

THE BEGINNINGS OF COLLEGE
HISTORY

AN ADDRESS

Delivered at the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass.,
Oct. 2, 1907

BY

MARQUIS F. DICKINSON, Esq., of Boston



BOSTON
WRIGHT AND POTTER PRINTING COMPANY
18 POST OFFICE SQUARE
1908



Compliments of

Marquis F. Dickinson.



THE BEGINNINGS OF COLLEGE
HISTORY

AN ADDRESS

Delivered at the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass.,
Oct. 2, 1907

BY

MARQUIS F. DICKINSON, Esq., of Boston



BOSTON
WRIGHT AND POTTER PRINTING COMPANY
18 POST OFFICE SQUARE
1908

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Boston Library Consortium Member Libraries

THE BEGINNINGS OF COLLEGE HISTORY.

BY M. F. DICKINSON, ESQ., OF BOSTON.

It is not always easy to touch the sources of controlling influences. The head of the spring may be, generally is, somewhat remote from the spot where its sweet waters emerge upon the surface. It would be impossible to discover among the northern hills the tiny lake which is the very head water of yonder broad Connecticut. These analogies hold as to educational movements and institutions. We may trace back the history of the world's oldest and greatest centers of learning until our quest is lost in the dimness of tradition; but even then perhaps we shall not reach their real origin. National enthusiasms, religions, even wars, patriotic inspirations, social movements, the benevolence of individuals and communities, — all have played their effective parts, under varying conditions and circumstances, in enlarging the boundaries of educational influence and power. And so it happens that in the last analysis it may be impossible for me to state exactly what particular influence most effectively contributed to the establishment of the institution which forty years ago to-day threw open its doors to the aspiring young men who constituted its first entering class. No man can tell just where lay the one efficient, creative cause of our college life, nor exactly who proposed the seed thought out of which has grown modern agricultural education and the Massachusetts Agricultural College, whose fortieth festival day we are here to celebrate. I say all this, not forgetting the great Morrill act of 1862, upon which the superstructure of our college life is laid. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, for any man to corral in a single statement, however full, all the sources of our existence. The most that can be done in the half hour allotted me is to point out the particular influences and the particular men that impress me as the most conspicuously prominent in laying our foundations.

The war of the American revolution left the thirteen colonies exhausted and poor. Education was at a low ebb; the ambition of our hardy New England yeomanry was well-nigh crushed out under the adverse conditions created by a depreciated currency and universal bankruptcy, which seemed to threaten our rural communities. The breaking out of Shay's rebellion here, similar political disturbances elsewhere, and the feeling of universal unrest and dissatisfaction prevalent among the common people of most of the colonies, were ominous signs of great national peril. The exigency compelled the establishment of a central government and the adoption of a federal constitution as the

only remedy from anarchy and the loss of free institutions. When the head master of the Boston Latin School heard the news of Lexington, he sent the boys home, declaring, in the prevailing doggerel style of the time: "War has begun and school is done." From the opening of the revolutionary struggle until its results were garnered up by the Constitutional Convention of 1789 there was not a moment of national security. When the work of that convention was accepted by the States, then was guaranteed to America the indissoluble union of the federal States and the immortal perpetuity of federal powers. The establishment of an orderly government at once enlarged the outlook and stimulated the aspirations of the people everywhere. Hope took the place of discouragement, business enterprises began to prosper, and the faces of all men seemed to be turned toward the morning of a new day of greatness and glory. With this material improvement came a new mental alertness which everywhere took possession of the nation; and in the development which followed, the cause of education secured its full share of betterment. The future welfare of the country, and of the *whole country* as distinguished from the separate States, became a subject of intense interest and speculation. It began to be understood as never before that the agricultural resources of the United States would prove in the end the greatest of all its assets, and accordingly ideas and plans for agricultural improvement began to press upon the minds of thoughtful and patriotic citizens.

It is interesting to note that the indications of an enlarged and more intelligent interest in agriculture, and of the importance of more widely disseminated knowledge on farm subjects, first appeared in the principal centers of population. This is the point from which I trace the first important influence among the beginnings of college history, to which I wish to refer.

In the year 1792 the Legislature of Massachusetts incorporated the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture. This ancient organization is still in existence, fulfilling its unselfish mission after one hundred and seventeen years of patriotic and fruitful service. No other single organization in New England contributed so much in the earlier periods to the advancement of agricultural knowledge; no other has given so strong an incidental impulse to the cause of agricultural education. In 1792 few societies of agriculture existed anywhere. Great Britain had only two, — one in Dublin, a small affair, the other in Scotland, — for the British Board of Agriculture was not created until 1793. So far as America was concerned, efforts in this direction seem to have been confined to the States of New York and Pennsylvania and one or two of the Canadian provinces; but the Massachusetts society of which I speak was the first on the continent to receive legislative sanction and formal incorporation. It was called into existence by citizens of the highest distinction and influence. At the head of the original incorporators stood Samuel Adams, the great colonial leader; Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, who received the sword of Cornwallis at Yorktown; Thomas Russell, one of the merchant princes of Boston, once the owner of the Vassall estate at Cambridge, which we now cherish as the home of Longfellow; Charles Bulfinch, the famous architect who designed our venerable State House, and was architect of the Capitol at

Washington as originally constructed; Christopher Gore, distinguished legislator and diplomatist, United States Senator and Governor of Massachusetts, benefactor of Harvard College to the extent of \$100,000, — a great gift for that day; John Lowell, the distinguished jurist, member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention of 1780, where he secured the abolition of slavery in our State by the insertion into the constitution, in our declaration of rights, of the statement that “all men are born free and equal” (thus extending the thesis of Jefferson in the great declaration that “all men are created equal”), afterwards judge of the district and circuit courts of the United States; Samuel Phillips, founder of Phillips Andover Academy; James Sullivan, afterwards Attorney-General and Governor of Massachusetts; and others almost equally distinguished. All those whom I have especially named, save one, were graduates of Harvard College. Soon after its organization other great names were added to its membership, — John Hancock, John Adams, Fisher Ames, Gen. Henry Knox, Gen. William Heath, Gen. Artemas Ward, all of revolutionary service and fame; Governor Levi Lincoln, Loammi Baldwin, Josiah Quincy, George Cabot and Theodore Lyman. In later years its roll has included many of the leaders of the State, — governors, judges, senators and Congressmen, scholars and men of science, great merchants, capitalists and philanthropists. Its president to-day is the renowned scientist, Charles S. Sargent; its efficient secretary, the accomplished and genial Gen. Francis Henry Appleton, for some years a most useful member of our Board of Trustees. Large sums of money have from time to time been bestowed upon it in the way of gifts, so that it has enjoyed unusual opportunity to extend its sphere of useful service. None of its officers have ever received any salary, nor has the society ever spent any money for the entertainment of its members or its guests. It has contributed to the world a noble example of unselfish public service.

The art of agriculture was indeed at a low ebb when the society entered upon its philanthropic work. The real value and proper use of manures were largely unknown. We are told that occasionally barns were removed from their old locations to get them away from long-accumulating heaps of dung. Agricultural implements were rude and imperfect. Crops were few in variety, carelessly planted, indifferently cultivated and unintelligently harvested and housed. Live stock, horses, cattle and sheep, were of inferior grades, and were cruelly neglected and uncared for. Agricultural implements were of ancient and ineffective types. The hours of labor were inordinately long. All work seemed to be done in the hardest way. The fitness of a particular field for a special crop was quite a matter of indifference. The practice of the grandfathers and early settlers still held the New England farmer fast bound to traditional and worn-out methods. To these deplorable conditions the new society offered the light of intelligence and the hope of improvement. But it was slow work to overcome the prejudices and practices of a hundred and fifty years. It was hard to persuade the country farmer that he ought to open his eyes to the improved methods which were beginning to appear in Europe. The reformers were ridiculed as “gentlemen farmers” and “book

men," who were attempting changes quite unsuited, it was thought, to requirements of the practical husbandman. At the end of its first quarter-century President Lowell admitted that during its first years the society did not accomplish much good; but added that it was not the fault of its founders, for they were ahead of the public opinion of their age. They had invited, with rather unsatisfactory response, the co-operation of farmers by valuable series of questions sent broadcast throughout the State, asking for information as to existing conditions and wants in rural communities. But indifference and ridicule did not dishearten these apostles of the new era. They began to talk about an experimental farm, and thus created an interest out of which finally grew the Botanical Garden at Cambridge. Generous members and their friends began the endowment of the society, and soon prizes began to be offered for essays and papers on practical agricultural subjects. The first one taken up was that of compost manures. The canker-worm pest, the drainage of ponds, the methods of maple sugar making, butter and cheese production, the proper care and treatment of sheep, the cultivation of wheat and onions, the analysis of soils, the necessity of improved ploughs, were among the subjects urged upon the attention of Massachusetts farmers during the first decade of the society's history. An impression finally began to be made. It was at length evident that the organization was going to justify its claim to be considered an important factor in enlarging and extending the boundaries of agricultural knowledge.

In 1801 the society began a series of fairs at Brighton, where it finally purchased land and erected an agricultural hall for the uses of its annual gatherings. These were kept up until after 1830. Following its example, agricultural societies quickly sprang up all over the State, until the "fall cattle show" became one of the recognized features of New England life, — a kind of organization which shortly after 1850 led up to the establishment by our Legislature of our excellent Board of Agriculture, to the influence and aid of which, through its intelligent and progressive membership, the Massachusetts Agricultural College owes so much. Without its loyal support the college could hardly have weathered the stormy period of legislative criticism and hostility through which the institution passed during the later period of President Clark's administration and that of his successor, Mr. Stockbridge. Its forty members constitute a most powerful and effective influence at the State House when they unite upon or against any proposed legislation which vitally affects our agricultural communities.

In 1813 the society had accumulated, from gifts, a permanent fund of \$20,000; and the following year the Legislature made it "a liberal grant" of \$1,000 annually from the State treasury, for circulating its publications, for conducting experiments and for the other useful purposes which it was endeavoring to promote. The same year began the publication of its semiannual serial, "The Massachusetts Agricultural Journal," which was succeeded years later by "The New England Farmer" as its semiofficial organ. Thus at length came the era of agricultural newspapers, the educational features of which to-day constitute a most valuable contribution to the progress of Massachusetts agriculture.

As early as 1824 the society was asked by the trustees of Dummer Academy at Byfield, in old Newbury, to join them in conducting an experimental farm on the extensive lands of that ancient school. The trustees of the society heartily approved the movement, but declined the proposal because they thought such an enterprise ought to be controlled and cared for by the State rather than by a private corporation. In this proposal we distinctly discover the germs of our modern agricultural educational system.

In the evolution of the modern plough, which seems to be the outgrowth of Jefferson's early invention, this society took a leading part. Its annual ploughing matches at Brighton had in view not so much to test the skill of the ploughman as to discover the best and most effective instrument. Its liberal premiums in this department did much to encourage manufacturers of agricultural implements in perfecting this most indispensable and important servant of the practical farmer.

Early in its history the society had turned its attention to animal husbandry. By liberal premiums bestowed at its own and county cattle shows it had encouraged the importation of foreign breeds by individuals; and by its own importations from time to time had encouraged the practice. In this way, beginning with the year 1816, have been brought from abroad, partly by private enterprise, but largely with funds furnished by the society, of horned stock, Alderneys and Ayrshires, Devons, Flanders, Holderness and Portuguese cattle; Short Horns, Herefords, Holsteins, Guernseys and other valued strains; Leicester, Arabian and Russian sheep and many other valuable kinds from Great Britain and elsewhere; shapely swine, fitted to replace our long, lean, lank and limber native stock; and horses of superior quality, notably the huge Percherons, which have proved of great value in improving the race of farm and team horses. This service has been rendered at large expense; for these imported animals after having been kept for considerable periods for public use, have been finally sold much below their cost, and thus distributed throughout the State among farmers and others interested in improving our lines of stock.

In 1836 the society joined in a movement to secure what was called an agricultural survey of the State, which led to the appointment of Rev. Henry Colman of Deerfield, of whom I shall speak later, a well-known agricultural expert, for this service. It is interesting to note how much good work has been done by the clergy in the uplift of agricultural interests. Many of you will recall in this connection the admirable paper prepared, and many times read before interested audiences, by our lamented Goodell, entitled "The Influence of the Monks in Agriculture." It was a piece of original work that deservedly received the highest praise, and ought to be permanently preserved in print.

The introduction and improvement of the mowing machine engaged the special attention of the society in the fifties; the importation of English harrows, a study of the ravages of the potato bug, the planting of forest trees, helpful service rendered to the Bussey Institute in its beginnings and to this young and ambitious college in its early days, were among some of the im-

portant services rendered in the seventies. I note an interesting fact, that once it made a donation of \$200 to an ingenious Agricultural College student, to aid him in perfecting a steam plough of his own invention. The sequel I have not discovered. Who will write the obituary of that steam plough?

But time fails me to recount all the great services rendered by this ancient society to the cause of agriculture, and the inspiration it has given to the cause of agricultural education. As friends of the college we desire to-day to recognize with especial gratitude, by this somewhat extended notice, the profoundly important influence, partly active, partly indirect and incidental, exerted by it from first to last in helping to lay on sound and permanent foundations the Massachusetts system of agricultural education. The analogy between its exertions and the later and broader work of our United States Department of Agriculture, which has now grown to be one of the great universities of the world, can hardly have escaped your attention, as I have imperfectly sketched the achievements and influence of this beneficent organization.

In 1820 Andrew Nichols, at the first show of the Essex Society referred to the fact that Governor De Witt Clinton of New York State had recently declared himself in favor of the establishment of agricultural schools for the purpose of improving the art of husbandry, and himself expressed the belief that established agricultural academies, well endowed and managed, would prove of the greatest benefit to the State. Fourteen years later we find Mr. Mosely urging similar news before the same society, claiming for agricultural education equal rank with establishments for military and naval training. A serious attempt was made in 1824, aided by the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, to create at Dummer Academy an agricultural department; but the aid sought from the Legislature to enable the institution to launch the scheme was withheld. Colman, in one of his reports made in the early forties, refers to a similar attempt to locate an agricultural school at Beverly, where land had been already bought for the purpose. In 1840, at the Teachers' Seminary on Andover hill, which had then existed some ten years, a course in scientific and practical agriculture was announced, and the teacher of mathematics was entrusted with its care. This institution was soon merged with the scientific department of Phillips Academy, where all agricultural features were soon lost except the farm, which I believe is still a part of the academy property, and is devoted to golf links. Westfield Academy had a legacy of \$5,000 from Stephen Harrison in 1856, which was to become available when the additional sum of \$5,000 could be secured. This benefactor was evidently the precursor of Mr. Pearson of Chicago, who has so effectively used this plan of giving to colleges in our own day on the offer, "So much from me, if others will contribute an equal amount." I am unable to tell you what results followed this Harrison bequest. Powers Institute of Bernardston just before 1860 was conducting a course in agriculture, and vainly asked aid from the Legislature for the purpose of expanding the work. Our General Court generally has been shy about affording aid to academies. In 1842 Benjamin Bussey died, leaving a large foundation, not then immediately available, for the establishment of the Bussey Institute of Agriculture. Our

college was at the outset in danger of becoming merged with it, in which case we should probably have been to-day an adjunct of Harvard University.

One of the most eccentric of wills was that of the late Oliver Smith of Hatfield in our own county of Hampshire. My characterization of the instrument would, however, convey a wrong impression if I did not add that it established a number of very original and noble trusts. It created the institution we call the "Smith Charities," and is a blessing to the inhabitants of eight of these river towns,— five in Hampshire and three in Franklin. Mr. Smith was a bachelor farmer, called wealthy in those days, though he left what would be nowadays only a competency, — hardly enough to pay the necessary, or rather unnecessary, expenses of a modern millionaire for a single year. He had lived a frugal and thrifty life, and had grown legitimately forchanded by letting out money at interest. He had mastered the problem of "the accumulating fund." And so the charities he created were, to a large extent, to become available long years in the future. The will was made in 1844. Mr. Smith died in 1845. Then ensued a notable contest, in which some of his heirs attempted to set the will aside on the ground of the insanity of one of the attesting witnesses. Chief Justice Shaw, the greatest of Massachusetts jurists, presided at the trial; Samuel Williston of Easthampton was foreman of the jury; Daniel Webster and Rufus Choate were counsel for the executors and the contestants respectively. The trial took place in the old court house in Northampton. Mr. Choate urged the case against the will a large part of one entire day; Mr. Webster spoke only twenty minutes. The instrument was sustained by the jury, and the full bench of the Supreme Judicial Court confirmed their finding. Undoubtedly it was his service as juryman in this case which suggested to Mr. Williston some provisions of his own will, made more than a quarter of a century later, wherein the same feature of large "accumulating funds" for educational purposes appears in the liberal provision made for Williston Seminary. Mr. Smith's foundation provided that the sum of \$200,000 was to be held by the trustees until it had doubled; then the fund was to be divided into three portions,— \$30,000 for an agricultural college at Northampton; \$10,000 for the American Colonization Society; \$360,000, to be called the joint or miscellaneous fund, for the benefit of indigent boys, indigent female children, indigent young women and indigent widows of the eight towns before referred to. The residue of the estate went to a contingent fund, by ingenious provisions intended to secure and enlarge the miscellaneous fund. The \$30,000 agricultural fund the trustees were to continue to hold until the expiration of sixty years from the testator's death, and then to pay it over to the town of Northampton for the establishment in that town of "Smith's Agricultural College." This fund became available, under the terms of the will, in 1905. Lands have been purchased and plans are maturing for the erection of buildings for the instruction of boys in agriculture and the mechanic arts. I have gone into considerable detail in dealing with Mr. Smith's will, because this college is vitally interested in the success of the Northampton institution. Each should be helpful to the other, and somehow the work of each should be made to strengthen and supplement the work of the other. The field is wide enough

for both. It is quite likely that if Mr. Smith had lived twenty-five years longer the provisions of his will might have been somewhat modified to suit later conditions. But a testator has a right under the law to legislate as to the disposition of his estate after his death, and his will ought to be executed as written, except as to such provisions as are unlawful or contrary to public policy. No such flaws are to be found in the will of this shrewd Yankee yeoman; so that on this festal day the Massachusetts Agricultural College sends its hearty greetings and best wishes to its neighbor and colleague beyond the meadows and the river. It is an interesting fact, worth noting here, that Miss Sophia Smith, founder of Smith Academy at Hatfield and of Smith College at Northampton, was a kinswoman of Oliver, and actuated by similar benevolent motives.

Another educating influence along agricultural lines was the work done by Rev. Henry Colman of Deerfield. He was an accomplished preacher of the Unitarian denomination, with whom agriculture was a delight and passion. He was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1805, in the same class with Francis Brown, whose presidency of that institution included the period when the celebrated Dartmouth College case was passing through its various stages, and in which Daniel Webster, a loyal son of the college, won his greatest professional triumph before the greatest of the chief justices in the Supreme Court of the United States. After leading the life of a teacher and preacher for more than thirty years, Mr. Colman was commissioned by our General Court in 1837 to make a complete agricultural survey of the State, and to report results to the Legislature. These reports, four or five in number, cover a period from 1837 to 1841, when his work was discontinued, for reasons not fully explained. The survey included the counties of Essex, Middlesex, Berkshire and Franklin, and are full of interest, even now. They indicate great intelligence and skill in investigation, are models in style, and will repay examination by the ambitious student of to-day. They may be found, I believe, in our excellent library. Mr. Coleman travelled extensively in Europe upon this business, where he received great attention from many distinguished men, and became socially popular, being of fascinating person and deportment. He died suddenly in London in 1849. He too was an apostle of agricultural education, and with untiring zeal urged its extension. In summing up the most notable influences which contributed to the growth of public sentiment among our people on this subject from 1820 to 1860, his name deserves a prominent place.

After 1840 the interest in the subject of agricultural education was greatly heightened. Everywhere, at county fairs, in the people's lyceums, and by repeated petitions to the Legislature, the matter was kept constantly before the people. A notable utterance was contained in Governor Briggs's inaugural address of 1850, out of which grew the resolves of that year looking to the establishment of an agricultural school in Massachusetts. The appointment of commissioners to investigate and report upon the subject, among whom were Mr. Wilder and the elder Edward Hitchcock of Amherst College, followed, but the effort proved unsuccessful. I omit anything more than a reference to that college and Dr. Hitchcock's work, because that subject is to be treated at some length by my friend Mr. Bowker, who is to follow me.

More than to any other man we owe a debt of gratitude to Marshall P. Wilder, whose name stood at the head of the first Board of Trustees of this college, and who was, from the time of its organization to the day of his death, always the staunch and tried friend of the institution. As far back as 1849, in an address before one of our agricultural societies he strongly advocated the establishment of schools where theoretical and practical agriculture should be taught.

In 1856 was incorporated the Massachusetts School of Agriculture, Mr. Wilder again heading the Board of Trustees. In 1860 the charter of this corporation was transferred to several citizens of Springfield, who undertook to raise \$75,000 to carry out its objects, expecting to receive from the Legislature further endowment; but the civil war interfered with their plans, and the effort proved abortive.

It was under the stimulus of these various institutions for better farming and better education therein that the State Board of Agriculture came into existence, by act of the Legislature, shortly after 1850. It was composed of three delegates from each of the incorporated societies in the Commonwealth, and has always constituted an influential body of citizens. Its objects were stated to be "the encouragement of agricultural education and the improvement of agriculture in all its departments in this Commonwealth." There has been a very close connection between that institution and this from the time of our foundation to this moment, and it ought to be said that the Board has always been a staunch friend and supporter of the college.

It was a strange circumstance that, after all the efforts made to secure action by our own Legislature for the establishment of an agricultural college, the institution at last came to the State as a benefaction of the general government. Senator Justin T. Morrill of Vermont — a name always to be spoken in honor by men of our faith — had been for years urging the distribution of large portions of the public domain among the States for purposes of education in agriculture and the mechanic arts. During the administration of Mr. Buchanan his efforts were partially successful. Congress indeed passed the act, but the bill was vetoed by the President. Mr. Lincoln was more friendly to the movement; Congress re-enacted the bill, the President set his approval upon it, and it became a law July 2, 1862. This was the beneficent Morrill act, under which sixty-five colleges have come into being in the United States. The sums bestowed upon the respective States were in proportion to the number of senators and representatives. Thus Massachusetts ultimately received about \$360,000. Under the law, one-tenth could be used for purchase of land, none of it for buildings. The States were required, through their Legislatures, to accept the benefits of the act within two years from its passage, and to provide within five years thereafter not less than one college, or the grant to the State should cease. It is well known that through the agency of its influential friends the Institute of Technology secured the income of one-third of the \$360,000, and thus was satisfied the requirement for a school of mechanic arts, leaving an opportunity here for a separate agricultural college, — the only one of its class in the United States.

Governor Andrew's message to the Legislature in 1863 was a noble plea for the acceptance of the gift; but his plan was to unite the agricultural features

of the gift with Bussey Institute, thus making the Agricultural College a department of Harvard University. The committee to whom the Governor's recommendations were referred discussed the whole subject with great ability, coming, I believe, to a unanimous conclusion that there was actual demand for a Massachusetts Agricultural College, and that it should be wholly disconnected with all existing institutions and separate from all large cities and towns; that it should recognize the principle of daily manual labor by its students as essential to success; and that the necessary funds for the founding of the institution should be contributed equally by the State and individuals. The Legislature adopted the conclusions of the committee; voted that the Congressional grant should be received, and the conditions faithfully complied with; and that the fund should be divided, in the proportion heretofore mentioned, between the college and the Institute of Technology. Later in the year the Board of College Trustees was incorporated, Mr. Wilder, of course, leading the list. The institution at the outset encountered considerable opposition, which was aggravated by the jealousy of rival towns who wished to secure its location within their own borders. The site and course of study were at first made subject to the action of the Legislature, but afterwards the decision of these important points was more wisely committed to the Board of Trustees. It was made a condition of the location that the municipality which received it should contribute \$75,000 toward purchase of land and the erection of buildings. I remember very well, though I was not then a resident of the town, the great excitement which prevailed here over the question of securing the college. Seven cities are said to have contended for the honor of being considered Homer's birthplace; just about the same number of towns wrestled together for the Agricultural College. Springfield wanted it, so did Stockbridge, Northampton, Williamstown and Lexington, Harvard College and Jamaica Plain with its Bussey Institute, besides Amherst; and I presume there were other aspirants,— the returns are not complete. I do not believe there was a town in Massachusetts in 1863 that would not have jumped at the chance, if it could have found the way to put up the forfeit.

And now appears upon the scene that dashing and picturesque figure, Col. William S. Clark. He had left his professorship of chemistry at Amherst College at the opening of the civil war to go forth as major of the Twenty-first Massachusetts Regiment. He soon became its colonel, and gallantly led his command in some of the hardest fighting up to the end of 1862. It was understood that he was booked for a brigadier-generalship, and this he would have had but for General Reno's untimely fall at South Mountain. In February, 1863, he was at home on a furlough, when the question of the acceptance of the provisions of the Morrill act was about to come up for action at the State House. I have always supposed that the resignation of his commission by Colonel Clark shortly after had some connection with his deep interest in the establishment of the new college. At any rate, he was out of the army in May, 1863, and from that moment was instant, in season and out of season, in securing the Agricultural College for Massachusetts, and afterwards for Amherst. Marshall P. Wilder, Dr. George B. Loring, the State Board of Agriculture as

a body, and almost the entire citizenship of this town, were his able coadjutors. In the fall of 1863 he was elected representative from Amherst to the General Court, serving both in 1864 and 1865, and again, I believe, in 1867. It was a long and laborious task that he set himself, but in the end he won out at every point. He was made chairman of the House committee on agriculture the first year, and I assure you he magnified his office. Under his guidance, Governor Andrew's proposed Bussey Institute-Agricultural College combination was broken up; and it was no easy thing for any man or association of men to persuade the Legislature in 1863 to overrule any recommendation of our great-hearted war governor. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology made a claim for one-half the income of the Congressional fund, thus offering to satisfy the mechanic arts provision of the Morrill bill, and leaving the other half for the maintenance of an agricultural college pure and simple. There was a great struggle on this point, and the matter was finally compromised by giving the institute one-third the income, leaving the remaining two-thirds to the proposed agricultural college. Into the bill of acceptance was slipped the provision by some interested friend of the Connecticut valley — and we can safely guess who he was — that the new institution should be located in the interior part of the State.

The act of acceptance of the national benefaction on the conditions named, passed April 18, 1863, was unequivocal in its terms, and pledged the State to a faithful administration of the trust it assumed, and to watchful care for the wants of the college. It was hardly to the credit of a few opponents of this institution that they made a serious attempt, sixteen years later, to lead the old Commonwealth into a practical repudiation of its obligations toward the child of its own adoption, and to annul its solemn contract with the general government. This was an attempt which greatly alarmed the friends of the college. Happily it was triumphantly defeated, and the college became more firmly anchored than ever in the good-will of its constituents. In connection with this deliverance the college ought never to forget the inestimable service rendered the institution by that effective body, the State Board of Agriculture, led by its accomplished secretary, Mr. Flint.

Our act of incorporation bears date April 29, 1863. Mr. Wilder's name, of course, led the list of trustees, one-half of whom were members of the Board of Agriculture. The location of the college and course of study, originally vested in the Legislature, were afterwards very properly transferred to the trustees, subject to ratification by the Governor and Council. Seventy-five thousand dollars was the amount of "graft" which the State claimed from the lucky town that might draw the prize of a college, which sum was intended to constitute a building fund for setting the new college in operation.

The fight for the location, and the raising of the requisite grant, were now on the carpet. The Legislature had just convened in January, 1864. Colonel Clark was there and everywhere. On the 25th of January a town meeting was held in Amherst, to see if the town would vote any sum of money to secure the location of the college here, and also to see if it would petition the Legislature to authorize it to create a bonded debt to raise the necessary funds. One

hundred voters were present. Urgent speeches in favor of the measure were made by Colonel Clark; Edward Dickinson, treasurer of Amherst College, our most dignified citizen; Col. Ithamar F. Conkey, the brilliant advocate; and Luke Sweetzer, our leading merchant. Only the voice of Albion P. Howe, "mine host" of the Amherst House, was heard in remonstrance; and that only against the proposed bonded debt, for he needed the college more than any one else in town. The final vote stood 79 to 7 in favor of asking authority to bond the town in the sum of \$50,000; but the Legislature of that year, after a terrific struggle in the House, declined to allow the town thus to burden itself. It was argued that this would be establishing a dangerous precedent, though there had been repeated similar enabling acts in aid of railroad schemes, notably in the case of the Troy & Boston or Hoosac Tunnel line. It was further urged in opposition that the movement was in utter disregard of the solemn rights of Amherst taxpayers, and would be an especially cruel sacrifice of the rights of women owning taxable property. And so Colonel Clark stirred up 446 taxpayers and voters—almost every male taxpayer in Amherst—to send in a monstrous petition to have their "rights invaded" for this object. In addition to this, Mrs. E. P. Hannum and 26 other widows of the town also prayed likewise, and Nancy Wait and 8 other maidens in a separate petition said "Amen." The introduction of the widows' petition in the House of Representatives provoked sarcastic reference to Sam Weller's estimate of that interesting class; and one facetious member proposed advertising a vendue, putting the college up at auction, and knocking it off to the highest bidder. Colonel Clark's advocacy of the measure on the floor of the House was brilliant in the extreme. His chief opponent, Erastus Hopkins of Northampton, was a man of extraordinary force and eloquence, always a resourceful and dangerous antagonist. The real opposition came from a union of rival towns in the strife over the location. Every one was determined to throw down all the others, and so the cause of Amherst and its proposed \$50,000 bonded debt went down to temporary defeat. Such is log-rolling.

But the friends of the college in this vicinity were not discouraged, and they undertook the Herculean task of getting together the sum of \$75,000 by voluntary subscriptions, for that was the amount required by the Legislature, to be raised by subscription or otherwise, for the purpose of erecting buildings. Exactly how this was done, no man can tell. Pledges of \$50,000 seem to have been extorted from the taxpayers of Amherst, somewhat in proportion to their taxable ability. How and where Colonel Clark obtained subscriptions for the remaining \$25,000 is not clearly disclosed. Records at the State House, which have been gathered for me by that indefatigable worker, Mr. Fowler, librarian of the State Board of Agriculture, author of "The History of Early Agricultural Education in Massachusetts," to which work I am much indebted in this paper, show that \$5,000 of it came from William Kellogg of this town and \$10,000 from the benevolent manufacturer of Easthampton, Samuel Williston. If Mr. Durfee's gift of the plant house be counted as a subscription, that completes the requisite \$25,000, leaving \$50,000 to be subscribed for by the taxpayers of Amherst.

Now began one of the fiercest campaigns ever waged. On the 11th of April, 1864, the citizens of the town were called together at Agricultural Hall (not in a legal town meeting, however), to consult in reference to the location of the Agricultural College here. In the notice appears the significant announcement, "Colonel Clark is expected to be present." He was present. Committees were appointed to canvass all parts of the town, soliciting voluntary subscriptions. Meetings, or rather rallies, were held at the Center, the East Street, and at the "ends of the town." The community was financially raked, as with a fine-tooth comb. Men and women subscribed, and had to subscribe over again. Henry Cobb generously offered to double his subscription, and to pay \$500 for others who could not afford it. At length the subscription of \$50,000 was full, but I presume there was not a signer who expected ever to be called upon to pay; and so in fact it turned out, for not one of them ever was asked for the money. Poor Mr. Williston of Easthampton had to pay his \$10,000, but his town got no college.

Other towns than Amherst had also subscribed like sums to secure the college, so that the trustees were now faced with the question of its particular location. They visited several places on this business, coming here in August, 1865, viewing this spot, and also the elevated ridge just below the town now called Mt. Doma,— the locality where the new observatory of Amherst College now stands, about a quarter of a mile to the southwest of President Harris's house. But right here was evidently the spot upon which Colonel Clark's heart was set, for he led the Board over these farms of Dick Cows and Chester Cows and those of their neighbors, shovelling and digging into the earth, and showing the remarkable variety of soils here available for study and use in experimental work. The conclusion of the trustees was reached early in the following month of September (1864), when by formal action they located the college on this spot, with its four or five farms, a total area which was finally brought up to some 375 acres. In November, 1864, the Governor and Council confirmed the action, and the Massachusetts Agricultural College at *Amherst* became an actuality. The opposition from Lexington, Springfield, Northampton and Berkshire County was carried even into the Council Chamber, where hearings were had, the mutterings of disappointment lasting months and even years longer.

But the great and final contest was yet to come. In 1865 Colonel Clark was returned to the House with practical unanimity, where he was to crown his efforts by one supreme accomplishment. Everybody recognized that to enforce payment of the subscriptions in a town altogether destitute of rich men would be a public calamity. The subscribers had taken an awful risk; and now their cry of anguish was, "Bind us; bond us; give us an enabling act."

Governor Andrew's annual message of 1865 recounted the failure of his Bussey Institute plans, but generously promised his support to the college in its new location. He deemed it his duty, he said, to co-operate in giving vitality and efficient action to the plans of the trustees. He declared Amherst, of all places offered and possible, justly to be preferred, and commended the new college to the liberal care of the Legislature. He spoke of science as the in-

spiring leader of constantly advancing ideas, and made a noble plea for ideal excellence, foreseeing the time when "Husbandry, attended by all the ministers of science and art, would illuminate and rejuvenate the face of the world and re-create our life below." In commenting upon this address, the Agricultural Department at Washington said, in its monthly report for January, 1865: "Of all the official notices made by the executives of different States . . . in reference to the establishment of the land grant colleges, we admire and approve most that of Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, abounding, as it does, in sympathy for the industrial classes, and in a just perception of their real wants."

Early in the session the application of the town for authority to tax itself \$50,000 as a donation to the Agricultural College came on for hearing. Mr. Hopkins of Northampton again appeared in remonstrance, accompanied by a prominent farmer of Amherst. His chief argument was the dangerous precedent. Colonel Clark met this by reading a resolve introduced into the previous Legislature by Mr. Hopkins himself, donating \$100,000 to the sufferers of eastern Tennessee. He also showed that the Amherst farmer remonstrant had strenuously opposed the establishment of a high school some years before as an unnecessary and extravagant measure; and that, unlike the vast majority of his fellow citizens of Amherst, he was singularly devoid of public spirit. The colonel's powerful influence carried the bonding bill through the committee of the House and the House itself. The judiciary committee of the Senate, however, by a vote of 3 to 2, reported leave to withdraw. In open Senate the bill was promptly substituted for the adverse report, and was passed to be engrossed by a vote of 16 to 1; but the hard condition was imposed that an affirmative vote of two-thirds of all present and voting in a town meeting called for the purpose should be requisite to give validity to the bonds.

The greatest town meeting Amherst, perhaps, ever had, — certainly one of the greatest, the one that was to settle the future of the subscriptions, — came off at Agricultural Hall on the afternoon of May 8, 1865. The opposing cohorts turned out with full ranks. Edward Dickinson presented the votes, which had been drawn with unusual care, and made a brief statement calling for the yeas and nays on the first and decisive proposition. There was no debate. Every man's mind was too firmly made up to leave any room for argument. Could the two-thirds be secured? The vote was taken in solemn silence, broken only by the monotonous responses, "Yes" or "No." Under great tension the selectmen canvassed the vote and announced the result: 463 votes were cast, 359 in the affirmative, 104 in the negative. The cause was won. The town had assumed the burden; the subscribers were safe. Nine mighty cheers greeted the announcement. The remaining necessary subsidiary votes were promptly carried. The meeting expressed its thanks to Colonel Clark for his successful efforts to procure the passage of the act, to which compliment the doughty colonel responded, as we are told, "in a neat and spicy speech, recounting some of the great obstacles encountered and overcome."

Judge Henry F. French of Cambridge, who had been prominent in advancing the interests of the college, was chosen its first president, in November, 1865.

Not a building was then erected, and upon the question of their particular location on this tract much discussion ensued. One party was for Plant House Hill, which I am told was favored by President French, the architect, and by Mr. Olmsted, the distinguished landscape gardener. The decision finally fell on this spot, which was then called the "Flat," in distinction from the higher land to the eastward. The deliberate judgment of later years no doubt approves the final choice; but the differences then existing, and some other causes, led to Judge French's resignation in September, 1866, before he had rounded out a single year of service. The stately pine hedge, guarding the eastern boundary of the farm, was his legacy. President Chadbourne, who succeeded him three months later, remained only until June of 1867, when delicate health compelled his resignation. These were seven months of great industry and fruitful results. Much was done by him in outlining the general course of study adopted by the college, which was to a considerable extent an adaptation of the Hitchcock outline of 1851, and which many other of the State agricultural colleges, and some institutions abroad, afterwards closely followed. But at length Colonel Clark came into his own. He was elected president of the college on the first day of June, 1867, so that he was here to welcome the first entering class in September. But I have now reached the point to which I was asked by your president to go, in this rather rambling address.

In closing, may I be allowed to congratulate the alumni of the college, and you, Mr. President, as its official head, on the successes and triumphs of the first forty years of its literary and scientific life. For you and your associates, every one, I invoke the peculiar satisfaction and happiness which follow and reward the successful teacher. May these young men, and those hereafter to come as students in unbroken current, lay here deep foundations for lives of lofty aims, of unselfish service, and of ever-increasing influence and usefulness.

