

YALE ALUMNI WEEKLY

VOL. VIII. No. 25.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1899.

PRICE TEN CENTS.

ALUMNI AND PRESIDENCY.

What Yale Men Ask For In Their Next Leader—Views of Men From Many Parts of the Country.

What special qualities do the sons of Yale ask for in their next President?

This is the main answer:

First—That his reputation shall be a national one.

Second—That he be a Yale man.

Third—That he be a young man.

This is, in brief, the theme and the conclusion of this article. The reason for asking the question and the means taken by this paper for answering it, are worth further elaboration. The three main points of the answer will bear further definition.

A few months ago Dr. Timothy Dwight determined to establish a precedent as to the years of usefulness of a college president, and tendered his resignation as President. When the loss of such a head as Dr. Dwight makes it necessary to find a man capable of fulfilling all the demands that the conduct of a modern University is certain to make upon its chief officer, then, and only then, does one realize the extreme scope of such demands. It has not happened that many of our great universities have been, in the last few years, face to face with such a situation, and so it is that the requirements have not been brought prominently to the front and the growth of those requirements studied.

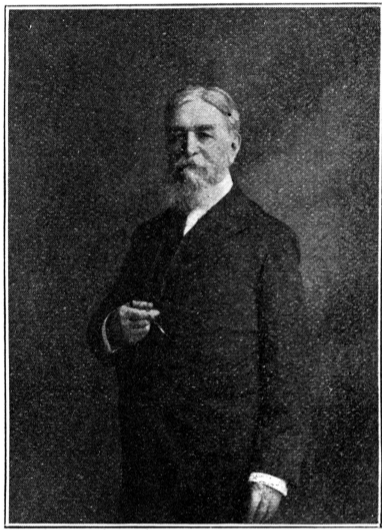
The University of Cincinnati is looking for a President and the Committee having his selection in charge are the most recent seekers in the field, and so the most acquainted with the difficulties of the problem. And they find it a most difficult one. How much more than must those feel it, who have to find a man to place at the head of such a University as Yale? As a member of the Corporation puts it: "If anyone can give us the man for the place, send him on; we shall take him."

Ten thousand Yale graduates are ready to look for the man. They wish to aid, but not to interfere with this important function of the Corporation. If it were possible for the selection of a fit man to be of more vital interest to any members of the community than to the Yale Corporation, it would be to the Yale graduates; for there is no more loyal body living than they, and any weakness in the University they love will be a hurt to their hearts such as only the closest family affliction could equal.

The ALUMNI WEEKLY has in the past month, largely through personal interviews, endeavored to bring the views of the graduates into available form and to collect information such as would be valuable to those who have to select the President whether it were in form that might be published or not. A trip by one of the editors of the paper has included Chicago, Cincinnati, Dayton, St. Louis, Washington, New York, Boston, Hartford, Waterbury, and other Yale centers in the eastern part of the country, and while it was impossible to see all who think and feel deeply and who can speak with authority, the trip meant interviews with hundreds. And this has been supplemented by views of hundreds more, secured by correspondence, including representative Yale men everywhere. Replies have come from nearly all and each letter speaks of the deep interest felt. Limitations of time, and the hope of securing personal interviews, have prevented

correspondence with many others, but in general the Yale territory has been quite well covered. Of course one man can speak for many, if he mingle with them and think seriously.

It is within the truth to say that the canvass of the country has placed the paper in the possession of facts indicating how each one of ten or more candidates would be received in the great Yale strongholds. There has also been established such a connection as makes it possible to furnish, upon very short notice, the views of nearly any section



REV. BURDETT HART, D.D.
Member of Yale Corporation.

and, in a measure, the qualities of the resident of any section as they are known to his intimate friends and acquaintances. But this would be chiefly matter which it would not, at least as things appear now, be wise to place in print, and which is therefore aside from the purpose of this article.

LOYALTY TO OLD LEADERS.

A few quotations will help to show how deep in the hearts of the graduates is the love for those men who have sacrificed so much for Yale. "My admiration for Professor _____ is such that I would nominate him for any post to which that gentleman felt himself equal." "My contemporaries would like to see Professor _____

_____ president of Yale or president of the United States or president of any other thing he would care to be president of." "We would like to see Professor _____ president, although our sentiment may be largely the result of personal regard and gratitude."

Some of these are only examples of the first impulsive words of men who have made themselves names in the world and look back to the years at Yale and the men who stood to them for all that is strong and forceful, all that is commanding in scholarship and character. Many of these enthusiastic champions, brought face to face with the forgotten fact that, as years have passed over their own heads, so they must have touched those of whom they can not think as a day older than when they last saw them; realizing that, no matter how kindly has been that touch of time, it must have left its mark, grow for a moment sad in the reflection that the time will come, must come, has in many instances already come, when the old give way to the new.

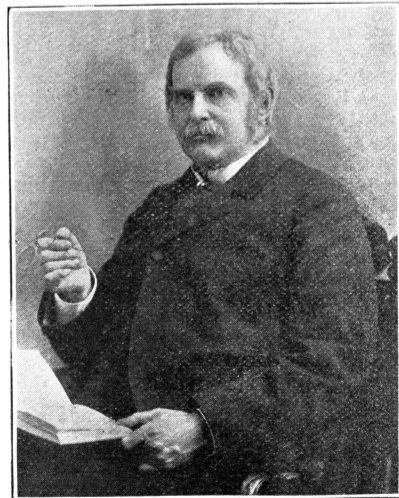
All know that many of the men who have in the past stood at the front of Yale are one by one reaching the years when they must look at the setting and not the rising sun. But it is a pleasure to feel that these men live yet in the

hearts of the boys they taught and there at least they will never die, and never grow more gray. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that nearly all the old classes, until they actually see the class numerals, want to present the names of their own favorite Professor as just the man for the Presidency. With such a constituency as this, one can but feel that every personal desire will be merged in rejoicing at the selection of the right leader and that leader will have behind him such a following as will enable him to accomplish all that man can do for the interests of the University.

One of the first impressions caused by meeting and talking with the alumni through the country, is that of the extreme desire of everyone to learn what men are being considered and what the alumni in other sections think of the type of man needed. Personal visits to and conversation with such men as might perhaps fairly represent the best expression of opinion among Yale men in the important cities, have elicited suggestions that will be of interest to all members of the Yale family. In regard to these expressions of views, particular attention has been paid to securing as widely distributed ideas as possible.

THE MEN SEEN.

The men who have been seen have been representative of every field of activity and men who have earned the right to have their judgment considered by having themselves risen to prominence in the world of education, or of letters; who have attained the very highest position in the professions or who have made themselves powers in the world of business or of finance. Clergymen of note, supreme court justices, presidents of educational institutions, heads of the largest business corporations, experts in all fields—and in their distribution one sees the remarkable breadth of the Yale product—have given their views and all have talked with perfect freedom, not only as to the type of man, but also as to individuals. Many of the opinions regarding individual candidates were given in confidence and to be placed at the service of those who may have direct reason for their use under like conditions of confidence. But the views



HON. FREDERICK J. KINGSBURY, LL.D.
Member of Yale Corporation.

as to the type of man, the expression of opinion as to the attributes which should surround the next president of Yale, were given unreservedly and with a desire that they be freely disseminated and discussed by all Yale graduates. In giving these views in their crystallized form, one may expect most

naturally to meet the inquiry as to whether any man can possibly combine all the qualifications. That inquiry should not, however, deter such statements, nor, because such demands would require an ideal president, should they be passed by. To secure the best it is always necessary to set up an ideal.

THE DEMANDS.

The demand most common and listened to from all sections, is that the man be of national reputation. If he be a professional man, that he be recognized by name; that if he be a pronounced educator, he be known among those skilled in the science of teaching for his experience and achievements in that line; that if he be a man of teaching affairs his name should be a power where such names are mentioned. Men who are ready to argue against any particular calling, and in favor of another, unite in calling for prominence. In favor of this they say that the present situation calls peculiarly for a man whose very name shall command respect and that too, in no uncertain manner, for one who has already been a leader.

The next most widely voiced desire is that the man be a Yale man; that the choice be not made outside of the men who have lived and breathed Yale's traditions.

The third qualification in order of the general desire, is that the next president be a comparatively young man, one whose opportunity for carrying out his projects be not limited to a few years, and whose ambitions have not given way to a too settled conviction that every thing in this life that may be done, has already been done. There is a most marked desire that the man have the hopes of youth, rather than the scepticisms of age. As one man put it: "Few men pass sixty without believing too strongly in the probabilities of failure."

OTHER DESIRES.

After these three, the opinions begin to be more divided. Among the most marked of those advanced after these salient points appears to be the belief that the man should be one in whose character the trait of human sympathy be a pronounced one; a man of magnetic influence, stimulating, leading and urging to a desire of imitation in its best sense.

Pressing closely upon this is the demand that he be a man of what for want of a better term men are inclined to call "orthodox" belief and life, inspiring reverence and exhibiting in himself a fitting type of the University that owes so much to the strong religious convictions of its great men in the past. Then there are equally divided desires for an expert educator, for a man of especial administrative qualities, for a man of financial acumen, for a man of pronounced executive ability.

ACTION DESIRED.

There is one point upon which opinions seem very strongly united, and that is against anything that would savor of postponement or of a temporary arrangement. The principal argument against this is embodied in the fact that it would in a way cast a stigma upon the man eventually chosen; that a fair inference would be that he had already been considered, but had been found wanting, and that such a reflection would cast doubt upon his