1901, p. 91.

3. Ibid., 1881-1882, p. 15.

4. Dr. Stephen W. Stockey came to Coe in 1891 as financial agent, but was soon placed in charge of the preparatory department and was also a Latin instructor. However, he is not listed as Headmaster.
was housed in a large room in the main building, and here the pupils remained throughout the day except when reciting to a professor other than the headmaster. The pupils in this room must have been a heterogeneous group of youngsters, for the Academy accepted them as young as twelve years, or "at any date or period in life" and prepared them for college.

The curriculum varied, of course, from 1881 to 1901, but in general, pupils studied algebra, Latin, English the first year; algebra, Caesar, physical geography the second year, and, in the third year, plane and solid geometry, Virgil and Cicero, English, civil government, botany, and a choice of Greek, physics, or German. The college maintained the preparatory department until World War I when the high schools definitely began to offer college preparatory courses.

The trustees provided a strictly classical education as far as the college proper was concerned, although there were a few attempts to offer vocational training in the

5. Coe College Catalogue, 1894-1895, p. 26. Professor Boas stated that the average age of students in the preparatory department was "not less than seventeen," and many of the students there were at least nineteen. These students had waited several years before making the transition from "the little red schoolhouse" to the Coe preparatory department.

course of the years. Consequently, the entrance requirements of the college demanded a classical preparation. When the college was established in 1881, all entrants were required to take examinations in English (including orthography, grammar, geography, and history), mathematics, Latin and Greek. By 1885 the entrance requirements had been expanded to include, in addition, elementary bookkeeping, algebra, elementary physiology, American history, German or French, literature (American), and the "ability to read intelligently any ordinary English with distinct articulation and natural expression."

By 1894 the high school in Cedar Rapids had achieved a sufficiently high academic rating to warrant the college's admitting all Cedar Rapids graduates without an entrance examination. Similarly, graduates of other approved high schools throughout the state were excused from the examinations. In the catalogue the college listed approved and

7. Coe College Catalogue, 1881, p. 16.
8. Ibid., 1885–1886, p. 12.
9. High schools were approved by the State University of Iowa as early as 1873. [Professor Vernon C. Carstensen states that high schools were approved a year earlier than Professor Ensign has indicated.] This meant that the University sent visitors to a few high schools and academies to study these institutions somewhat. They then announced that the graduates of schools which had been examined carefully by members of the University faculty and found to be doing work equivalent to that done in the
unapproved high schools for the benefit of the prospective student. Students who were not graduates of approved high schools were examined in Latin, Greek, mathematics, English, United States history, and natural science which included physiology, geography, botany, and "elements of Natural Philosophy." Each successive change meant greater requirements in science.

By 1897 Coe had divided its curriculum into three distinct courses, classical, philosophical, and scientific.

9. (Cont'd) University preparatory department would be received, so far as subjects presented met requirements, without examination at the University. Half a dozen schools were accredited in 1873; and other schools, both academies and high schools, were accredited from time to time by action of the University faculty. Other colleges in the state, of course, were permitted to use this list of accredited schools. From a letter to the writer from Dr. F. C. Insign, Professor of Education, State University of Iowa, September 2, 1949.


11. The entrance requirements for the classical course in 1897-1898 read as follows in the catalogue of that year:

LATIN

1. Grammar, including Prosody, Allen and Greenough; Roman pronunciation.
2. Latin composition. (a) Collar and Daniell's First Book; (b) Jones' Latin Prose Composition or equivalent.
4. Cicero. Six orations, including the four against Catiline and those for Archias and the Manilian law. A portion of Cicero or Sallust may be substituted for two orations of Cicero.
The scientific and classical courses had identical requirements with the exception that German was substituted for Greek and French for Latin in the scientific course. The philosophical course substituted only German for the Greek required for the classical course. In general, entrance

II. (Cont'd)
5. Vergil's Aeneid. Six books; prosody of hexameter verse.

II. GREEK
2. White's First Lessons.
4. Xenophon. First two books of Anabasis.

Note—Since few high schools are prepared to teach Greek, students are permitted to classify in the Freshman class, taking the Greek with the preparatory class.

III. MATHEMATICS
1. Arithmetic. Entire, including metric system; White.
2. Algebra. Through quadratic equations; Wentworth or Wells.

IV. ENGLISH
1. Grammar.
2. Rhetoric and Composition; Hart. The student must be able to apply the principles of the language accurately and each will be required to write a brief composition on some assigned subject. The subject will be taken from one of the works mentioned under 3.
3. English classics. A thorough study of the following: 1898
   Lowell, "Vision of Sir Launfal;" Longfellow, "Courtship of Miles Standish;" Scott, "Ivanhoe;" Webster, "Reply to Hayne;" Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar;" Irving, "The Sketch Book."
requirements in 1897 were more stringent in every field than ever before. The language requirements were increased the following year and the trustees could safely state that no western college had a higher standard of admission.

lij. (Cont'd)

1899

Scott, "Marmion;" De Quincey, "Flight of a Tartar Tribe;" Shakespeare, "Merchant of Venice;" Tennyson, "The Princess;" Webster, "Bunker Hill Oration;" Addison, "De Coverly Papers."

V. HISTORY
1. United States history.
2. Civil Government, Mowry.
3. Oriental monarchies, Myers.
5. History of Rome, Myers.

VI. SCIENCE
2. Geography. Physical and political.

Philosophical Course
The requirements for admission are the same as in the Classical course, except that German takes the place of Greek as follows:

VII. GERMAN
1. Preparatory German, by Edgren and Foster; reading; grammar.
2. Andersen's Maerchen; Super.
3. Das edle Blut; Wildenbruch.
4. Storm's Immensee.
5. Hil dern's Ho cher als die Kirche.

Scientific Course.
The same requirements as in the Philosophical, except that for the work in Cicero and Virgil the following course in French is substituted:
than did Coe.

The curricula of Coe College were in a constant flux. Shaped by the trustees with the aid of the faculty, the courses offered by the college were ever-changing in an effort to meet the needs of the students. The desire of the college was, then as now, to provide, as far as possible, a complete liberal education, "preparing every pupil to enter upon farther professional study, or active life, with a good equipment in a well-furnished and disciplined mind and character."

In its first year the college offered two separate courses of study, a classical and a scientific. The principal difference between them was the fact that the scientific course omitted Greek altogether and required less Latin, substituting instead French and German and courses in natural philosophy and the physical sciences. Since there were but two courses that year, the college presumed to offer but two degrees, a Bachelor of Arts for students

11. (Cont'd).

VIII. FRENCH
1. Grammar and reading; Chardenal's grammar.
2. French reader; Super.
4. Le Duc de Beaufort, Alex. Dumas.
Note—Where students come from schools where French or German is not taught, satisfactory arrangements will be made.


who completed the classical course, and a Bachelor of
Science for those who completed the scientific course.
The following year the faculty offered an additional literary course which eliminated the study of an ancient language altogether and substituted French and German. This new course led to the degree of Bachelor of Literature.

The degrees offered by the college during the first several years of its existence were only of catalogue record since there was no graduating class until 1884. That spring Miss E. Belle Stewart graduated with a B.A. and Mr. Stephen W. Stookey with a B.S. They were the first graduates of Coe College and, later, both returned to teach at their alma mater. At that same commencement the college awarded its first honorary degree, a Doctor of Laws, to Woolsey Welles of Fort Dodge, Iowa.

In 1888 the administration offered three courses, classical, Latin scientific (or philosophical), and general scientific. The classical course, naturally, still required Greek and Latin, but the second course of study did not require Greek, and the third required neither Greek or Latin.

From time to time the college offered courses in

15. Coe College Catalogue, 1884-1885, p. 17.
vocational fields which were not classical and which sometimes did not require four years of college. The first vocational curriculum was offered in 1881-1882 when the college introduced a normal course for the junior and senior years of college. No foreign language was required these last two years and education classes were substituted instead. This new course led to the degree of Bachelor of Didactics. For those students who wished to teach, but could not remain in college a full four years, the faculty devised a "Short English and Normal Course" in 1885 which required only one year in the preparatory department instead of the customary three, and was designed

16. In the first year that the college offered instruction in normal training, the catalogue had this word of explanation for the course:

"The need of this department grows out of the fact that, while graduates of colleges who enter the professions of law, medicine, theology, etc., usually make special preparation for their work at professional schools or elsewhere, those who undertake the responsible duties of the profession of teaching largely enter upon it without professional study. The profession is therefore crowded with two classes of incompetent persons who essay to teach,—first those who have a very limited general education, second those who possess a liberal education but who have neither knowledge of the science of education, nor training in the art of teaching. The latter class supplies as many examples of failure as the former.

It is the design of this department of Coe College to prepare its students who wish to become teachers to rise to positions of honor in the profession, by securing in the first place a broad general education, and in the second place knowledge of the principles and methods of instruction." From the Coe College Catalogue, 1881-1882, p. 26.
to furnish students with a good elementary English educa-
17
tion.

Another vocational attempt was the course in civil
engineering which was incorporated into the curriculum in
1892. It was dropped three years later, however, since
the college was not willing or equipped to compete with
Iowa State College at Ames or the State University at Iowa
City in the engineering field.

In September, 1899 the college renewed its attempts
to provide teacher training and established a department
of pedagogy under the charge of Professor J. Percival
Ruggett who was also headmaster of the Academy. The nor-
mal department and the "short English course" begun during
the early years of the college had been short-lived. The
course of study in the new pedagogy department underwent
several changes, so that by 1901 the department offered
the history of education, contemporary education, the
psychological basis of education and the philosophy of
teaching and school administration to be studied over a

17. In the second year of this curriculum, a stu-
dent took mathematics, science, English, and drawing; the
third year mathematics, English, science, Biblical instruc-
tion, American history, English language, and science of
government; and the fourth year courses were Biblical
instruction, mathematics, science, English language, and
bookkeeping. [This last was optional.] See Coe College
Catalogue, 1885-1886, p. 13.
two year period.

The college continued to offer normal training courses after 1901, and, in later years, it also had a home economics department. However, the strong point of the college remained its liberal arts curriculum, and, aside from teaching, the faculty did not aspire to prepare students for any other specific vocation.

In 1897 students who were not candidates for a degree and who, for good and sufficient reasons, could not pursue a prescribed course of study were permitted to take the "partial course." This was designed for those students whose time in college was necessarily brief, serving, in certain respects, the same purpose as the "Short English and Normal Course" of a few years earlier. These special students recited to the regular college professors and received a certificate showing the work accomplished.

The classical curriculum at Coe in 1892-1893 which may be considered generally representative of the twenty year period from 1861 to 1901 included Old Testament

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18. Coe College Catalogue, 1900-1901, pp. 33-36. See also Coe College Courier, September 25, 1900, p. 3.

19. Coe College Catalogue, 1897-1898, pp. 14-15. This was similar to a program offered by the University of Wisconsin twenty years earlier. In Madison, many students, classified as "special," were permitted to sample the University curricula as they so desired. Merle Curti and Vernon Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin, 1:400.
history, Greek, Latin, rhetoric, solid geometry, algebra, and ancient history for the freshman year. The college calendar included three terms so that all of these subjects were not necessarily pursued at the same time. The sophomore studied New Testament history, Greek, Latin, rhetoric, mediaeval history, trigonometry, mythology, modern history, "Select Latin," and chemistry and French which were optional. He might elect archaeology and analytics if he so desired. In the junior year, evidences of Christianity, psychology, English literature, biology, physics, and logic were required; Greek, Latin, German, French, English history, calculus, and zoology were electives. The senior pursued courses in history of philosophy, literary criticism, geology, political economy, "Science and Religion," and elected three of the following each quarter: ancient literature and art, Greek, Latin, French, German, history of civilization, American literature, comparative anatomy, astronomy, chemistry, Constitutional history of the United States, histology, literature of the nineteenth century, philosophy of history, jurisprudence, and botany.

The first master's degrees granted by the college were bestowed upon its first graduates, Miss Stewart, and

Mr. Stookey, and upon A. L. Lyon of the class of 1887. In those days, a master's degree was conferred at least three years after graduation to that person who had spent the graduate period in collegiate or professional study and practice, and who had submitted a satisfactory literary, philosophical or scientific paper to the faculty.

There were many other colleges in Iowa in 1893 which were similar to Coe in that they were small, liberal arts colleges sponsored by a religious denomination. With the exception of Coe, however, none required any instruction in Bible in the freshman year. Many of the colleges offered a rather limited freshman curriculum compared to that of Coe, but it is possible that Coe was printing more in the catalogue than it was offering. Drake University freshmen were required to enroll in trigonometry, analytical geometry, physics, general history, and Latin classics. At Iowa, Cornell and Iowa Wesleyan colleges, and at Upper Iowa University, all freshmen in the classical courses took Greek, Latin, and mathematics, and, usually, one other course. At Iowa Wesleyan the additional course was history, at Iowa College it was chemistry, and at Cornell the fourth

21. Minutes of the Synod, 140; Coe College Catalogue 1894-1895, p. 140.

22. Iowa College is known today as Grinnell Col-
course was drawing. At Coe, however, as we have seen, the freshmen were required to study both Greek and Latin, rhetoric, solid geometry, ancient history, algebra, and a course in Old Testament history. In other words, the classical course was very similar in all the schools, but Coe offered more for the first year, including the Bible course.

Four years of instruction in Bible or related fields were required at Coe regardless of the course pursued. All students enrolled in Old Testament history in the first year, and New Testament history in the sophomore year. All juniors took evidences of Christianity and seniors pursued "a critical examination of the relation of science and religion."

Elocution was a part of the Coe curriculum from 1881 until after 1901. According to the catalogues, college officials believed that the power to express thought was second only to the power of trained thinking and hence public speaking was always a part of the Coe program. Nowhere is it stated to what extent the "Department of


25. Speech courses are still and have been ever since 1901 an integral part of the Coe curriculum.
Expression may have influenced the students' interest in debate and oratory so much in evidence on the campus during these decades, but excellence in public speaking and reading was generally considered highly desirable. Professor E. A. Ross recalled, however, that there was no attempt to integrate the debates of the literary societies and the other forensic activities of the students with any classroom work. The catalogues are somewhat indefinite as to the true place of elocution in the curriculum. In some catalogues, it is discussed at length, and, apparently, it was stressed as an important part of the student's course. In other issues of the catalogue, elocution merited only a single sentence. The ability to express one's self effectively by the written word was considered as important as oral expression and hence literature and composition were consistently stressed throughout all the years that a student attended Coe.

In addition to liberal arts, Coe offered some courses in the fine arts, but these were not the strong point of the college, and the quality and consistency of instruction was erratic. For example, the college offered art instruction in the first years of its existence.

then dropped the subject entirely. In 1886 the course was resumed with classes in free-hand drawing, crayon work, and painting. "The blackboard," the catalogue added, "is freely used in all departments."

By 1899 the art department was under the direction of Miss Alice Louise Burton, a graduate of the Cornell Department of Art and a student at the Art Institute in Chicago and the Academy of Design in New York City. Miss Burton taught free-hand drawing, mechanical drawing, "the study of still-life and flowers in oil, water-colors or pastels" and the "painting of the head and figure from life." Any art course cost the student from five to seventeen dollars per term in addition to his tuition.

Coe also had a music department of sorts. Sometimes it was a department sponsored by the college, but more frequently it was an independent school of music affiliated with the college. During the eighties the college offered modest instruction in piano, cabinet organ, harmony and theory, and voice. However, by 1896 a student could study a wide variety of music courses, for the Cedar Rapids College of Music had become "associated" with Coe. The music department now offered instruction in violin, voice culture, organ, composition, song interpretation, piano, cello,

27. Coe College Catalogue, 1899-1900, p. 53-54.
music history and theory, and mandolin, guitar, and banjo. Coe students were entitled to "special reduced rates." Professor E. M. C. Ezerman of the Cedar Rapids College of Music had complete charge of all the musical organizations at Coe, and his chorus was considered especially fine.

Elective and optional courses were introduced into the Coe curriculum in the fall of 1884. Students, however, still were not permitted to elect subjects until their junior year, for the faculty felt that the younger students were not sufficiently well qualified to understand the "habits and tendencies of their own minds." Certain elective courses, furthermore, were designated as "optional;" these might be chosen by the student only if he had a general average of eighty. As late as 1901 less than one-third of the college courses were left to the student's selection.

The course of study as presented in most of the Coe catalogues was imposing; but not all of the courses could possibly have been offered in any given year if for no other reason than that the faculty simply could not have taught all that they were purported to teach. According to the

29. Ibid., p. 20-21.
30. Ibid., 1889-1890, p. 17.
catalogue of 1898-1899, Miss King offered ten courses in history and twelve in "English Language and English Literature;" Professor Ash was slated to teach seven different mathematics classes; Professor Condit was listed for thirteen courses in Greek and eleven in Latin, and Miss Leeb offered twelve courses in French and thirteen in German.

31. Coe College Catalogue, 1898-1899, pp. 21-50, passim. The departments of instruction and courses included in each department in 1897-1898 were as follows:

A. Philosophy and Political Science
   Psychology, logic, ethics, Christian evidences, history of philosophy, Butler's analogy or lectures on the relation of the Bible to modern thought, political economy, and social science, jurisprudence, the Bible.

B. History

C. Language and Literature
   1. The Greek language, including Xenophon's Anabasis (Books III and IV), Herodotus, Homer's Iliad (Books I, III), Homer's Odyssey (Books V, VIII), the Memorabilia of Xenophon, the Odes of Pindar, Prometheus Vinctus of Aeschylus or Sophocles' Antigone, the Apology and Crito of Plato, Aristophanes, Demosthenes' De Corona, Book I or VI of Thucydides, the Greek Testament, and oriental and classical ancient literature.
   2. Latin Language and Literature, including Cicero's Cato Maior De Senectute, Livy (Books XXI and XXII), Odes and Epodes of Horace, Satires and Epistles of Horace, Tacitus' Germania and Agricola, Juvenal's Satire, the Tuscan Disputations of Cicero, Selections from the letters of the Younger Pliny, Selected plays of Plautus or Andria and Heaton Timorumenos of Terence, Quintilian De Institutions, Oratoria Libri XII, and Cicero's De Natura Deorum.
   3. French Language and Literature, including
The diligence required to understand Herodotus and Cicero was rewarded, throughout the years, with a growing series of prizes offered by patrons of the college. The most desirable scholarship at Coe today is the Knox prize established by T. M. Sinclair in memory of the Reverend James Knox. The prize, the oldest on campus, grants full tuition for the last two years of college to the sophomore.

31. (Cont'd)

4. German Language and Literature, including "Grammar, Written Work and Reading," the second part of Bernhardt's Novelletten Bibliothet, Schiller's, Wilhelm Tell, Selections from Rossegger's die Waldheimat, Soll und Haben, Freyta, Bernhardes Composition, Von Scheffel's Ekkehard, Schiller's Maria Stuart, Goethe's Italianish Reise, Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea, Lessing's Emilia Galotte, Theodore Storm's Immense.

5. English Language and English Literature, including rhetoric, "English Literature," "Elizabethan Era," "Queen Anne Period," literary criticism, continental literature, and American classics.

6. The Hebrew Language and Literature

D. Mathematics and Science

1. Mathematics, including algebra, trigonometry and surveying, analytical geometry, calculus, mechanics, and astronomy.

2. Physical science, including general chemistry, qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis, organic chemistry, mechanics and sound, electricity and magnetism, heat and light, the "Morphology and Physiology of Animals," systematic zoology, embryology, histology and physiology, plant morphology.
student with the highest honors in his class. The trustees offered a scholarship to Coe College to any boy or girl who graduated with highest honors in his high school class. Other awards made during this score of years were the C. 3. Soutter prizes which were awarded to members of the junior class who showed the greatest advancement in physical sciences during their sophomore and junior years. These prizes were in the form of books worth ten and fifteen dollars. Similar "classical prizes" awarded to the students with the greatest proficiency in Greek and Latin during their sophomore year and the English prizes awarded to the sophomore and freshman who made the best averages in English were also Soutter prizes. The Wilson botanical prizes of ten and fifteen dollars were given to the two students who had made the most complete herbariums. T. S. Parvin offered five and ten dollar awards to students having the highest averages upon completing the preparatory course, and the Ristine mathematical prizes were given to the sophomore and freshman with the best grades in mathematics. The Dows' Junior Essay prizes were given to the three juniors who wrote the best essays on an assigned subject. Mr. G. E. Crawford presented an expen-

31. (Cont'd)
and physiology, systematic botany, dynamic and structural geology, and paleontology.
E. Department of Physical and Voice Culture and Elocution.
sive dictionary and two scientific volumes to members of the junior class who did the best work in biological sciences. First and second prizes of twenty-five and fifteen dollars were granted by Mr. S. C. Bever to the two students "standing best in thought, style and delivery in oratory." These prizes were all donated by Cedar Rapids people and two of them, the Knox and the Bever prizes, are still awarded at every Commencement exercise.

The curriculum and the prizes would have meant nothing, however, without a competent faculty. We have already noted the difficulty in drawing a distinction between the religious and intellectual forces at Coe because the faculty represented them both so well and made no clear-cut issues themselves. All faculty members were Christians; most of them were Presbyterians, and they, far more than the Presbyterian Church, made Coe a Christian college.

Coe had its share of good teachers and poor among the faculty members who came and left during these years, but of all of the men and women who taught at Coe prior to 1901, there are five who definitely helped to create the


33. Interview with Mrs. Clifton G. Crull, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, July 27, 1949. Mrs. Crull attended Coe eight years, a student at the Academy and the college. Her parents were good friends of President and Mrs. Marshall and of Miss King.
atmosphere of the college. Miss Alice King, professor of English and history until 1921, came to the campus in 1886 as "Lady Principal" of Williston Hall. Although she was an excellent teacher, her greatest contribution to the college was her influence upon the women of Coe. She was an intelligent and gracious woman with a fine background of European travel. She had numerous momentos of her journeys and she used them to make her rooms in Williston Hall as attractive as possible for the girls. Even after she left Williston, Miss King maintained her interest in the Coe women and bent every effort toward helping them in any way possible. There is a story that she helped one girl with an obnoxious and raucous voice to become a very fine orator. Miss King was a lady who created within the college girls the desire to be gentlewomen.

Every so often a man comes to an institution, and so molds it and develops it that without that particular person, the institution would have become something entirely different. So it was with Stephen W. Stookey and Coe College. Stookey graduated from Coe in 1884, the first man to graduate from the college. Upon his graduation, he went to Manchester, Iowa where he served first as principal and then as superintendent. In 1891 he returned to Coe where

34. Interviews with Dr. and Mrs. Hickok and Mrs. Crull.
he remained until his retirement in 1933 except for a period between 1908 and 1914 when he served as president of Bellevue College, now the University of Omaha.

When he first came to the campus before the turn of the century, Dr. Stookey was a young man with fiery red hair and sharp eyes. His approach to any subject was cold, objective, and positive. He was a stern teacher who became very angry with any student guilty of careless thinking. Stookey was an excellent geologist, more interested in the subject than in the student, and only students seriously interested in science returned to him for advanced work. He was a strong teacher, but an equally able administrator, and in 1904 he became dean of the faculty. Dr. Stookey was a very religious man who firmly believed in the law and order of natural phenomena, and through his teaching of geology he attempted to prove the existence of God and the truth of the Bible. Professor Stookey made marked contributions to Coe College not only as a teacher and as a dean, but also as a practicing Christian, and every student on the campus felt his influence.


36. Interviews with Mrs. Crull and Dr. Ben H. Peterson. Dr. Peterson, a Coe graduate, is head of the department of physical science at Coe College.
Another man who helped to shape the thinking of Coe students around a religious viewpoint was Dr. Bert Heald Bailey. Dr. Bailey graduated from Coe in 1897 and from Rush Medical College three years later. He had earned his M.D. because he wished to become a medical missionary, but because he had a heart lesion, he could not pass the necessary physical examination. Whereupon Dr. Stookey, who had known him as a student, persuaded the trustees to invite the young doctor to teach zoology at Coe. He had learned taxidermy while still an undergraduate, and he employed this skill to improve the museum which was under his care after he joined the Coe faculty. He was primarily an ornithologist and succeeded in making the museum one of the best of its kind in the state. Although Dr. Bailey's career at Coe covered the climax of the evolution controversy, he was able to hold the chair of biology without creating any discord whatsoever. Without actually saying so, he made his students understand that after they had studied enough biology, they would be able to handle the question of evolution by themselves.

The religious approach seemed to make Dr. Bailey's


38. Interview with Dr. Peterson.
science more effective. He established the custom of tak-
ing his ornithology classes on field trips early in the
morning so that they might observe the birds as the sun
was rising, and then he would return with them to the chap-
el and read aloud the One Hundred and Fourth Psalm, "giving
it a meaning and a quiet emphasis that were all his own."
Perhaps Dr. Bailey's philosophy of education is best ex-
pressed in a statement he made to a reporter on the college
newspaper:

"What Coe needs most", he said, "is a
deeper appreciation of the ideals of service
rather than those which are purely mercenary.
We should talk and think in terms of service
rather than in terms of earning ability.
This institution was founded and established
on ideals aside from remunerative ideals...
What we need is that we shall strengthen the
genuine ideals of the college which are
primarily those of service that look not
toward financial returns but that look
toward the uplift and betterment of humanity
everywhere. We must get farther away from
the idea that a college education is a
commodity for sale, and nearer the conception
that it is an opportunity and an added
responsibility for service."39

Bert Heald Bailey was well qualified to maintain the
tradition which Professor Condit had established and which
was continued by Dr. Stookey.

A fourth professor to leave a lasting influence at
Coe was Clinton O. Bates, professor of natural philosophy

39. Coe Cosmos, n.d. Clipping in alumni files of
the college.
from 1889 to 1924. He was a tall, spare man who had been reared in Arkansas and graduated from the University of Arkansas in 1883. He came to Coe as professor of natural philosophy and taught physics and chemistry until 1902, after which time Dr. Leroy Weld taught physics, and Dr. Bates confined his work to chemistry. He was an enthusiastic teacher who loved to perform startling experiments before his classes, including shooting off nitroglycerin. Sometimes he would deliberately sabotage his experiments so that students would remember what had not happened. He was a popular teacher although his students always regarded him with some amusement. He was never the object of any practical jokes on the part of students, but they could always rely upon him for amusing incidents.

Professor Bates was a chemist who was completely absorbed in chemistry and had few outside interests. His knowledge of chemistry, compared to information current today, was limited, but he probably knew as much as the average professor of chemistry of his time. He had only

40. For example, there is this story. In a day when, ostensibly, no man knew what garments a woman might wear beneath her skirts, he spied a girl’s garter lying on the floor of the chemical laboratory, and, since no young lady had sufficient courage to claim it, he absent-mindedly twirled it on his forefinger throughout the entire lecture. The class, of course, was convulsed.
limited training /he had done a little graduate work at
the University of Michigan/7, and therefore he did little
research, but he was very good in chemical analysis. He
was, incidentally, city chemist for Cedar Rapids nearly
all the time that he taught at Coe. If Bates could not
teach research methods, he could and did teach techniques
and properties and attitudes. In connection with this last
trait, he had an enthusiastic and positive approach to any-
thing, including "screw-ball experiments." He always main-
tained this enthusiastic attitude and seldom, if ever,
criticized any philosophy or experiment. Considering the
fact that Dr. Bates was not extensively educated nor widely
traveled, this positive approach was definitely to his
credit. Bates' field was limited to chemical analysis and
in later years he lost touch with modern chemistry because
he could not appreciate theoretical research. However, he
constantly preached that the future was in the hands of
the chemist and ever emphasized the practical application
of chemistry and what could grow from it.

Professor Bates practiced his Presbyterianism in all
of its details, but he did not carry his religion into his
science, and, as far as any one ever knew, there was no
conflict between his chemistry and his Christianity. If
this approach did not make for dynamic teaching, certainly
no conflict was ever introduced to make the student question
the attitudes and influences with which he had been reared
and which were so potent at Coe.

Perhaps the man who has the greatest opportunity to
influence college men is the successful coach. Certainly
Professor-coach George W. Bryant made the most of his oppor-
tunities. He was one of the most colorful and dynamic per-
sonalities to influence Coe philosophy. He was a student
at Coe from 1890 to 1894 and gained a reputation for his
loyalty, his energy, and his versatility. As a student,
he participated in all activities with great enthusiasm and
was unsatisfied until he had others following his example.
While he was at Coe as an undergraduate, the Cosmos was
introduced, caps and gowns were first worn at Commencement,
a brass band was organized, Coe took first place in the
Iowa Oratorical Contest, I.M.C.A. delegates were sent to
Lake Geneva [Bryant was the first delegate from Coe],
colors and yells adopted, and football and track were in-
stituted. In practically all of these affairs young Bryant
played an active role, and he was the principal organizer,
 promoter and participator in all athletic events. He was
a popular member of the student body, and at Williston

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41. Most of the information about Professor Bates
was secured in an interview with Dr. Ben Peterson, a stu-
dent under Mr. Bates for four years and his immediate
successor as head of the department of physical sciences.
Hall where the girls and men ate together. The girls "hung upon what he was doing and saying or waited breathless to see what he would do next." In 1893 he was editor of the Cosmos and was captain of the tennis, baseball, football, and track teams. At one time he held eight track records.

Bryant, then, was a force at Coe before he ever became a member of the faculty. He returned to Coe in 1899 as professor of Latin, athletic director, and coach of all the teams. Prior to assuming his work at Coe, he had graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary and had served as pastor of a Michigan church for two years. As a Latin instructor, he was not particularly outstanding. He did not teach Latin grammar effectively and he did not emphasize the importance of drill; consequently his courses were easy and his students did not study for him. Professor Bryant emphasized the philosophy of the classics instead of the conjugations, and in doing this he was typical of many ministers who taught in small colleges. They found the task of drilling their students unpleasant and boring and so they discussed philosophy as a more interesting alternative and justified themselves by saying they were teaching "life."

Bryant, on the other hand, was an excellent teacher.

42. Dr. and Mrs. Fred G. Murray, quoted in the Coe College Courier, October, 1947, p. 5.
in "Evidences of Christianity" and he was a successful coach. His teams won two state baseball championships, two state tennis championships, and his track teams were famous throughout the Midwest. As a coach and as a professor of religion, he made the most of his opportunities to contribute to the Christian atmosphere of the college.

In general, these five people were typical of the professors at Coe from 1881 to 1901. Most of the faculty stayed at Coe because they wished to, and several had forsaken the ministry for teaching. By and large, they were good teachers; Professor Ross has estimated that the quality of instruction at Coe in the decade of the eighties averaged eighty-five per cent of the quality of instruction at the University of Wisconsin sixty years later. The faculty members were worthy people who loved learning, scholarship, teaching. Many of them did not possess advanced degrees, but they were fine teachers with excellent personalities.

In the two decades between 1881 and 1901 Coe had three presidents. They were all Presbyterian ministers, they all believed in the philosophy upon which the college was established, and they all worked very hard to promote the interests of Coe, but their methods and characteristics were completely different.

The first president, Stephen Phelps, was ordained
in the Presbyterian ministry in 1883 and filled numerous pastorates before coming to the Presbyterian church in Vinton, Iowa in the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids. Here he became familiar with the work of the Coe Collegiate Institute and for a while served on its Board of Trustees. He accepted the presidency of Coe College in the early spring of 1881 reluctantly and with the definite understanding that when the school was "so far developed that..." he would be justified in leaving... he would do so and return to the pulpit..."

He served as president from 1881 to 1887 and in that time Williston Hall was erected, Main building enlarged, the Knox prizes established and the college Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. were organized.

President Phelps was a man of medium height, with a ruddy complexion and prematurely white hair. He was a friend of every member of the faculty and student body. He was a "consecrated Christian," an understanding counselor, and an especially gifted speaker. Professor Ross has called him a "magnificent pulpiteer."

The Reverend Phelps was trained for the ministry at

43. Letter from Dr. Phelps to Dr. Burkhalter.

44. The Cedar Rapids Gazette and Republican, March 4, 1930, p. 4.

45. Letter from Mrs. S. C. Armstrong, and interview with Professor E. A. Ross.
Western Theological Seminary and his talent was in that field. He was not an educator and had no desire to be president of Coe. He is not remembered for his work as president [he heartily disliked having to raise funds], but for his friendliness and affection for the students. He resigned in 1887 because the college by then, he felt, was in a position to attract endowment and had a good course of study and decent equipment. In his letter of resignation to the trustees, he added that the work at Coe had been very heavy, and he had "intense longings to return to the work of the pastorate." President Phelps had no educational philosophy; he placed the Christian aspects at Coe uppermost and learning secondary.

The Board of Trustees invited the Reverend James Marshall of New York City to be the successor to Dr. Phelps. Marshall's father's father had served honorably in the Revolutionary War, and his mother was descended from the Tennents of New Jersey. Marshall had to work his way through college, but succeeded in graduating from Yale in

46. Dr. Phelps was not a disciplinarian. Characteristic, if legendary, is the story of the girl who interrupted a faculty meeting held in the president's office to call out, "Dr. Phelps, can you tell me where I will find a cloth to clean the blackboard?" This incident is related in a letter from Miss Mabel T. Armstrong, Bradenton, Florida, who was a student at Coe under President Phelps.

47. The Cedar Rapids Times, December 13, 1886.
1857. He studied law for a short time in Syracuse, New York, but soon became interested in educational and religious work. He was active in city missions and eventually gave up the study of law entirely and opened a school for girls. In July, 1862 he received a commission from President Lincoln as an army chaplain and served in that capacity until 1866. In that year he resigned his commission, and for the next three years he traveled abroad and studied in the New College of Edinburgh and in Heidelberg. He returned to the United States in 1869 and held several pastorates. In 1876 he became minister of De Witt Memorial church in New York City. Here he established the Lebanon club for working men, the first of its kind in New York City, and worked extensively with the poorer classes. He was forced by failing health to retire from this work in 1883, but by 1887 he had recuperated sufficiently to accept the offer to come to Cedar Rapids as the president of Coe College.

Marshall appeared to be sober, severe, and stern, but he had a delightful sense of humor which his friends found most disarming. He was a good man and a kind one, but he lacked that friendly quality that had made Dr. Phelps so popular with the students. Neither did Marshall possess

Phelps’ power to hold students and faculty together.

There were several reasons for Dr. Marshall’s slow adjustment to Coe. In the first place, there was nothing in his training to prepare him for midwestern informality. In the second place, Coe students were exceptionally undisciplined, for Dr. Phelps had been notably lax in that respect. In the third place, he was a classicist who wanted a classical college.

Dr. Marshall’s first objective at Coe was discipline. Since he and his wife had no children, perhaps he expected more from young people than he might have otherwise. At any rate, he did not enjoy the sight of young men and women laughing and talking together on the campus or in the library with little pretense of studying.

The result of Marshall’s efforts to discipline the students was, ultimately, the entire withdrawal of two classes from the college in the spring of 1888. [See chapter six]

The loss of the two classes severely hurt Coe, for there was a definite decrease in enrollment and the prestige of the college in Cedar Rapids was diminished as well. It was a highly embarrassing situation and President Marshall had to explain and defend the lack of graduates and the small

49. Miss Mabel T. Armstrong to writer.
enrollment for the next two years. Fortunately, the faculty and the Synod supported Dr. Marshall, and there were no further incidents to mar his administration.

President Marshall was a classicist and a disciplinarian. Under him the college became a well ordered school which expanded cautiously. Under him, the Cosmos was founded, athletic teams organized [but they were not victorious], the faculty increased, and the curriculum enlarged. There was nothing spectacular about President Marshall and when he died on the opening day of school in September, 1896, he left only a conservative and orderly institution.

Coe College had known a minister and an educator as presidents. Now it was to know a promoter. Dr. Samuel Black McCormick was a native of Pennsylvania and practiced law in Pittsburgh for a year in 1882-1883. He practiced in Denver for the next four years and then returned to Pittsburgh and studied for the ministry at Western Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1890 and served a church in Allegheny, Pennsylvania and another in Omaha before he came to Cedar Rapids in August, 1897. Dr. McCormick was a man of tremendous energy. He was a

50. Minutes of the Synod, 231.

51. Newspaper article in alumni files. There is no name, but it is a Pittsburgh paper. n.d.
"hustler" and "the pace he kept was not always pleasurable, but it was always fruitful." When he came in the fall of 1897, Coe had neither students nor endowment to any impressive degree, so he set out to achieve both. He successfully managed a campaign to raise a one hundred fifty thousand dollar endowment [see chapter five], and he increased the enrollment considerably. He found money and friends for the college, he built Marshall Hall, the gymnasium, and the fieldhouse. He made athletic events popular, he made the "Day of Prayer" the "most sacred season of the college year," and he inspired the faculty to greater efforts. In the seven years that he was at Coe he put the college on its feet and left it a far better school than he had found it. President McCormick left Coe in 1904 to become chancellor of the Western University of Pennsylvania, now the University of Pittsburgh. Under his leadership, that institution, too, knew tremendous growth and development.

Marshall's enthusiasm and interest in whatever he did were contagious and the college developed rapidly under his leadership not because he was a scholar, an educator, or a business man, but because he was a leader who knew how to make the most of the abilities of his associates

and of himself.

President Marshall knew at least to his own satisfac-
tion, what a college should be and what a college edu-
cation should mean. In February, 1899, Dr. McCormick
began the publication of the Coe College Courier, a monthly
bulletin designed to keep alumni informed of college af-
fairs. In the first issue he wrote an editorial on the
purposes of an education. Dr. McCormick was a direct
contrast from Dr. Phelps in many ways, but in one respect
his words might have been those of the first president,
for he wrote that education was not primarily for the
purpose of earning a livelihood, but it was for the pur-
pose of glorifying God. A man should educate himself inso-
far as possible, regardless of his intended occupation, in
order to realize all of his possibilities as a man in the
sight of God. Education might make men more successful in
life, but that was a minor point. The real purpose of an
education was to make it possible for a man to come closer
to the image of God, to arrive at a more perfect estimate
of the meaning of life, and to get out of life more of
"true joy and blessedness."

From 1881 to 1901 the faculty and administration of
Coe did their best to provide a Christian atmosphere in
which to present a liberal education. The institution had
been originally sponsored by a Presbyterian minister for
the purpose of preparing young men for seminary training, but the school was not effectively supported by the Presbyterian Church. The Board of Trustees, which was subject to Synod approval, was composed largely, not of Presbyterian ministers, but of Cedar Rapids business men who were genuinely interested in the welfare of Coe. If it had not been for the generosity of Cedar Rapids, Coe would not have survived, and it speaks well for the community that its citizens did support a school designed to promote the Christian spirit. The blending of the community and the church was evident throughout the development of the college in its first fifty years as an institution of learning.

By 1901 Coe was firmly established as a Christian college. In later years it would become one of the major liberal arts schools in the state. It had survived its most perilous years.
Acknowledgments

My obligations are many, but I am especially indebted to Professor Emeritus Edward A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin who graduated from Coe College in 1886, to Professor Emeritus and Mrs. Charles T. Hickok, members of the "Coe family" since 1905, to Mrs. Clifton C. Crull who attended both the Coe Academy and the College in the decade of the nineties, and to Professor Ben H. Peterson, professor of chemistry at Coe College and a former Coe student. All of these people were very generous with their time and their memories. My warmest thanks are due Miss Mabel T. Armstrong, Mrs. Samuel G. Armstrong, Dr. Harry Morehouse Gage, Mr. James Ralph Jewell, and Professor Forest C. Ensign for their very helpful letters. I am grateful to Elizabeth Windsor of the Coe College library who extended me many privileges and much help, to the Reverend Donald Paul Chapman who permitted me to use the church records in his possession, to Catherine Covert Stepanek of the Coe College alumni office who suggested many new sources of material, and to my mother for her valuable criticism.
Bibliographical Note

Manuscript sources for the history of Coe College include the Minutes of the Board of Directors of Cedar Rapids Collegiate Institute, the Record of Parsons Seminary, and the Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Coe Collegiate Institute. These are considered separate documents, but are bound in the same volume. They are alike in that their information is variable; some of the secretaries kept detailed records, but others supplied only the barest facts. This volume is in the possession of the Coe College business office. Unfortunately, the minutes for the Board of Trustees of Coe College from 1880 until after 1900 have been lost, creating a serious gap in the information available about the early years of Coe College.

The minutes of the faculty of Coe College, in the possession of the Coe College recorder, are somewhat disappointing as source material for a history, for the faculty meetings were almost exclusively concerned with matters of discipline.

The Records of the Presbytery of Cedar, Iowa, the Records of the Iowa City Presbytery, and the Records of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids present a fascinating account of the early history of the Presbyterian Church in Iowa. The earlier records have more detailed information
than the later ones. Since the Presbytery of Cedar was Old School, there is little point in using it as source material for a history of Coe College. The records of the Presbytery of Cedar and of the Presbytery of Iowa City are in the possession of the Reverend Donald Paul Chapman, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Bettendorf, Iowa. The Reverend Chapman also has the first two volumes of the Record of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids, but the later volumes are in the possession of the Coe College library.

The unpublished History of Coe College of Edward R. Burkhalter is a good, but limited account of the early years of Coe. James Ralph Jewell has called it "an unusually safe guide." Stephen W. Stookey's The Story of a Life in Relation to Coe College and Alice King's Memories are two highly readable papers by former faculty members. Dr. Stookey has written an interesting autobiography, but he is too modest and too generous to be as enlightening as he might have been. I saw the typed manuscript of this work, but it has also been published in pamphlet form. Miss King's memoirs are exceptionally descriptive, but occasionally inaccurate. Charles F. Clark's The Missing Classes is an account of the affairs that led to the expulsion of six students in 1888. It is very humorous and descriptive, but somewhat inaccurate. Clark presents his views on President Marshall rather forcefully; Miss Mabel
T. Armstrong, who was a student at Coe at the same time, gave a more sympathetic description of Coe's second president. There are typed copies of the King, Stookey, Burkhalter, and Clark papers in the Coe College library. The diaries of George Greene and Robert C. Greene are in the possession of Mrs. Katherine Greene, Cedar Rapids. I was not permitted to see the original of either diary, but was given typed cards which did not represent the complete diaries.

One other manuscript is The History of Education in Iowa, volume six, by Clarence Ray Aurner. It contains brief histories of many Iowa colleges, but presents no new material. The typed manuscript is in the possession of the Iowa State Historical Society, Iowa City.

The Coe College Cosmos was a student publication begun in 1890 and issued monthly during the school year. The Cosmos is excellent for the student viewpoint and for accounts of student life and activity. An equally valuable source is the Coe College Catalogue which has been issued annually from 1881 to the present with the exception of the year 1883-1884. This is good for enrollment, curricula, and general regulations and requirements. Another college publication, the Coe College Courier, issued regularly since 1899 for alumni, is a fruitful source of material although not as rich as the Cosmos or the Catalogue.
There are complete files of these periodicals in the Coe College library. The oldest publication of the institution is the *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Coe Collegiate Institute, 1876-1877*. There is a copy of this catalogue in the office of the recorder of Coe College. The *Wisconsin State Historical Society* has catalogues of Beloit College, Carroll College, Ripon College, and the Lawrence University of Wisconsin, all of which are useful in comparing the curricula, activities, and regulations of the various schools.

Beginning with the spring meeting in 1892, the minutes of the Presbytery of Cedar Rapids were printed, and these volumes and the bound volumes of the minutes of the Synod, also printed, are in the Coe College library. The Synod minutes are useful primarily for the reports on the state of the college delivered by Presidents Marshall and McCormick before that group. The Synod rarely took any action concerning Coe.

The *Iowa Masonic Library* has a good file of Cedar Rapids newspapers from 1852 to the turn of the century, and it was here that I found nearly all the newspapers that I used. *The Cedar Valley Times* became the *Cedar Rapids Times* in 1867 and was published until 1892. This paper is not to be confused with the *Cedar Rapids Evening Times* which was published from 1902-1918. *The Cedar Valley Times* and
the Cedar Rapids Times, both weekly papers, provide excellent comments on the social life of Cedar Rapids, and are more interesting to read than The Daily Republican whose editor was more prosaic. The latter newspaper was published from 1861 to 1926. The Cedar Rapids Democrat was published for a year or two in the fifties. The clipping from the Traer, Iowa Star-Clipper which I used is in the possession of the Coe College alumni office, and the copy of the Iowa Recorder (published in Greene, Butler County, Iowa since 1891) is in the possession of Mrs. Katherine Greene.

There is some uncatalogued material in the Coe College library which contains the receipt to John Dawly signed by David Blakely, the letter from George Greene to John F. Ely, the letter from Elizabeth R. Jones (Mrs. Williston) to Dr. E. R. Burkhalter, the letter from Charles Parsons to Dr. John F. Ely, and the letter from John W. Shearer to Dr. E. R. Burkhalter. Also in this collection is the note indicating a loan from George Greene and Dr. John F. Ely to Parsons Seminary for $1,114.30. While the college possesses much valuable material from its own history, there has been little attempt to organize it or to gather more.
SECONDARY SOURCES

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Elisha D. Ely, The Ely and Weare Families (Cedar Rapids, Torch Press, 1926). Contains many items of interest to the social historian, but needs editing.

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Program for Founders' Day, December 5, 1922. This contains letters from Dr. Stephen Phelps to Dr. E. R. Birkhaller written for this brochure. In possession of the Coe College library.