The LAFAYETTE ALUMNUS...

The Campus Near Jenks Hall
The American College
1925 - 1935 - 1945
JOHN HENRY MACCRACKEN
President of Lafayette College, 1915-26

Looking back ten years, forward ten years, and about us in 1925, do I feel that 1925's faith in higher education for American youth was justified, or if I feel it was justified then, do I still retain that faith under the changed conditions of today? My answer in general is yes, but it will require some additional words to spell out what my faith was in 1925, what it is now, and how my conditions seem to me to be substantially different in 1925 from those in 1925.

In 1925 the alternatives for the youth of 18 were college, professional and technical school, apprenticeship or job. The alternatives remain substantially the same today, except that so many fine junior colleges have been set up and the standards of professional education, particularly of law, dentistry, and pharmacy have been so raised, that professional education generally speaking does not confront the boy of 18 as an alternative over against college. Apprenticeship at that age has largely disappeared, though efforts are being made to revive it as a part of federal policy. Jobs are scarce and therefore not a universal alternative, while idleness at public expense has been added to the list of real possibilities.

In 1925 college as an alternative to immediate employment implied eventual employment at a higher wage, and employment of a sort which carried with it certain social values. It is still true that the chance of employment for the man who can afford to wait until he is through college is double that of the youth seeking employment at 16. I am told that over 50 per cent of the class of 1925 at Lafayette found employment, and a recent study made at Purdue shows that well over 50 per cent of their graduates of the last five years are of present employed and at surprisingly large salaries. Conditions in this respect are, therefore, not as greatly changed as many would have us believe. College certainly does not lead into a blind alley. When it does not guarantee a job it doubles one's chances for employment and is now the only road to the professions. On the other hand wages in the skilled trades have risen more than average wages in the skilled professions and the youth who chooses to become a carpenter, a stenographer, or a bricklayer, if he is one of those fortunate ones to secure employment, can expect to work shorter hours and yet offer his own Buick or Chrysler years ahead of the man who choose the longer road to the professions.

If the nation decides to furnish higher education to all who can profit by it at public expense, does greatly increase the competition in the professional fields, it will become a question for careful consideration on the part of the man with little taste for intellectual pursuits, but with five thousand dollars capital, whether it will be better for him to invest his five thousand in four years at college, or to go at once into business taking his capital with him.

The blue shirt is symptomatic of the change in social attitudes. Both the "sweat shop" in Washington and the Prince of Wales affect it and prefer to be recibed with manual labor rather than with the white collar class. I heard the president of an American College, which until recently would have been numbered with the aristocrats, say the other day, that most of the important work in the world is done by the men who get their hands dirty, and another college president declares that there were too many seen riding today on the backs of other men. If democracy feels compelled to treat out economic inequalities among its members, why may it not also try its hand at intellectual inequalities? Perhaps we will vanish Aristocracies.

Against these signs of diminishing social values attached to college education it is well to note the statute that University of State University and its football team is an instrument toward popular favor and power; to note that in the ten years 1922-1932 the number of students in high school increased 2½ times and that the seven per cent of the youth of 22 who graduate from college will ten years from now hold 57 per cent of the supervising staff and professional positions paying $1000 or more a year. If you draw a line through American youth today and call those who graduate from High School the top and those who do not the bottom—it may still be popular for the politician to say "I am the bottom even if you're the top," because the majority is on his side of the line. But if you are planning for 1945 I would not count on it. The majority may shift and shift very fast, just as the number of college men in politics is going to change very quickly as a result of the new requirements for the study of law.

Personally I think the talk about changing social conditions has been overdone. Human nature under Roosevelt is not substantially different from nature in 1925.
under College. Breed and consec-
monious and envy may be fostered by
by capitalism, they are certainly
by commercialism. Commercialism offers
possibilities for the man who knows more,
can see further, who is stronger and more
patent than the rest of us, to work for
the last ounce of his energy for the
welfare of mankind, but it does not
justify the use of ability to that end.

I was not one of those who
believed in 1925 that higher education
you the pursuit of all the nation's
goods or the road to happiness for all
its citizens, much less did I believe
that a particular kind of education,
college education—was the kind of
education all needed. But I believe
that, as I believe now that
doing what we love is the best possible
use of four years that a young man
or a young woman of certain
abilities and interests could make.

Like all, I know price can be
bought too dear, and the wrong
people, when they find it; not
suited to their needs either because
it to vulgar use, or substitute
the fascination for the real.

It has always been democracy's
indispensable that it sets the tone by
labels that, by substance. As
the Supreme Court implied the other
day, democracy calls ten cents
more a dollar, then it is a dollar for
democracy, "you popull ver del." It is
most encouraging sign that a
whisky dealer adverts "the
palate can tell you more than a
thousand words." Let's get down
to facts and beware of labels. If
you talk about colleges in general,
the same label will be
LaFayette and for Lehigh, and Einstein,
but if you talk about colleges in general,
you mean other than these. Never
LaFayette or Lehigh is still
LaFayette and perhaps the char-
acteristics which differentiate it from
Lehigh are quite as significant as the
characteristics which they have in
common. The value of a college
education is debated over and over
and the chief reason we do not
arrive at a conclusion is whether
the game is worth the candle
because we do not start by saying
what game and whose candle.

Nowadays not only are we
all college alumni but even in the
same institution college does not seem
the same to any two students. To
one it is a professional preparatory
school, to another the professional
school itself; to another the
professional school itself.

Space will not permit a discussion
of the different types. I can only
say what I mean when I use the
term, American College. The
institution must have all these
salient characteristics. (1) It is a fellow-
ship and implies a way of life to-
gether; (2) which intellectual interests
prevail, are not exclusive.

(1) It is a walled garden,
a controlled environment. The
e same sun shines on it which shines on
the world outside but all sorts of
devices can be used to control and
filter the sunlight and even to
replace it with artificial rays. It
shines with the world at large
but its educational elements can
modify the soil indefinitely.

(2) Its activities are measured
by the ideal that it acts twice more
the cost and the public good.

There are three stages for the
maturation which must be recog-
nized and taken into account.
The economic, the social, the
mental. The correlation made by
the natural process we call "growing
up" cannot be greatly altered by
"taking through" any more in the
intellectual and spiritual world than
in the physical world.

(4) Time is a factor in the
process which cannot be ignored.
Neither traditions nor materials
of instruction alone determine the
length of the curriculum. Four
years is an accident but a period
arrived at by the experimentation
and observation of those most con-
cerned with all the factors involved.

(5) It is a device of mediation,
co-ordination, and transition, a true
"middle thing" to use the German phrase
more sense than one.

It mediates between parental con-
trol and complete individual freed-
hood. It offers an artificial environ-
ment in which experiential is possible
without the full price of the conse-
quinces being charged to the in-
dividual. It mediates between the
past and the future. It mediates
between truth on authority and
truth on personal judgment. It mediates
between personal and even national
and world history with "the spot
activities."
Dr. and Mrs. Radcliffe Have Fifteenth Wedding Anniversary

On New Year's Day, Dr. and Mrs. McCluray Radcliffe of Philadelphia celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They received the congratulations of their many friends at a tea held in the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, Philadelphia. Dr. Radcliffe is president of the famous class of 77 and very active in the Lafayette Alumni Association of Philadelphia. He was a trustee at Lafayette until he resigned in October, 1902.

Dr. Ross Hoffman, 23, Wins $500 American Historical Prize

A prize of $500 is glory in itself but when it is granted to a historian by such a body as the American Historical Association the honor is doubled.

Dr. Ross Hoffman, 23, instructor in History at N. Y. U., has been awarded the George Louts Bowne Prize of $500 by the American Historical Society. The prize is given every other year for the outstanding volume on European international relations, and it was given to Dr. Hoffman for his book, "Great Britain and the German Trade Route, 1783-1914," published last year by the University of Pennsylvania Press. Dr. Hoffman received the prize at the annual meeting of the Association held in December in Washington, D. C.

Another book, written by Dr. Hoffman, and published in 1934, was titled "Reconstruction: a volume of a religious and historical character." The publishers are Sheed and Ward, N. Y.

Seventh Annual Alumni College to Be Held Beginning June 6

Recognizing that it is difficult for many alumni to leave their work for a full week to attend the Alumni College, President Lewis has made a change in the usual program. This year, the seventh annual session, the Alumni College will be limited to four days, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, June 9, 10, 11, and 12. Dahan Mizeritz, author and authority on Jewish affairs, and famed as the "Interpreter of India" will be one of the speakers.

George E. McLeod, '23, chairman of the Alumni Council and producer, with John Wirtz, of several plays among which was "Within the Gates," by Sean O'Casey, will lead a symposium on "Contemporary Progress of the American Drama."

There will be two other conferences. One will be on "Engineering," the subject of the other will be announced later.

Carnegie University, with its first "Alumni University" scheduled for this June is the latest recruit to the rapidly growing list of colleges and universities that have followed Lafayette's lead in this field of adult education.

President Lewis spoke before the Cornell Alumni Corporation at their annual mid-winter meeting on the subject of the Alumni College and it was the action of that body that launched their new project.

J. Blair Easter, '12, Elected to Royal Statistical Society

J. Blair Easter, '12, Pittsburgh financial and economic student, has been honored by being elected a fellow of the Royal Statistical Society. There are 35 other fellows of the society in the U. S.

The Royal Statistical Society was founded in 1834 by parliamentary recommendation of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, its object being the careful collection, arrangement, discussion, and publication of facts bearing on and illustrating the complex relations of modern society in its social, economical, and political aspects, especially facts which can be stated numerically and arranged in tabular form.

Mr. Easter, associated with the investment counsel firm of John A. Beatir & Co., is completing a book on statistical information and investment work. His research led him to contact the prominent and successful managers of investment funds in England and Scotland from whom he learned the affairs, principles, and practices so successfully used in that country. He then endeavored to correlate his findings with practices of the largest American life and fire insurance companies as well as principal American public endowments.

His work is not completed but his findings so far confirm his original thought, namely, that correlation of accumulated wealth through the medium of investing is a scientific task and that the procedures in this science should be considered as a profession which is regulated by a code of ethics.

The Pittsburgh Press carries a weekly article written by Mr. Easter on the subject of investments.

Judge Richard Kennedy, '78, Died on January 29

Judge Richard A. Kennedy, '78, presiding judge of the County Court in Pittsburgh since 1914, and a jurist in the court since its founding in 1911, died on January 29 following an operation.

In his almost 25 years in County Court Judge Kennedy listened to the cases of thousands of marriage cases as he presided over the bulk of the domestic and tax-support cases. Since 1911 he directed the distribution of more than 110,000,000 to widows, children, and aged parents.

His chief hobbies were botany, ethnology, meteorology, astronomy, and other natural sciences. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.