

YALE ALUMNI WEEKLY

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THE TENEYCK.

Better Speaking—The Close Contest of Coffin and Gould.

There was more good speaking at the TenEyck this year than last, for which some disconsolate friends of Yale oratory are duly thankful. If Yale will only work seriously at this problem, there may be such a thing as platform presence at Yale as one of the results of Yale education. It does not constitute a bewilderingly artistic feature of the University landscape at present. One can see a great deal better speaking at prize exhibitions at high schools than is often offered in the Junior and Senior years at Yale. And if a Yale student towards the end of his course can't speak a piece of his own creation better than a high school scholar can deliver somebody else's oration, it is unfortunate.

The College evidently expected something better, or at least the Class of Nineteen Hundred did. But that Class always seems to be looking for good things and to be backing them up. The Juniors attended in good numbers. There was, however, a most painful row of vacant pews in the front of the Chapel, a fact which ought to be taken into consideration in judging the speakers. Some of the Academic Faculty were there.

The oration on "St. Paul," of Bascom Johnson, of Washington, D. C., the first speaker, was mainly biographical, finished in form, and at times was delivered with grace and force. The effect was marred by hesitation at several points.

Walter Sharp Page, of Columbus, Ohio, delivered an interesting and thoughtful piece on "Charlemagne," with a good voice and with simplicity and directness. He made much, but not the most of a subject well suited for effective oratorical delivery. His voice was good and gestures very bad.

William Sloane Coffin of New York, to whom the prize was awarded, spoke third. Mr. Coffin treated the subject of "St. Paul" in rather an original manner, devoting himself to the Apostle's influence upon the American idea of liberty. The paper was logical and spirited, and claimed quite enough even

lacked unity. The delivery was conversational rather than oratorical.

"Schiller" was the subject of the oration by Maurice Philip Gould of Wamego, Kansas. It divided the honors of the afternoon with Mr. Coffin's oration. Mr. Gould had the best attention from the audience of any of the speakers of the afternoon. He took principally the man Schiller, giving so much of a criticism of his works as showed Schiller. He had caught the intense German's spirit, and in the construction of his piece made a good selection of those points of his character and his work which had dramatic force. Some critics said Mr. Gould's piece was "windy" and too theatrical. It was not windy because it was too well thought out. Whether or not it was too theatrical depends largely on the point of view; but Mr. Gould did go off his feet.

The delivery was good. There was too great deliberation at times, which looked to some like straining after effect and to others like a recognition by the speaker that he had a piece that required some effort to show that in the writing and the speaking of it the man was contained. Mr. Gould's gestures came rather nearer being natural than any one's else. The time will come when speakers will be produced at Yale who will express themselves by their gestures, and not consider gestures an unfortunate necessity for a public appearance.

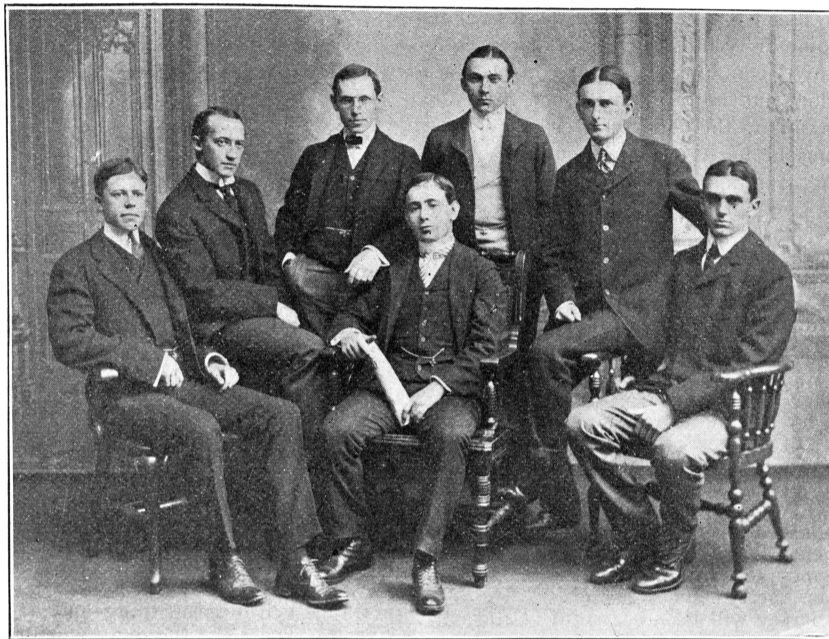
It is worth while going into a single piece to this extent for the reason that the speaker attempted so much and came so near accomplishing it. He did not quite do it, and there is no disposition to criticise the sanity of the verdict which gave Mr. Coffin the first place in the final judgment of the Faculty. Mr. Coffin was himself always. His speech was so clear that no auditor with any perception could mistake it. He gave the impression of knowing exactly what he was talking about as well as of feeling what he said. When one compared the two pieces his feeling was that Mr. Coffin was sure to do good platform work in the future, with promise of constant development and increasing power; and that Mr. Gould might sail a rather unusual course on this sea if he worked over his rigging long enough and secured and kept on hand plenty of ballast.

Henry Thomas Hunt, of Cincinnati, Ohio, lacked assurance and distinctiveness of utterance in his piece, which was the last on "St. Paul"; hence, unfortunately, the audience were unable to judge of the good points of his paper as a whole.

Howard Speer, of Cincinnati, who had chosen "The American Soldier" had a subject of great opportunity. He left a feeling that if he had done a great deal of hard work he might have added to grace and a sense of the picturesque, a much stronger grasp of the solid side of his subject, which would have made a great oration.

The last speaker, Charlton Brice Thompson of Covington, Kentucky, left a very good impression. He had an honest, vigorous piece and an honest, vigorous delivery, although the latter gave too much the impression that he was trying to drive it in every time. He used his head too much in gesturing and his voice too much all the while. There was no perspective of inflection. The construction of the piece was unfortunate. His subject was "Gladstone and Bismarck," and the antithesis on which he built was overburdened. It was a section of Gladstone's character versus a section of Bismarck's character, a page of one against a page of the other. It constantly opened the temptation of sweeping assertion, which was not always resisted in the interest of historical accuracy.

RETIRING RECORD BOARD.



Photograph by Pach.

H. H. Tomkins, Jr. H. B. B. Yergason. H. Mason. E. F. Hinkle.
M. Scudder. C. E. Hay, Jr. (Chm.) J. B. Adams.

The Winner.

William Sloane Coffin, brother of Henry Sloane Coffin, a TenEyck speaker of the Class of Ninety-Seven, was announced the winner of the Henry James TenEyck prize speaking contest, held in Battell Chapel on Friday afternoon of last week at three o'clock.

Mr. Coffin comes from New York, where he prepared for Yale at the Cutler School. Since entering College he has been prominently connected with the Young Men's Christian Association work, having had charge with a classmate, during the present year, of the mission work of the Association, on Grand avenue. At the annual meeting of the Association recently, he was elected Treasurer. In the Junior appointments he received a Philosophical Oration.

President Dwight presided at the Exhibition and, as heretofore, all members of the Academic Faculty present were the judges.

The attendance this year, while not to be compared with that of ten or twelve years ago, was noticeably larger than for the past year or two.

ELI WHITNEY NAMED.

Another Candidate for the Corporation to be Put Forward.

To the Editor of YALE ALUMNI WEEKLY:
Sir:—In view of the emphatic manner in which the several nominations for the vacancies on the Yale Corporation have been announced, I feel that the alumni should be advised of another name, the enthusiastic nomination of which is already assured.

I refer to Mr. Eli Whitney of the Class of Sixty-Nine. In the near future this name will be presented to the alumni in a letter inviting attention to his qualifications for the position, the recognition of which has already led to the vigorous and unsolicited support of his friends.

New Haven, Conn., Mar. 23, 1899.

THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION.

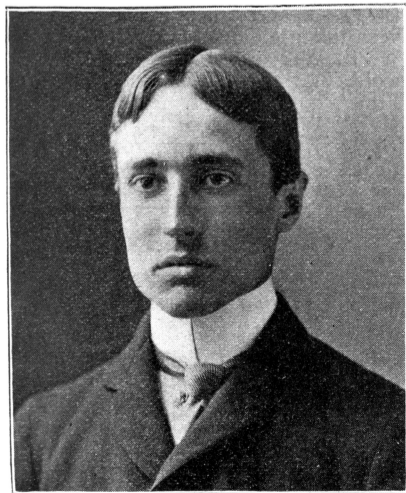
Things That Will Go and Things That Will Remain.

III.

A graduate of Yale in the sixties, returning in the nineties, finds very little to remind him of his own Yale. The material setting of the Yale life is almost wholly changed, and the life itself is changed. The graduate in the nineties, who returns in the following twenties, will probably find more material reminders of his own Yale, but the life itself will be strange to him. Undergraduate life during the next administration will probably change much more rapidly than it has during that now closing. This cannot be avoided, and must not be regretted. Whatever good things pass away will be replaced by better things, and whatever bad features disappear will not be missed. Some of the latter must be encouraged to go.

The solidarity of life during the two lower years is one of the good things sure to disappear and be replaced by something better. This seems at first hard to accept; many will not accept it, until it is an accomplished fact in the face of their protests and petitions. The change has already begun to show itself. The great increase in the size of the classes has already affected this solidarity of life considerably. The introduction of either the elective or the group system in these years will give it the death blow. Increasing opportunity to graduate on the satisfactory performance of certain courses of study, whether two or five years be required therefor, will hasten its disappearance. Class feeling, class rivalries, class collisions will largely disappear with it. They can be spared, although they were good things in their day and generation. Intellectual and social rivalries will more than fill their place.

All the pettinesses of the marking system; of "allowed cuts" and "dry



WILLIAM SLOANE COFFIN.

for St. Paul. The delivery was marked by a fine earnestness, which was kept well within bounds. The gestures showed that they had been carefully planned and yet were almost natural.

The oration on "St. Paul" by Frank Marion Atterholt, Jr., of Akron, O., contained many things of merit, but