

CHAPTER SIX

POLITICS IN ADMINISTRATION

Selection & Tenure of Governing Board, Presidents, & Staff



The college program which the endowment and physical plant were developed to realize depended mainly upon the competence and breadth of view of the governing body, president, and staff and the freedom which they would have to carry out their ideas and plans. As in every other public institution there was the ever-present danger that having freed itself from sectarian control, the College would be dominated by political influences.

ADMINISTRATIVE STANDARDS

All state administration, it should be remembered, was in the dark, benighted days before centralized control and systematic organization and intelligent standards and practices. The spoils tradition and practice were still at their height, and no public official was free from the influence of the baneful system—a chaplain as well as a customs collector and a college president—and if worth the effort a professor, no less than a postmaster. Educational standardizing bodies and professional organizations had not yet developed to create professional consciousness and to influence public thinking.

With the unfavorable influences for public education in general there were special difficulties that hampered the land-grant colleges. Lack of agreement as to aim, organization, and emphasis in the early years prevented the unity that would have freed the colleges from internal strife and brought acceptance sooner in the state at large. Attacks from the

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extreme sectarian camp made on all state institutions were especially concentrated on the A. and M. group, as with their scientific emphasis—even to the Darwinian arch-heresy—they were regarded as of all secularized organizations of higher education the most godless. Finally the very zeal of the constituencies that had contributed so largely to the founding of the agricultural college brought a desire to control it in particular ways—often more popular than professional. A “people’s college,” it was felt, should be directly responsive to popular desires and minister to the people’s difficulties in a practical way and on call. This attitude was intensified by the agitators of discontent in the early stages of the “agrarian crusade.” Considering these influences, general and specific, instability of organization and errancy of program, though unfortunate and costly, are readily understandable. And in noting these unhappy developments it should be said for the Iowa Agricultural College that factional, partisan, and personal divisive and disruptive influences, sufficiently pronounced in all conscience, were still not nearly so prominent and determining as in many other states.

INSTABILITY OF GOVERNING BOARDS

The board of trustees was subject to periodical alteration of composition and even more of tenure. The original board of thirteen, eleven representing judicial districts, and the governor and president of the State Agricultural Society serving ex officio, was named in the act, and future elections were to be made by the legislature for four-year terms. The plan of nominations by county agricultural societies never functioned actively and soon became of no effect. With the addition of a new district in 1866 another board member was added, and by 1873 the number had become fifteen, thirteen district members and the two ex-officio.

As always in the case of a representative lay board, stand-

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ards of competence, delimitation of functions, and traditions of impartial public service were necessary for stability and efficiency. Iowa's experience in this regard followed that of other states. The system of selection, while an improvement over that of states making a mistaken effort at popular control by election on party tickets, was inferior to appointment. Selections too often were made for political expediency, especially with the appearance of pressure groups in the farmers' movements. Terms of service were too short and re-elections were too infrequent. By the time that a member began to gain familiarity with organization and policies he was displaced by a new member who had to learn about collegiate problems with the handicap of his prejudicial notions about them. The more competent found other duties too pressing or were dropped for more compliant appointees. Some members, under the system, were certain to be incompetent and neglectful and a few dominated in the formulation of policies.

With the natural desire for improvement in the efficiency of the governing body there was the erroneous notion that a smaller body would be more effective. Such a change was proposed by the visiting committee of 1868, and with the financial entanglement that developed early in the seventies the demand for reorganization of system and personnel became insistent. The joint committee to investigate the College's finances in the special session of 1873, after setting forth at length the delinquencies of the existing board—that "each were sworn officers, each had a duty to perform besides that of receiving regularly their mileage, and each one should be held accountable for an ignorant or wilful neglect of duty,"—made frank and definite recommendation for changing the basis and policy of selection. "The position of a trustee of the agricultural college is designed and intended to be honorary in its character, and the committee is of the opinion that the 'office should seek the man, and not the man the office.' Men should be chosen for that position who have a peculiar fitness for the

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place, and not to satisfy local pride or political predilections. Hence, we recommend that the law providing that one trustee be elected from each judicial district be repealed, and that hereafter they be selected from those best fitted, wherever found within the state. The State has now invested in the institution the sum of *two hundred and sixty-nine thousand and five hundred dollars*, besides the two hundred and forty thousand acres of land donated to the state, and by it held in trust for the promotion and dissemination of agricultural education, and cognate branches of learning. This land is worth, at a low estimate, *one million of dollars*. All of this vast sum of more than a *million and a quarter* of dollars is entrusted to the management of a board of trustees, who have generally been chosen on account of locality, and by reason of some local political influence or importance. They come together two or three times a year, spend a day or two, ratify the acts of the executive committee or president, draw their mileage and go home, without really knowing, or caring to know, much of the inner workings of the concern."

In accord with this recommendation, the code of 1873 provided for a board of five members selected from the state at large, no two from the same congressional district, by joint ballot of the General Assembly. Compensation of \$5.00 per day of actual service and 5 cents per mile actually traveled in line of duty was now provided with the limitation that no member should receive such compensation for more than thirty days service. This modest honorarium was reduced in 1878 for the boards of all state institutions to \$4.00 with the same limitation on period of service. The term was still to be four years starting with two- and four-year classes. The first members were to be chosen by the General Assembly in 1874, and the new board was to take office on May 1, 1874. The revelations of the neglect and ineptitude of the governing body in the legislative investigation of that spring, as well as the bitter divisions in the state over issues of personalities and

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policies, made the continuance of any of the old board unthinkable, and the revised body was thus new in personnel as well as size. Ex-Governor Kirkwood was the most distinguished member of the new Board and was made its first chairman.

The expectation that a small board would make for stability, continuity of policy, and harmony was rudely shaken by the open and well-nigh scandalous factional division and political bargaining involved in the abrupt change of administration in 1883. There followed a reversion of public opinion to the feeling that a small board involved an undesirable concentration of power which had been grossly abused by the majority, and after barely a decade a return was made to the larger, supposedly more representative and popularly responsive governing body. The McCall act of March 28, 1884, provided for legislative selection by congressional districts for six-year terms, beginning with a three-class grouping in May, 1884. With the addition to the membership of the governor and superintendent of public instruction in 1898, the governing body as thus constituted continued until the establishment of the centralized board in 1909.

The whole experience with separate governing bodies—no worse than that of other institutions of the state and much better on the whole than the record of many other states—was typical of the working of governmental processes in following changing public sentiment and prejudice and of the prevailing confusion between broad policy determination and expert administrative functions. The beginnings of this distinction were indicated before the end of the pioneer period. The long and continuous service of officers of the board—most notably E. W. Stanton as secretary and J. L. Geddes and Herman Knapp as treasurer—gave a considerable degree of continuity and security in the midst of fluctuation in organization and personnel.

The lack of firm and consistent governing policies was

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largely a cause, though to some extent a result, of the lack of security in the College's administrative head. By reason of the influences in establishment, the basis of support, and the uncertainty of organization and program the internal affairs of the separate land-grant or "agricultural" colleges were unusually liable to political interference from the legislature, state officials, and other party leaders, especially influential journalists. The rise of the farmers' movement, most notably the grange organization, developed pressure groups which sought to exercise censorship of curriculum and personnel. The effectiveness of this influence was limited by indefiniteness of demands and lack of unity in their ranks, but the disturbing possibilities were great. These interest groups were most menacing in their combination with factious elements within the institutions. This was more likely in a technical institution, where applied and general subjects were brought together, where traditions were unformed, where a considerable proportion of the staff had backgrounds of practical men of affairs and kept a connection with such groups and interests outside the institution, than in the traditional, like-minded college.

WELCH AS ADMINISTRATOR

When Dr. Welch stipulated to the organizing committee a relatively long tenure for himself as a condition of exchanging the hazards of a senatorship for those of a state college presidency he was seeking a more difficult stipulation than either side, under the enthusiasm of the new educational departure, realized. That with all the influences of opposition and instability he was able to maintain his leadership for such a relatively long period—far beyond the average of initial land-grant administrations—was an evidence of unusually effective administrative and educational leadership. His training was thorough, and his cultural interests were real and broad.

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His educational experience, which had extended to all levels and to different types of institutions, had enabled him to balance and to a considerable degree to reconcile the claims of the old and the new, of the classical and the technical. He was a rare teacher who understood and appreciated that attainment in others. He picked his staff with care and supported them against misunderstanding critics on and off the campus. Combined with his educational outlook was an intimate knowledge of the world of affairs secured by observant travel and active participation in business and politics. A gentleman of the old school in the truest sense, he had a natural dignity, precision, and formality. He brought to the pioneer college an urbanity too often ignored or despised in the early trials of industrial education. Boys fresh from rural surroundings and ways might feel that their president was over-punctilious and exacting in social usages, but they came to recognize the essential part that his humanizing had had in their training. While never departing from his dignity to make a popular appeal he was by no means lacking in adaptability. Despite prejudicial and demagogical opposition extending at times to vituperative abuse, his appeal to the college community and to the state was real and lasting. Tempering his reserve and sense of dignity was a Yankee wit and a true sense of humor that relieved many tense situations. He could joke, however grimly, with a colleague on the arctic condition of sleeping quarters when on an institute circuit. While recognizing that discipline and professional dignity must be maintained, he betrayed an amused tolerance for the deference demanded by youthful proctors. When to an overflow meeting of delinquents he questioned what the institution was coming to and a brash young freshman suggested that most of it seemed to be coming to the president's office, he saw the joke and marked the future industrialist and philanthropist as a lad of parts. To inquiries from readers of the college agri-

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cultural paper as to his practical knowledge of farming, he gave frank and good-natured account of his experiences from boyhood days as farm laborer and proprietor.

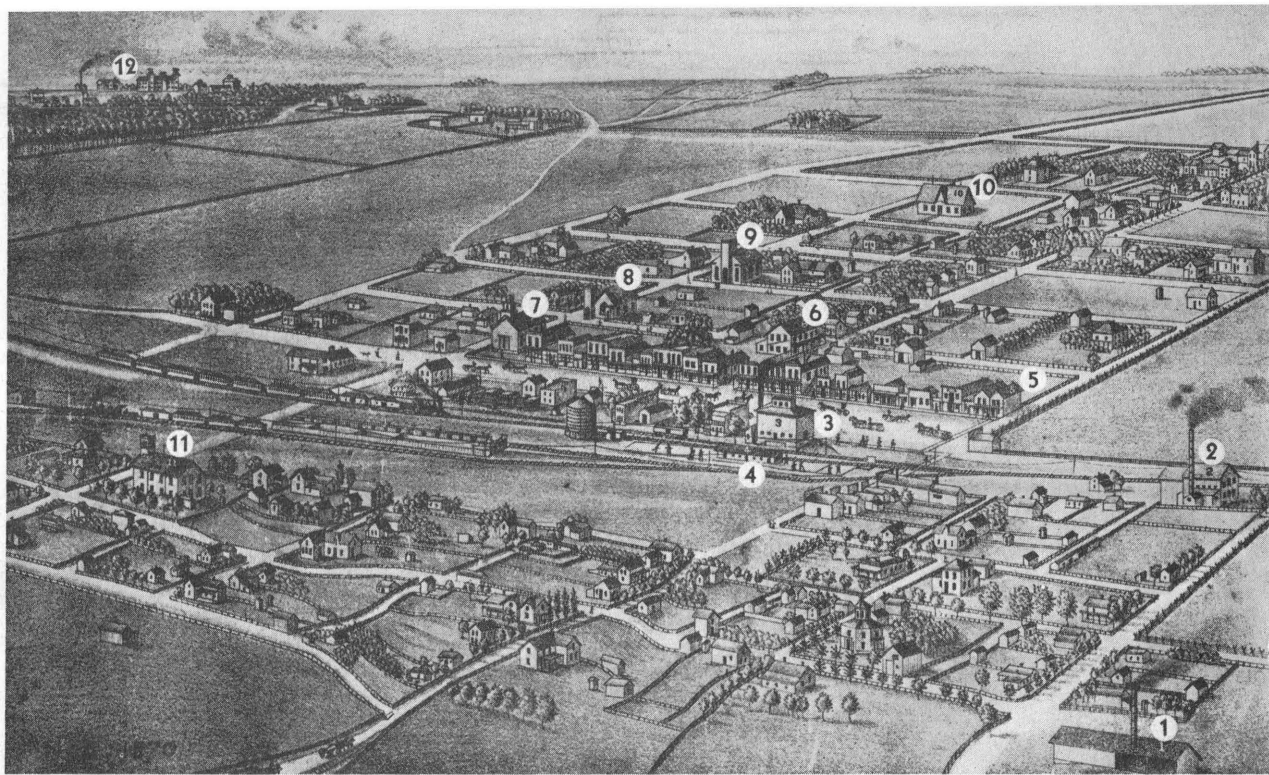
However conciliatory—up to a point—Welch was of the type of the strong executive, every inch a president within and without the institution. He was engaged in a great work and knew it and did not propose to have it interrupted by dissentient or distracting counsels and projects. The frail little man could be a relentless driver, of himself and others.

Unfortunately his physical resources were inadequate for the exacting labors to which he had dedicated his mature years. Never robust, his health was impaired when he came to the position and he was poorly equipped physically to carry on a pioneer enterprise under elemental conditions of living and travel. Subject to periodical breakdowns which necessitated seasons of recuperation, his achievements in administration, teaching, writing, and the conduct of his personal affairs are all the more remarkable.

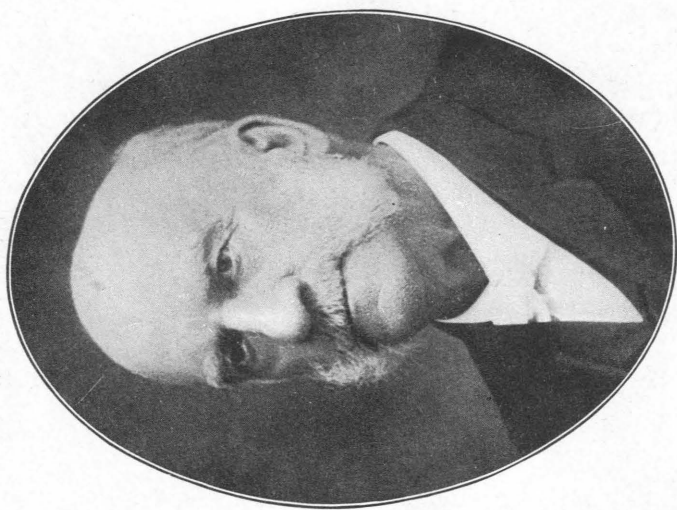
Certain admirers have suggested that if Dr. Welch's lot had been cast with a large established university rather than with a struggling, pioneer college he might have been identified with the more noted "educational statesmen" of the "educational renaissance" of the seventies. But one may question whether his ultimate contribution to the cause was any less in guiding and directing a typical land-grant college through the stormy and uncertain founding years. He provided the needful guidance and direction and gave the initial impetus to the College's career.

INTERNAL DISSENSIONS

The testing of his leadership was not long delayed; opposition within and without soon appeared. The independent and irascible superintendent in managing the farm, supervising student labor, supplying the steward, and purchasing supplies had so many misunderstandings with the Board and adminis-



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF AMES, STORY COUNTY, IOWA, IN 1870—(1) Steam saw mill, (2) Steam flour mill, (3) M. & W. Evans elevator, (4) Depot, (5) New York house, (6) West hotel, (7) M. E. Church, (8) Baptist church, (9) Congregational church, (10) North public school, (11) South public school, (12) Iowa State Agricultural College.



SEAMAN A. KNAPP



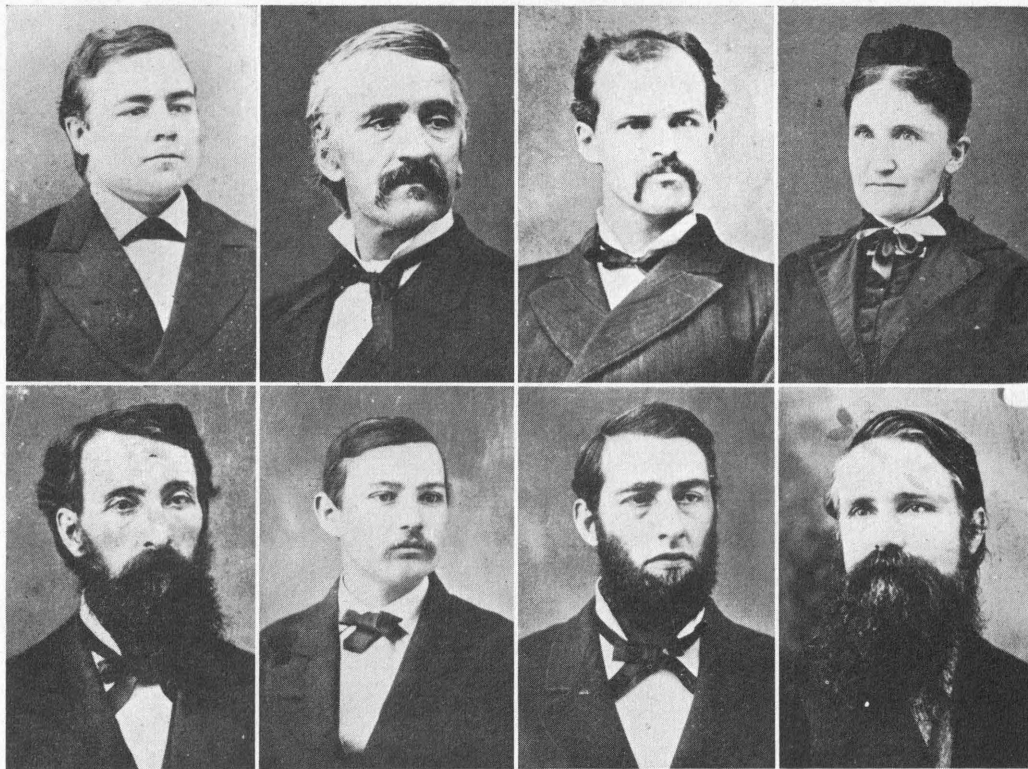
ADONIJAH S. WELCH



LEIGH S. J. HUNT



WILLIAM I. CHAMBERLAIN



EARLY FACULTY MEMBERS. *Left to right: Above—*E. W. Stanton, Gen. James L. Geddes, J. K. Macomber, and Mrs. Mary B. Welch. *Below—*M. Stalker, T. E. Pope, H. D. Harlow, and W. H. Wynn.

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tration that his periodic resignation was finally accepted in the summer of 1870. Upon the strong recommendation of a board member an alert young farmer of Jefferson County, Isaac P. Roberts, was chosen for this large and responsible position. The responsibilities and functions were greatly increased and extended the following year. At the urgent request of the President instruction in practical agriculture was added to the supervisory duties. During the faculty reorganization in 1873 Roberts, distrustful of board policies and dissatisfied with living conditions at the farm house, accepted a call to the New York Agricultural College at Cornell, where he was destined to have a long and influential career as a teacher and administrator. This opportunity came largely through the influence of his former colleague in the physics department, William A. Anthony, who had resigned the previous year and preceded him at Cornell. Anthony had become involved in a disagreement with the Board over compensation for summer employment in installing laboratory equipment and a misunderstanding regarding opportunity for personal research. Both claims seemed unreasonable to the governing powers, and the young scientist no doubt was over-ambitious for his professional status in a pioneer agricultural college, but the unfortunate consequence was the loss of a physicist of energy and creative mind.

These differences were the preliminaries of a real administrative crisis which culminated in the legislative investigation of 1874—a combination of tragedy and comedy. Throughout 1873 the College was under attack from the rising Granger interest. The leading organizer of the order in the state, William Duane Wilson, an editor of the *Homestead* and the first secretary of the College, was strongly opposed to the trend of the farmers' school that he had helped to found and was openly committed to the overthrow of the existing administration. Local opponents combined personalities with policies. An early farmer-labor agitator brought out a journal

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of brief existence at Ames, *Brain and Brawn*, which made the College a leading object of attack. The most picturesque and voluble local opponent was Colonel Lucian Quintus Hoggatt, a veteran of the Mexican War from Indiana, where he had also served in the legislature. He became a pioneer settler on the "Squaw Branch" in the future residence district of Ames and was active in local politics, serving as sheriff throughout the Civil War. He was also a trustee of the College in 1864. Hoggatt had been affronted by the failure of the President to leave a class to greet him on a visit to the College, and the two men, of such contrasting attitudes and temperaments, had clashed openly at public gatherings. In 1873 the Colonel was elected to the legislature on an independent greenback ticket and in the succeeding session exerted his ingenious powers to discredit the college administration by presenting petitions seeking reorganization of the curriculum, the removal of Welch, and a general investigation.

Internal faction added to outside assault. Professor George W. Jones, who had served as acting president at the beginning and held the important position of cashier in addition to heading the mathematics work and teaching civil engineering, more and more clashed with administrative policies, while Jones' own brusque ways were offensive to some of his colleagues. The young professor of chemistry, Dr. Foote, had an irascible temper which ill fitted him for the duties of dormitory proctor as well as for the close restraints of the college routine, and he had been saved from removal only by the President's support. The venerable professor of pomology, Captain James Mathews, in spite of public and professional distinction, proved an academic misfit. He had been recommended by the Iowa Horticultural Society as a successful fruit grower who would promote that industry at the College, but when he failed to develop the college work in any effective way the society turned against him. These disaffected staff members gradually drew together and allied with the farmer opposition in the

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state. Newspaper letters in some cases were inspired or written directly by the dissenters. Disgruntled former students added further to the complication. Altogether by the end of the year the situation had become intolerable.

At a board meeting in November Dr. Welch offered his resignation. It had been persistently rumored that he was considering another position. In July he spoke at the University of Arkansas, and the state press reported that he had been offered up to \$6,000 to head that new land-grant enterprise. Before acting on the resignation the Board declared all positions vacant. They then proceeded in the afternoon session to re-elect all of the staff with the exception of Jones, Foote, and Mathews. Jones and Foote were defeated for re-election by a vote of five to six. In tendering re-election to Welch the Board presented him with a petition from citizens of Ames asking his retention. The deposed professors and their supporters charged that they were victims of an underhand plot, and that the President's resignation had not been made in good faith but was a part of a deliberate scheme to oust opposing members without a fair hearing.

LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE COLLEGE

The culminating element in a readily exploitable college scandal was the Rankin defalcation, and the cumulation of all the counts made an indictment that the legislature could not ignore. At the beginning of the Fifteenth General Assembly, in January, 1874, a joint committee of eight, five from the Senate and three from the House, was authorized to make a general investigation of the College but with special attention to the charges of misapplication of funds; the defalcation of the treasurer; that "*the college is drifting away from its original intent as a school of agriculture and the mechanic arts, and that it is not now fulfilling the purpose for which it was founded, and particularly that its course of instruction and practice does not tend to make farmers and mechanics, but rather to turn*

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them towards other professions"; and "that the students of said college, for whose benefit the college has been established and munificently endowed by the State and national governments, are arbitrarily, capriciously, and often unjustly treated by the officers of said college, and that no adequate redress or aggrievance [sic] is accorded them . . ." More generally the committee was to investigate the course of study and methods of instruction, and to pass upon the much-mooted issue as to whether the farm was "in any true sense, a model farm" as contemplated by the original act. The investigation was to extend back to the beginnings and to be inclusive in time as well as in scope.

Public hearings were held for over a month, and testimony and documents were accumulated to fill an 800-page volume. The committee rejected a proposal to secure a counsel and conducted the proceedings in their own original manner. President Welch asked for the privilege of cross examining witnesses, but instead interested parties were allowed to submit questions in writing which, if proper to the investigation, the committee would ask. Their own examinations proved to be awkward, repetitious, and rambling in the extreme. The proceedings were not only crudely informal but took a latitude that was inclusive of all that proponents cared to present, either in the way of evidence or innuendo. Heresay, rumor, gossip were admitted along with documentary exhibits.

The forty-three witnesses included present and former board members, representatives of both factions of the staff, specially interested legislators, former college employees, prominent residents in the vicinity of the College, and former students. Nothing could have been better calculated to air grievances and to exploit prejudicial attitudes. The people's college was subjected to wide-open public inspection. Funds and their handling were traced to the smallest transactions. Intellectual competence, teaching methods, social attitudes, and moral habits of staff members were appraised by fellow

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colleagues and students. But the investigation centered in the administration. The President was given especial scrutiny, to determine whether his financial and educational policies and personal qualities had contributed to misappropriations, unsound program, and dissension. Injudicious financial arrangements, such as the trading of Congressional documents for house repairs, and carelessness regarding supplies taken from the farm were given distorted emphasis. Failure of the President to meet callers promptly at all times was represented as a rebuff to the popular constituency, as exclusion of janitor and fireman from the presidential dining table was held to be an evidence of aristocratic snobbishness wholly opposed to the spirit of a labor college. The opposition, especially the deposed staff members, charged discriminatory treatment of students, but only a few cases could be cited and the facts of these remained in dispute. On the "drifting away" charge the main allegations were that practical agriculture was not systematically taught and that the farm was far from a model; the latter contention was largely discounted by the lack of agreement as to what was meant by this term and as to the physical capacity and adaptability of the college acres.

In reply witnesses favorable to the President alleged that the opposition was from a small clique of radical agitators, discharged employees, and disgruntled students and that the great majority of townspeople of Ames and vicinity were back of the administration. Various efforts were made by committee members to discredit the deposed staff members by suggestions of incompetency, contumacy, and disloyalty.

The report, condemning, as had been noted, a looseness of financial practices and supervision, gave little aid and comfort to the opposition. The charge of drifting away from original intent was "not sustained." From the evidence presented, the students were not being subjected to arbitrary, capricious, or unjust treatment. Regarding the personal matter of removals, though the legality was fully admitted, on "the man-

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ner, necessity and propriety," the committee, like the general public, was divided and hence passed no judgment. The investigation, if not the complete triumph for college policies that the student paper claimed, and if leaving the way open for irreconcilables to allege on certain counts a Scotch verdict, was nevertheless an immediate triumph for President Welch and established his position securely for the time being. The dissentient staff members were not reinstated, and his authority in developing his program was undisputed.

There remained, however, the basic division between the practical farm interest and the broader scientific emphasis which time and skillful contacts alone could reconcile. The selection of S. A. Knapp, a successful stock raiser and popular writer and lecturer, to the chair of agriculture in 1879 was a reassuring move that seemed to pacify the opposition.

WELCH'S REMOVAL

For a few years the President was apparent master of the situation within the institution and in the state, but physical decline both depleted his energy and gave excuse to opponents for his displacement. In 1877 he had a breakdown that necessitated a rest in the midst of the year; and when in 1883 the Commissioner of Agriculture invited him to inspect the agricultural schools of Europe, the change seemed an advisable one. The faculty unanimously petitioned the trustees that he be granted leave from September, 1882, to March, 1883. The Board, after first denying the request, made the adjustment by designating General Geddes as acting president and Professor Bessey as vice-president. This seemed a satisfactory arrangement, and Welch apparently felt that his position was secure. But his absence gave his opponents the opportunity they sought. The revised small board had a majority favoring the opposition and there was a faculty element desirous of more emphasis upon vocational training. Again, as in 1873, farmers' organizations were involved.

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The first move was made at the annual board meeting in November, 1882. The salaries of the President and of Mrs. Welch as lecturer on domestic economy were cut three hundred dollars each. General Geddes' services were discontinued and Colonel John Scott was elected professor of military tactics. Professor Beal was changed from civil engineering and zoology to geology and the stewardship. Bessey resigned the vice-presidency and Knapp was elected to that position, serving as acting president until Welch's return.

The action was but the beginning; a year later the full blow was struck. Welch was summarily removed; Knapp was elected as his successor; and the appointments to the administrative offices—president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and steward—were declared to be for one-year terms. Mrs. Welch had resigned at the preceding meeting. Professor Beal's resignation, understood to be forced, was accepted. Captain James Rush Lincoln, an officer in the national guard who as a loyal young Marylander had seen active service as a Confederate soldier, was made steward and at the beginning of the new college year professor of military tactics.

The Board was divided on the presidency, the vote standing three to two for Welch's removal. Ex-Governor Kirkwood and S. R. Willard cast the minority votes. The entire faculty—including Knapp, who was reported as stating that the position had been forced upon him and that he did not intend to retain it permanently—protested against the removal. They alleged that the College was prosperous, efficient, and harmonious and that these conditions were proof of the effectiveness of Welch's administration, which for the good of the institution should be continued. A petition signed by 150 residents of Ames called attention to Welch's highly successful leadership and predicted disastrous opposition to the College throughout the state if he were forced to retire at this time. The *State Register* announced the Board's action in its regular accident column, headed "State Wrecks." Kirkwood for the

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minority urged, in a press interview, that the College had grown steadily under Welch's direction and that he was still physically and mentally capable and had the support of alumni, students, and faculty.

The main reasons alleged for Welch's displacement by the *Homestead*, the organ of the malcontents, was that he had reached the stage of physical and mental decline and that the agricultural interest required more vigorous and alert leadership. His supporters in the rival *Register*, under the direction of "Father" Clarkson, urged in reply that he could have served effectively for at least five years while a worthy successor was being sought with seemly deliberation.

Personalities entered largely into the discussion. It was alleged that some of the new appointments were the result of political bargains involving among other considerations a United States marshalship. Gue charged in an extended newspaper letter that there was a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the three members of the Board to determine all college policies according to their narrow and prejudiced views.

Sectarian bias on the part of certain board members was charged. The G.A.R. was incensed at General Geddes' removal, more especially for the appointment of an ex-Confederate soldier. Charges of misappropriation of funds allegedly inspired by the anti-Welch faction at the College led to a legislative investigation that completely exonerated the outgoing administration. Welch wrote to the *Register* from Europe in January, 1884, protesting vigorously against the misrepresentations and underhand tactics of the majority of the Board.

In reply H. G. Grattan, the leader of the anti-Welch trustees, presented a no less vigorous and acrimonious defense in the *Waukon Democrat* which was issued as a broadside and sent to members of the legislature. Alumni of various classes were quoted anonymously in approval of Welch's removal, largely on the ground that he was not a true champion of

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industrial education. After alleging that the whole case for the administration had been built up by a small clique of Welch's academic, journalistic, and business associates, Grat-tan charged specifically that the ex-President was "never a scholar," that he was ineffective alike as teacher, executive, and business manager, and that in his personal qualities he was a poor example for youth. Rather than having been done an injustice, the ineffective and incapacitated executive, the blunt phillipic concluded, had long been a burden on the College. Underlying the whole controversy was the old line of division between the scientists and the vocationalists. The legislative abolition of the offending board failed to settle the question and bring institutional stability. The situation was most unfortunate for the new president, who came to the position with a distinguished career in educational and agricultural leadership.

KNAPP A VICTIM OF FACTIONALISM

Seaman Asahel Knapp was a native of northern New York, descended on both sides from old and distinguished families. He secured a classical education at Union College, where he was an honor student, being elected to Phi Beta Kappa. After a brief career in the ministry, with the aid of his wife he conducted female seminaries in New York and Vermont with marked success. A crippling accident and a general breakdown from overwork caused him to remove to Iowa in 1866 for change of scene and outdoor life. He settled on a farm near Big Grove, Benton County. His strength proving unequal to this undertaking, he became pastor of a church at Vinton for the next two years. He then served for five years as superintendent of the Iowa School for the Blind and during that period regained his health sufficiently to be able to return to the farm. With characteristic energy and initiative he entered upon the improvement of livestock, especially of Poland China hogs, with such success that he gained a state-wide reputation.

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He was an organizer and the first president of the Iowa Improved Stock Breeders' Association. For three years (Sept., 1876—Aug., 1879) he was editor of the *Western Stock Journal and Farmer* at Cedar Rapids. In this position he became intimate with agricultural leaders like James Wilson and Henry Wallace. He had contributed to the College's *Progressive Farmer*, and President Welch had referred to him as the outstanding breeder of hogs in the state and as a leader in improved farm methods. His election as "professor of practical and experimental agriculture" upon nomination of Welch was a recognition both of the standing that he had come to have as a stockman and writer and a concession to those who were demanding full and direct training for the farmer. At the time of his election it was reported that he had been offered the presidency both of the Kansas Agricultural College and of Purdue University.

Knapp's brief experience as teacher and investigator at the College had been markedly effective. He had found the farm in a run-down state and had sought to make it a creditable enterprise if not a "model" one. His leadership was recognized in national gatherings as well as in the state. Conditions without and within the College, however, gave no adequate opportunity for his unusual administrative capacity. Farm organizations and press were cordial, and the student papers and apparently the student body were friendly. But the opposition press, including the Ames *Intelligencer*, and the supporters of Welch generally were aggressively hostile. Declining enrollments and continuing faculty divisions were emphasized to discredit the new administration. Under the circumstances, Dr. Knapp probably welcomed the rule that automatically limited his appointment to one year.

The new enlarged Board frankly recognized the necessity of reconciling and conciliating the two factions. At their meeting in December, 1884, Knapp was dropped from the presidency but continued as the head of the agricultural

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work. Professor Joseph L. Budd was placed in temporary charge. Welch was elected professor of psychology and sociology. The delicate military situation was adjusted by a vote of confidence in Captain Lincoln, warm praise of General Geddes, and the more substantial relief in his election to the college treasurership. The relations of the two military men were reported to be most cordial.

In general policy the Board took a step toward more stabilized tenure by repealing the rule that the election of president and vice-president should be made annually and by a resolution declaring it to be "the policy of this Board that the President, all members of the Faculty, and assistant professors of the College shall hold their positions during satisfactory service." Such a statement at this time was at least a reassuring gesture. The *Register's* correspondent thought the "treaty of Ames" a good week's work which had brought greater harmony to the College than it had known for years and created a confidence in its future. The local *Intelligencer* reported that "the faculty are united and harmonious; and from occupying a position of 'armed neutrality,' as some unwise parties intimate, the fight of the factions has closed and we know of no one connected with the institution who is so short-sighted as to hazard his own position by refusing hearty obedience and support to the new order of things."

Both Welch and Knapp accepted the solution in the best of spirit and pledged their full cooperation. The two men in different ways had made lasting contributions, but their services to the College were nearing an end. The next year Knapp secured a leave of absence to establish a rice plantation in Louisiana, and in that section in his mature years he was to make a contribution in the development of demonstrational club work that would place his name among the nation's greatest educational leaders.

Welch remained in his congenial teaching and lecturing work until failing health caused a recuperative trip to Cali-

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fornia, where he died in 1889. In the funeral tributes recognition was given to his foresight, patience, and devotion in developing the program of a pioneer technical college and to his artistic vision in campus planning.

LEIGH HUNT'S PERSONAL RULE

With the passing of the two principals of the rival groups the expected harmony was not secured. The College was slow in finding a leader who could win the confidence of the state. W. I. Chamberlain of Ohio was the preferred choice, but he could not be persuaded at this time to come to Iowa. Instead, largely through the influence of J. S. ("Ret") Clarkson, a member of the new Board, an ambitious young educator was chosen to carry on at the beginning of 1885. Leigh Smith John Hunt was born in Indiana in 1855 and was thus less than forty when selected for this difficult position. His unsystematic training was largely self-acquired and he had the confidence and assertiveness of the "self-made" individual. Hunt thus far had been notably successful as a public school administrator. He had been particularly effective in conducting teachers' institutes and had developed an early system of pupils' savings. In Iowa he had taught at Cedar Falls and Mount Pleasant and at the time of his election was superintendent of the East Des Moines district.

With qualities that were to take him far in the business world, he had neither the training nor the tact for a college president. The young executive seemed over-conscious of his dignity and brought social innovations new to the community. The sight of the head of a farmers' college riding out in a trap drawn by a high-stepping cob with a colored footman on the rear seat attracted unfavorable notoriety. His unfamiliarity with college customs and procedures and especially with faculty sensibilities was all too evident. He brought to the College the dictatorial methods of the "well governed" high school according to the standards of the time. Failing

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to secure the support of the faculty for his policies, he obtained a ruling from the Board that the College should be subject to an "executive government," which he proceeded to exercise in his relations with students, faculty, and the Board itself. He clashed openly with the veteran professor of English, Dr. Wynn, who was contemptuous of the executive's academic deficiencies and his limitations in public address, particularly in the conduct of chapel. In extreme protest the popular professor submitted his resignation in November, 1885, to take effect at the end of the following year.

The most spectacular test of "executive government" was in a contest with the senior class. Two members were expelled for infraction of rules and the whole class went on strike, setting up headquarters in the opera house down town. When the president of the Board appeared to offer mediation he was informed curtly that the head of the College would conduct its government in his own way or retire. The member returned home without addressing the students and the class soon after surrendered. Throughout the exciting struggle the faculty kept to its academic wood-sawing, that is, revision of the course of study; and there is no mention of the episode in the minutes. "Executive Government" was unrestrained. It was a victory for President Hunt, but this and similar decisions proved too costly to his standing with the College and the public, and on the plea of failing health he resigned the following spring. The only relief in this tense and hectic term was the President's marriage with a popular former student of the College. Leigh Hunt's long and truly spectacular career in the Pacific Northwest, Asia, and Africa as journalist, international financier, and mining promoter was still before him. His only later recorded educational activity was in a reported political deal for the location of the Washington State College. In a newspaper interview while on a visit to Iowa in 1915 he expressed the opinion that "We are over-educated. Our institutions of learning are for the few." At that time his main in-

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terest was in a scheme to establish subsistence homesteads for young men.

CHAMBERLAIN'S ELECTION

After this trying experience the Board sought to be safe and deliberate in their selection. Its committee, J. S. Clarkson and Joseph Dysart, reported at the May meeting in 1896 an imposing list of the candidates with impressive supporters. A number of men considered by the committee, including General John Eaton, of Marietta College; President T. C. Chamberlain and Professor W. A. Henry, of the University of Wisconsin; and Dean I. P. Roberts, of Cornell, proved not to be open to call. In Iowa, State Superintendent Akers was reported to have wide support, and newspaper discussion added the names of James Harlan, C. C. Carpenter, and Jesse Macy of Iowa College. Perhaps to the embarrassment of their faithful secretary, the committee reported that the president of the alumni association and others had "suggested and urged the name of E. W. Stanton." There were candidates well recommended from Illinois, Indiana, and even New England.

But the choice returned to the favored candidate of the previous year, W. I. Chamberlain, whose training, experience, and endorsement seemed to set him apart. The leading public men of his state—Hayes, Sherman, Foraker, Dr. Washington Gladden, the president and the professor of agriculture of the University of Ohio, along with other agricultural leaders of the Middle West and the outstanding agricultural journalists gave him hearty recommendations. By every test that could be applied, the committee was confident, Chamberlain met the qualifications sought better than any other available candidate. They had hoped that he would accept the chair of agriculture along with the presidency, but he declined—as he explained that he had the offer of two other similar pro-

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fessorships—by reason of his lack of training in the basic sciences. He consented, however, to give lectures on practical agriculture. The title consequently recommended was that of "President of the College, Professor of Moral Science and Lecturer on Practical Agriculture." The report was unanimously adopted, and Chamberlain, conveniently on hand, accepted in a brief speech the position which he assumed in July.

PROMISING LEADERSHIP

William Isaac Chamberlain was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1837, but as his family removed to a farm in northern Ohio the next year, he was almost a native Buckeye. He entered Western Reserve in 1855 and for ten years after graduation taught academy and college classes in the classics at his alma mater. Failing health led him to return to the family farm, where he was highly successful. His experiences were the basis of numerous contributions to agricultural papers which caused him to be well known among agricultural leaders. In 1880 he was elected secretary of the Ohio State Board of Agriculture and soon expanded its functions to include crop reports, fertilizer control, and the development of farmers' institutes. His work in the latter field was especially noteworthy. His attainments and influence were recognized by Rutgers in 1887 and by the Ohio State University in 1890 in awards of the LL. D. degree.

Chamberlain's selection was well received in college, state, and agricultural circles generally, and his administration started most auspiciously. A faculty reception in his honor in July attended by state officials, representatives of other colleges, and alumni was termed by the *Aurora* "one of the most brilliant affairs in the history of the College." Welch extended cordial welcome and predicted "a long and distinguished career as the honored President" of the College. Chamber-

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lain's response expressed a somewhat over-conscious sense of his inadequacy for so great a responsibility, but was regarded at the time as the becoming modesty of a strong leader.

His inaugural address in November, in which he declared for a distinct separation of the land-grant program and emphasis from that of the old type college and expressed his aims in moral and religious tone, was well suited to the supporters of the College, and his thrusts at the old-line colleges were tempered with the conciliatory assurance to visiting delegates that none of their institutions had kept to such benighted ways.

That the new President, according to his lights and temperament, made an earnest effort to unify and harmonize the various groups, there can be no question. For a time he seemed to be having commendable success. He sought deliberately to secure harmonious and cordial relations with the faculty and the student body. At the November, 1886 meeting of the Board he advised a more cooperative and democratic system of college government: "By vote of this Board, Nov. 13, 1885, the government of this College was made Executive. I prefer faculty government, subject to the general laws and advice of the Trustees. Thus far the Trustees and Faculty have been a unit in supporting my views, or rather our views have coincided. Whenever I cannot carry Faculty and Trustees I shall deem it my duty to carry out their views cordially and earnestly or resign the Presidency." The Board ordered that the former rule be rescinded as recommended and that "the government hereafter shall be that which is known as Faculty government."

In making recommendation of a successor to Professor Wynn he was at great pains to explain to the Board, and to the staff and the student body, in the *Students' Farm Journal* that he had had no part in the withdrawal of the beloved professor and had the kindest feelings toward him. In the selection of Wynn's successor Chamberlain exerted his personal influence more than in any other appointment. He

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recommended that a professor with ministerial training and experience who could take charge of the chapel services be secured. There were nine applicants that had been especially considered by the committee (the President and two board members)—from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and New York. Four of the candidates had preaching qualifications. Of the available candidates Chamberlain was convinced that one was outstanding, Arthur C. Barrows, a graduate of Phillips Andover and Western Reserve who, after teaching at the latter institution, had served in the ministry and as the head of an important church board. Chamberlain and Barrows had been fellow students and life-long friends, and the President's endorsement was in the strongest terms. He stressed particularly the fact that Barrows, although a classical scholar, was greatly interested in agriculture and in industrial education and that he had addressed farmers' institutes on horticultural subjects. After presenting an elaborate exhibit of records and recommendations, he concluded with an appeal to the Board which made the decision a test of his own influence: "My own acquaintance with college men is large, but I must say that I know of no other person anywhere nearly so well fitted for the place as Mr. Barrows is." The final decision was narrowed to the President's candidate and an Iowa man, and by a vote of five to four the former was elected. The selection proved a fortunate one both for the College and the President. Barrows was not only a most effective teacher but was able to aid and support the administration in various ways.

Unfortunately in the key technical positions Chamberlain failed to make as satisfactory appointments. His engineering professors showed a stronger professional than collegiate interest and point of view. For the agricultural professorship, after failing to secure a recognized leader upon whom he was counting to maintain and extend the work of the department, he was led reluctantly—as will appear in connection with the

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development of the course of study—to accept a board candidate ill-adapted for the organization and leadership demanded. No small part of the discredit of Chamberlain's administration was due to the lack of a Marston and a Meeker to train leaders and technical experts for the state's industries and a Knapp, a Wilson, or a Curtiss to win the confidence of Iowa farmers.

Both for his own peace of mind and the good of the College the conscientious executive tried earnestly to uphold the Board's avowed policy of permanence of tenure. In carrying on a coeducational system under the conditions of cohousing Chamberlain was much concerned for the competence and continuity of the highly responsible but ill-appreciated position of preceptress. The difficulties of securing and retaining a proper person for this position were pointed out in his recommendation to the Board in 1887. "The problem of securing a permanent preceptress is the one that most seriously confronts us. There has been no less than four different ladies acting in that capacity within about two years. None of whom were willing to serve for more than one or two terms. Such frequent changes are a most serious damage to the college. The place is an anxious, unpleasant and laborious one under our present complications with the dormitory and boarding system with co-education under a single roof. The problem will in my opinion never be fully solved until we get a new Ladies' Hall and Domestic Economy building. Until then I frankly confess I think we must combine the Preceptress with the French and German and pay a salary of \$1,200, to secure permanence."

In reporting to the Board in 1886 charges of teaching ineffectiveness against a professor of mechanical engineering and an instructor in modern language he recommended that they be given another year to demonstrate their capacity. He recommended in the case of the engineer that additional equipment be provided for his laboratory and shops, and

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pledged himself "to sustain him heartily in his work to the end that he may live down these criticisms if they are unjust." He was very desirous that "the idea of permanence of Professorships during good work should prevail . . ." He gave a great deal of care to selecting new faculty members, and though at least one young appointee felt that he lacked understanding appreciation, he seems to have acted conscientiously, according to his views, toward his entire staff.

He could report complacently in the student paper in July, 1887, a "year of uninterrupted good feeling between and among all the professors and students." From his Ohio experiences he was enabled to address farm audiences with effectiveness. His reports set forth the needs of the College and the state responsibility with considerable vigor, and though he maintained later that the Board restrained him from making major appeals to the legislature, provision was made for a general-purpose building—the Morrill Hall—before the end of his service. In federal relations he was a strong supporter of the experiment station act and personally represented the College in urging the second Morrill grant in 1890.

TROUBLES, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

But by that time his troubles were cumulating. An over-meticulous administrator, he gave undue attention to minutiae and thus dissipated his energies. His religious views were thought unduly narrow and an affront to free-thinking scientists in a state-supported institution. His scruples as a strict sabbatarian led to embarrassing complications. His social outlook seemed narrow and illiberal. In the spring of 1887, when Belva Ann Lockwood came to Ames for a lecture on Washington life and personalities, the President denounced in advance her dangerous ideas and undignified activities and posted an order forbidding the students to attend the lecture. About fifty, including some of the most prominent upper-

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classmen, openly defied the executive order. A spy from headquarters duly recorded the names, and after the offenders had signed a conventional statement of regret and penitence, the faculty resolved that "all students who attended Mrs. Lockwood's lecture be given final warning in chapel and their parents be notified of the same." It is doubtful that the action was taken with enthusiasm by the more open-minded members of the staff. In general, Chamberlain failed to secure the enthusiastic support of the faculty. In the background there remained the opposing agricultural factions, and Chamberlain himself later claimed that he had been the victim of this division for, he held, with all his emphasis upon the practical in his writings and addresses he was really more in sympathy with the liberal Welch faction than with the opposing group. The broad course in "science and agriculture" neither the President nor his eastern-trained agricultural professor was able to rationalize and justify effectively to the farmer constituency. Even in his institute talks, in which he was accounted especially proficient, Iowa farmers were said to be affronted by his constant references to his experiences on his Ohio farm.

CHAMBERLAIN RETIRES

Student disturbance was probably the final discrediting influence. The fraternity activity of a small group was bitterly resented by the great majority, and the President was felt to favor the movement by reason of the membership of his son. A small riot that occurred in breaking up a fraternity banquet occasioned a scandal which brought only inconclusive faculty action with the consequent dissatisfaction of all concerned. At the commencement in 1890 the graduates absented themselves from the baccalaureate service, and it was evident that the President had lost control of the situation. His resignation in November of that year was promptly accepted to take effect immediately. In facilitating so readily

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this adjustment of an increasingly unhappy situation, Chamberlain had the confident expectation of becoming the head of the Ohio State University. In this ambition he was counting on the unqualified support of ex-President Hayes, as he told certain members of the I. A. C faculty. The uncertainty of that highly conscientious board member was indicated in the entry in his diary for December 10, 1890. After mentioning that certain members wanted Chamberlain for president of the University he commented, "It will strengthen us with the farmers; make it, in fact, a mechanics' and farmers' college, and gain thus in the Legislature the needed votes for its liberal support." Hayes had agreed to consider the case impartially but he had made no promises—"Believe in making the college a people's college, a college for farmers and mechanics in the best sense—something different from the common old-fashioned classical college. The truth is, I fear Chamberlain is not large enough in head and character for the place. But—?" The question was not answered affirmatively, and Chamberlain returned to his old position at the head of the state board, in which he was influential in directing the policies of the University, including the selection of presidents. He devoted the last years of his long and useful career to farming and agricultural journalism. On his visit to the campus in 1913 surviving friendships were renewed and old enmities forgotten. The best final estimate of his service as head of the College in the unsettled years at the end of the pioneer period was given by himself in a letter to Professor Stanton a few months before the death of both of the former colleagues in 1920: "You knew the work I did or tried to do, and you know that I was sincere, honest and industrious, but I think I was not exactly adapted."

At the same meeting at which Chamberlain announced his retirement, Professor Smith submitted his resignation from the agricultural department, as he had learned of opposition to him "on the part of some members of the Board," an

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C. F. Mount withdrew from civil engineering with the sincere hope that the work of the department might "still progress in the direction of still further usefulness to the many young men now doing work in the department." These vacancies, with a somewhat more than average change in minor positions, led to the comment of the *Aurora*, "There must have been a 'land-slide' somewhere along the line, for the next term we will have eight new instructors and a new president."

That student disquietude over appointments may have been influenced or inspired by faculty discussion is indicated by the protest and recommendation of the Board committee on faculty and course of study that "We deplore the general lack of discretion on the part of members of the Faculty with reference to their intercourse with students and others and the freedom with which actions of the Faculty and important measures considered by it are discussed and bandied about among hired help, students and Faculty and we demand that a rule be adopted by the Faculty that all such proceedings be considered confidential and that the proper place to announce the decisions and conclusions of the Faculty is the rostrum of the Chapel." The rule was enacted but it did not insure acquiescence within or without with the policies of the Board and the administration.

STANTON TO THE RESCUE

The college government, indeed, had now reached a critical stage. Three presidencies within a six-year period indicated an unusual instability, even in those unsettled times. But more than this there was a rising opposition from the agricultural interests, who were demanding a reorganization in content and emphasis. Whatever excuses might be alleged, the Board was clearly on the spot. As a temporary adjustment they turned to their dependable secretary, Professor E. W. Stanton, for the first of the four interim terms that he was to serve as college head. Following his selection, the acting

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president was requested to present to the Board "his opinion in detail on the question of the relation of the Executive of this Institution to the other departments and such reforms and changes in detail of Executive management as would in his opinion aid more completely to the good order and success of the Institution." In his report the Acting-President disposed of these matters tersely. "There is no better guide in the administration of its affairs than the law itself and no argument howsoever ingeniously constructed can do away with the plain language of the statute." In its score of years, he asserted, the College had done a great work and now stood in the first rank among land-grant institutions. The true policy now was to build up and not tear down. The exhortation was prophetic of the new day. The readjustments that followed marked the end of the pioneer period of instability. Never thereafter were there to be such uncertain, fluctuating policy and such disturbing interference with the college organization.