

BACK IN THE NINETIES

Some Reminiscences by Earl D. Babst, '93, '94

Evidently the editor of the Chimes caught the president of the American Sugar Refining Company somewhat off his guard when he secured the promise of this article for the February issue. At any rate, Mr. Babst says it took a "Sunday afternoon struggle" to redeem his promise. We suspect, however, after reading it, that it was more fun than trouble, once he got right down to "reminiscing." We are lifting it almost bodily for the benefit of the alumni, though it was written originally for undergraduate readers.

Since leaving Michigan Mr. Babst has driven his personality deeper and deeper into the world of affairs. Formerly vice-

president of the National Biscuit Company, he is now president of the American Sugar Refining Company, a director of the National City Bank of New York, and a member of the International Sugar Commission during the war. He was one of the founders of the Detroit University School and wears a Michigan Phi Beta Kappa key. Mr. Babst has a secure niche in the regard of all Michigan alumni through the spectacular success of the great national dinner in New York in 1909. That was a high spot in Michigan history when nearly one thousand alumni gathered in the greatest college dinner that had been held up to that time.

When an alumnus starts out * * * to "say something" he has to choose in a general way between exhortation and reminiscence. To this alumnus only one choice seems possible. In these *post bellum* days he will not turn exhorter. Therefore, reminiscence is necessarily the alternative. At least, the choice is a safe and, let us hope, a sane one. Certainly there will be fewer to contradict, and I fancy there will be more to confirm.

Like so many others, the writer first made the acquaintance of his Alma Mater by studying its Catalogue. His interest was centered chiefly on the comforting promise that "students coming from colleges whose requirements for admission are substantially equivalent to those of the University may expect to be able to go on with their work without loss of standing." The letters and credits he presented to Prexy Angell did get him in, and Kelsey, Beman, and even Carhart, were satisfied, but Calvin Thomas

and Demmon very properly were not impressed. The more the Catalogue was studied the more the writer was convinced that he would "go on," but Commencement Day alone would decide if it would be "without loss of standing."

The Old Catalogues

The Catalogues of 1891-94 are before him, bound in a single volume, each course taken carefully checked off therein. The volume tells its own story better than any diploma. Kiefer, Barbour, Fletcher and Cocker are Regents; Sullivan M. Cutcheon, Ashley Pond and Benton Hanchett are the Board of Visitors. D'Ooge is Dean, and Ford, Prescott, Greene, Taft, Pettee, Walter, Pattengill, Cooley, Vaughan, Denison, Adams, Hudson, Hinsdale, Stanley, Knowlton, de Nancréde, Carrow, Freer, McLaughlin, de Pont, Trueblood, Scott, Patterson, Dock, Elmer Brown, Mechem, Schlotterbeck, Kirchner, Darling, Drake,

Dewey, Dixon and Effinger constitute the major part of the Faculty. Those of you who know your Michigan—and of course you all do—know the preparations that were being made then to receive you and those who will follow you. In those days there were not quite 2,700 students, of whom about one-half came from the state of Michigan. Dr. Angell lectured on International Law and Judge Cooley on the Law of Interstate Commerce. When they spoke it was with authority indeed; but, more important still, Angell spoke with a charm and ease and Cooley with a clearness of statement which, in reminiscence, quite baffle description.

Ernest T. Tappey, Lawrence Maxwell and Edward W. Pendleton were commanding figures in alumni affairs; the venerable Theodore R. Chase, '49, was still necrologist; Dean C. Worcester, a tutor; James Rowland Angell, a tennis-playing senior, and Stewart Edward White, a red-headed freshman. Harry B. Hutchins was at Ithaca, helping, as Michigan has ever helped, to "put over" Cornell. From the fact that it has taken Andrew D. White, Charles Kendall Adams, Jeremiah W. Jenks and Harry B. Hutchins—all drawn from active service with Michigan—it is apparent what a big job it was. To the glory of Michigan, that job has proved to be a successful one!

Michigan as a Pioneer

In passing, it may not be amiss to remind the undergraduate of what Charles Kendall Adams himself said on this point at the time:

"One of the normal methods of advance seems to be for the University of Michigan to devise some new educational variation, or return to some old European standard, and then, after it has demonstrated its success, pass it

through Harvard, as civilization is passed through France. It can then be proclaimed as the ripe fruit of the oldest and most renowned of American universities."

The whole procession of state universities is demonstrating every day the influence of Michigan ideas, but the East is coming under the influence a little more directly. The widely heralded announcement that "Jim" Angell is a Harvard man is merely the recurrence of an old habit.



EARL D. BABST, '93, '94L

To breathe for a moment the Campus atmosphere which still encircled the departed heroes of '91, let us open their *Palladium*, provided by Abbott, Crosby, McGraw, Hinchman, Thayer, Ashley, Stillman, Effinger, and Hinkson. Robert B. Lamont is president of the senior class, and from the class history we fancy that Bob already had his arms stretched out toward the steel organization which is his today. But '91 is romantic. Romance is the best beginning of all—the romantic love of the University. "Ah,

how we love it! Our College! What associations cluster about its towers and echo with its chimes; what memories of high arching elms and cool, green depths of shade, of sunlight and shadows dancing over gray old walls, of moonlight, and music, and sparkling water! How we love its bare old halls and narrow stairways, its mutilated benches and dingy ceilings! Even the clanking of the heaters when the steam is turned on is music to our ears!" Undergraduates, those predecessors of yours had no Union, no Ferry Field, and only the promise of the Waterman Gym. How much greater will be your inspiration to love Alma Mater!

Memories of Ninety-one

Dear old Ninety-one had vision as well as romance. "Ten years more brings us to the dawn of a new century. We shall still be young men, but with moustaches full grown, and the best part of life before us. We go to reinforce '89 and '90. Ninety-two and Ninety-three and so on, to '99, will come to reinforce us. We shall not play a lone hand." No, indeed. They have played many hands and are playing many roles. George Codd, Henry Butzel, Tom Cooley, Louis Defoe, W. E. Griffin, Harry Hatch, Jack Jameson, Ruth Lane, Bert Rich, Edgar Thorp, Eddie Woodworth, Tom Wilkinson, and Charlie Warren: all "children of light," whether ambassador, congressman, or private citizen—the boss of both!

The Old Annuals

To turn over the pages of this long-forgotten *Palladium*—and it would be true of every *Palladium*, *Castalian*, *Michiganensian*, and Michigan Annual of whatever name and date—brings indeed a thrill. Here is F. N. Scott, winning

the first prize with a whole page of verses on the *Chimes*:

"Jangling bells in high clock-tower,
Zig-zag chimes that tipsy go,
Ring that crazy tune you know,
For the useless inter-hour.

"Bells that quavering rise and fall,
Tuneless bells that strangely chime,
Sweet shall seem your voice some time,
When in dreams we hear you call."

On a neighboring page the newly-elected President of Yale sings for the same judges a light and cheery lay. In deference to University comity, however, we shall quote from Spring only, but you may still find out for yourself that Summer, Autumn, and Winter are rather alluring:

"In breezy Spring
When tree-tops sing
And Nature's heart is glad,
A single note
From my Love's throat
Shall drive me pleasure-mad."

It is only fair to the judges to say that this effort was awarded the second prize.

The cryptic symbols "J. R. E.," which probably even the freshmen of 1925 will identify officially, appear in the poet's contest, while I. K. Friedman comes out boldly, as well he may.

Omicron Phi, *Cord and Magnet*, and *Omega Nu* bring back a host of gay spirits: Stubby Walter, Fitzhugh Burns, Fred Sherwin, Frank Smith, Dick Smith, A. D. Rathbone, Jack Ferris, Frank Gilchrist, Eddie Wickes, Carl Phillips, George Prentis, Harry Candler, Clarence Church and Dan Quirk. A chance meeting with Ned Beck in the White House offices a few days ago and the recollections of the part he has played in the success of *The Chicago Tribune* have set me to musing, Mr. Undergraduate, that it does not seem so far back when Ned was as much interested in working for

Cord and Magnet as he was in being Ann Arbor correspondent and reporting the Campus news for the Windy City's big daily, of which he has now been editor for a long time. Who that knew the Campus in those days will forget Charley Alexander, Billy Quarles, Dave MacMorran, Carl Warden with his midnight serenades and his Chequamegon Orchestra, or Ralph Stone and his *U. of M. Daily*?



A FAR CRY FROM WALL STREET
Mr. Babst and his wife, formerly Alice Edwina Uhl, sister of Marshall M. Uhl, '06, and daughter of Edwin F. Uhl, '62, formerly Ambassador to Germany.

A glance at the photograph of the Varsity eleven of '91 will show towering Tom Chadbourne, of Houghton, Michigan, at center, just as he was with the Wilson administration and just as he is now with the new steel merger that makes such entertaining gossip in financial circles. And yet Tom writes now and then that he is the alumnus of twenty colleges. Our claims to him are the best, and Tom knows it. Malley is football captain, Duffy and Grosh are the backs. In baseball, George Codd, of course, is captain, and everyone, especially Harry Bulkley, is still talking of the triumphal tour of the East and the equally triumphal celebration on their return, after having played Hamilton, Vermont, Brown, Wesleyan, Trinity, Harvard and Yale.

The Mode of Thirty Years Ago

In those days the undergraduates frizzled their hair, just as afterwards they wore corduroy pants and today have shortened them to knickers. Truly, for the undergraduate, *mode* springs eternally new and queer. Just listen to this final anonymous effort of the editors (probably Ted Smith):

I

"Curly locks,
Fresh and hair,
Nature did not
Aid him there.

II

"Father came,
Saw with ire—
Curling iron
Now in fire.

III

"Father went,
Father said,
'All have frizzles
On the head.'

LAMENT

"All because his Charley boy
Thusly did the hours employ."

Here we are at the end of this old *Palladium*, which came out in June, 1891, some months before I marched past dear old Prexy Angell and got my chance to fight for advanced credits, so as to come out even with the rest of '93. Jim Murfin had not yet arrived to become a freshman. Ned Denby hadn't even heard of football.

Time is up, words are up; the struggle is done and the Sunday afternoon is gone. Guests are coming. The struggle you have had to make, poor undergraduate, to follow the musing of a far-off alumnus is about over, too, and we haven't said a word, or come to a single event, of my college days.

Well, they were many, and (confidentially) I love every one. There was the Cornell game in Detroit and Jimmy Van's run down the field, dodging the

famous Osgood; Grover Cleveland's speech in University Hall the day of the "rump convention" in New York, and the beginning of his great friendship for the University and for her gifted sons; those hymn-singing laws, the election of the Student Lecture Association in the Chapel, Prexy Angell's unexpected appearance and his pounding of the Bible in a vigorous effort to gain control of the platform; the visit of the legislature and McLaughlin's quarter-mill tax bill; the first May Festival; James Francis Burke and the National Republican College League; the Dekes stealing the Psi U's ice cream; Rob Wagner stealing the *Castalian* grinds—but some "grad" can tell you all about these things and many more. Possibly these hints may cause some to get their old Catalogues and Annuals and have the fun for themselves.

A Military Ball

Michigan's second annual military ball will be given in Waterman Gymnasium Friday evening, April 28, under the direction of the University Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Early applications for tickets indicate that there will be a large attendance. The price of tickets has been set at \$5. Music for the evening will be provided by three orchestras, according to Warren Gilbert, '22e, general chairman. Decorations will be provided by the Arts and Crafts Company, of Detroit, and are to be of a military nature. Twelve booths, in the form of front line trenches, will represent the allied countries.

Mrs. Marion L. Burton spoke before the meeting of the Michigan Dames on Monday evening, March 6. She told of her experience in organizing the chapter at Yale.

Marionettes at the Union Playhouse

The Tony Sarg marionettes performed recently at the Union Playhouse. The little actors were so lifelike that one scarcely knew whether to pity them for being blockheads or to congratulate them upon having no brains to bother with. They gave Thackeray's "Rose in the Ring" and Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," once more to delighted children, young children and old ones. Certainly the puppeteers deserve high praise for the illusion they created with a rag, a stick, and a hank of hair. The performance was given for the benefit of the Vassar College Fund.

"The Golden Doom," a one-act play by Lord Dunsany, was presented by Sigma Delta Phi, national honorary oratorical and dramatic fraternity for women, at the Women's League party on Friday afternoon, March 10.