

# The Weekly Almanian.

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## COLLEGE HISTORY

Brief Survey of It's Rapid Growth Given.

### OLD FACTS FOR NEW STUDENTS

Success Due to Sacrifice and Energy of Presbyterians.

Although Sept. 12th, 1887, is the magic date that Alma college sprung into existence, it does not follow that the college "just started," of its own free will, when the time was ripe. Quite the contrary, as those who know, will abundantly testify. Beginning as far back as 1837, active demonstrations were witnessed in the little town of Marshall, culminating in the legislature of Michigan passing an act in 1839, to incorporate Marshall college. Consecrated men, even before this, had lifted their voices in support of the founding of a college—a Presbyterian college—but not until 1837 did anything actually become a fact. Even this, however, was doomed to failure.

About this time the University of Michigan and Olivet college were founded, both owing their birth in a large measure to Presbyterian support.

Rev. Dr. George Bushfield, pastor for a long term of years of the First Presbyterian church of Detroit is one man, at least, to whom the University of Michigan owes a lasting gratitude. Presbyterian support was switched to Olivet college, also, and for a number of years, founding of a Presbyterian college was hopeless.

In 1885 plans to convert the Girls' Seminary at Kalamazoo into a Presbyterian college failed. In October of the same year, after a warm debate in the Synod, held at Detroit, it was resolved that "a committee of nine be appointed who shall consider the subject of the establishment of a Presbyterian college in this state," and also "Resolved, That said committee should be instructed to learn what funds can be secured toward the establishment of such an institution, such committee to report at the next meeting of Synod."

The committee was appointed, and such were the astounding revelations of their investigations, so ready and willing did every one seem to be, that the only logical

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## Evolutionized Democracy.

Oration written by John M. Dunham and delivered by him at the State Oratorical Contest held at Kalamazoo March 5th, 1909.

Advancement comes through slow, weary stages. It is a gradual metamorphosis from lower to higher forms. This principle of evolution is the immutable law of progress. Through its marvelous transformations, it has brought the world from barbarism to civilization.

Evolution has developed every tribe and nation, but the progress in each has differed as did the character of the race itself. Some peoples have led the world in art or music, some in science or literature. The once vigorous East contributed to the world all the mighty religions. The inhabitants of the West, endowed with great political genius, gave to the world government, and the farther removed from the sleeping Orient the more conspicuous is this genius. Greece created representative government. Rome evolved the majesty of law. The Celt and the Teuton, each in his sphere, wrought marvelous transformations in national character. The bold Anglo-Saxon, endowed with the valor of his continental fathers, made himself a force that shook the thrones of despotism and ultimately created popular sovereignty. Arraying himself in arms, he met his tyrant king on the banks of the Runnymede and there wrung from him the first rights of man. Across the trackless seas at a later period a people, far removed from Oriental stagnation and inheritors of the wisdom and virtues of a thousand years, cried to the world: "All men are free and equal." Oppression and tyranny had at last evolved an independent spirit. Then, Democracy, spanning the chasm between despotism and liberty, sprang into life—the dynasty of the commoner had begun its eternal reign.

And what, we may ask, is this Democracy? It is government based on the altruistic doctrine of the greatest good for the greatest number. It supplants the rule of one by the rule of all. Instead of the struggle of cunning, it calls for character. Instead of the selfishness of the ruler, the ruler is created by and for the subject. The product of an evolution, it is the voice of the people's will. Its essential principle in equality of obligation to the leader; equality of privilege to the follower; and equality of brotherhood of man, it proclaims, "I am my brother's keeper." Tempering justice with mercy, it makes its motto the golden rule. In the face of all predominant interests, it meets the cry of the oppressed of human relationships. Its creed is liberty, fraternity, equality—this gospel of hope and progress—we call, Democracy.

These elements have wrought history's marvelous transitions. A common and equal voice in the government, man's first right, revolutionized all society. Where slaves and serfs once covered under the lash, are men with full rights of men. Where subjects were crushed by the iron heel of despotism, are citizens choosing their rulers. Where tyrannical, autocratic codes flourished, is now justice with its peace and security. Evolution's altruistic triumph is the mutual obligation of leader and follower. Yielding to the higher, the moral law, the glory of the leader becomes the welfare of the follower. The spirit of fraternalism overcomes the selfish use of power. But the crowning triumph of all history is equality of privilege. By one magic stroke the system of individualism is created and the doors of opportunity opened to all. It touches ambition and spurs men on. It speaks to a humble rail-splitter and he becomes his country's savior. It awakens a barefoot canal-boy and

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## TRACK PROSPECTS

Some Advanced Dope About the Cinder Path Squad.

### CALL FOR MORE MATERIAL

Capt. Chapel Predicts Good Things, But Needs More Men.

Spring athletics are now attracting the attention of college students throughout the state, and Alma is by no means bringing up in the rear. Every day we hear the questions "What kind of a team are we going to have?" And what place will our track team land at the M. I. A. A. meet next June? Of course we all give an optimistic answer, but the situation may not be quite as optimistic as it at first seems. Our base ball squad of 25 men bids fair to give them all a run for their money before the season closes, but can we say as much for our track team?

Last year Alma had the best track team in the history of the college. At the M. I. A. A. meet the Presbyterians captured second place and we believe would have carried away the banner, but for the fact that one of our strongest competitors was barred from the meet. Of the seven point winners of our '08 team only three are now in school. Every one of these men are veterans and are already out working. They will indeed go a long way toward winning honors for old Alma, but they can't do it alone. They must have support. They need the encouragement of seeing a large squad out every day, every one of which is working hard for a berth on the team. Last year we were badly crippled for want of men. What men we had entered so many events that they couldn't do the school justice in any of them. One man started in nine events and another entered seven. Now this is altogether too much and we don't want to see such an occurrence again. We must have a big squad out.

There are lots of winners in college if they would only get out and work. Many a champion has been the laughing stock of onlookers when he first began work. How often have they been fooled. Hard work must and does count. Then again, our present standbys will in the year or so be gone from

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he becomes his nation's ruler. Supreme, is the ablest man. Our country's grandest heroes have sprung from the common people and have risen so high that "royal blooded kings must upward gaze to see them on the heights of fame". This is Democracy's glory. But not all who strive can attain; few can lead; most must follow. This may be her weakness; but Democracy allows those to rise who can, and demands in the name of divine justice that all shall still be men and bear full rights of men.

This is Democracy in theory; what is it in practice? The pessimist, pointing to threatening spectres which, gloomy and forboding, have risen upon the horizon of America's future, asserts that it is a failure. Hear his story: Social, industrial and political conditions are appalling. America's immigration evils have made her fair shores the dumping ground of the world. The reign of a privileged few, a self-styled aristocracy, is creating class hatred, awakening all that is worst in our population. The unwritten law is making justice a farce. Race antipathy gives us annually scores of charred stakes, each with its mute but eloquent handful of ashes. Where is our much vaunted equality? This is despotism; it is mob-rule and lynch-law,—frenzied, atrocious, despicable! Our industrial evils, great in proportion to our progress, continues the pessimist, are sowing broadcast the seeds of selfishness and lawlessness. Industry is exacting; industry is cold; in industry is but heartless oppression. Napoleons of finance measure their fortunes by the ruined lives of fellow men. "In gloomy sweat-shops the stolen joys of childhood are minted into gold." This spirit of commercialism dominates us; gold has become enthroned in our hearts; the almighty dollar has become our god. Politically, he asserts, America is corrupt to the core. We may boast of equality of privilege but we bow our heads in shame as he tells how the corporation's gold buys special privileges, overcomes public opinion and makes legislation a farce. We boast of equality in the choice of leaders but he asserts that elections are often bought and sold, that political systems are often a mere form, that bribery and corruption flaunt their inky blackness before us, taunting us with our weakness and goading us on in their glee. Such is his mournful story; but pessimistic though it be, it is not all fiction. Ah, Sirs! Conditions are bad. But is Democracy a failure? Is history but a mere repetition of the past, an endless round of calamities, a cycle of hope and despair? Or can we break away from this gloomy philosophy and seek refuge in the promise of a brighter day? We have found Democracy to be not a creation but an evolution. And, as an evolution, it is not yet perfect. But guided by the past, America is going forth to grander, nobler heights, till her destiny in the plan of the universe is fulfilled.

How to secure justice has been the problem of every progressive age. The present is pre-eminently so. Its efforts to solve it. The most commonly proposed panaceas are anarchism and socialism. They would reduce all society to a non-competitive basis. Both, through the diminution of the individual, would fail in their primary construction of society. But as a gigantic force for progress each is unparalleled. They are but stages in Democracy's evolution, which is leading the world on to absolute justice. Both are extremes; therein lies their benefit.

Anarchism fails because of an unwarranted faith in each individual. It is too optimistic, a Utopian dream. It dreams to those heights the real man can never attain. Its main principle is that government is the root of all evil, and since law and force make humanity bad, humanity unrestrained would be essentially good. Anarchy, eliminating government, would take us back to primitive conditions.

"When man walked with beast,

Joint tenant of the shade."

It would make each individual man his own master. But reason warns us against a leaderless society, for mankind is not yet perfect, nor even essentially good. Anarchy is the extreme opposite of despotism; good government must be conservative. Evolution has given us the happy mean, Democracy.

Socialism is a political-industrial doctrine. Its creed is the consolidation of all capital through governmental production. Socialism fails because it prevents competition, striking at the very root of all progress. It condemns individual-

## TRACK PROSPECTS.

Continued from first page.

Alma, and we want men here ready to get out and defend Alma's name.

We propose that every man not on the base ball squad select some one or two events and get out and work.

About ten men have been doing faithful work at cross-country training for the last two months, and here is our best to them. We feel sure that it has developed some middle and long distance men. We need more of them. It is not always the "firsts" that win a meet. Last year Alma was there with her share of the firsts, but she wasn't getting the "seconds" and "thirds." We didn't have the men to enter. This year we want to see two men entered in every event. Dope would tell us that the "seconds" and "thirds" will decide the championship this year.

At present the weights seem to be suffering the most of anything. The season is now getting far enough advanced so that the weight men can begin work out of doors. So get busy you big fellows and get out and work.

Besides the M. I. A. A. meet and dual with M. A. C. Alma hopes to send a team to the big conference at Chicago. This surely ought to be an essential to good hard work. In all probability the dual meet with M. A. C. will be held on Davis field.

The need at the present time is more men. More men to get out and put in good faithful practice. More men for the weights, more men for the runs, more men for the hurdles, more men for the jumps. Does this appeal to you? If so, what can you do? Pick out one or two events that you believe yourself best suited for, and get to work. Don't put it off any longer. A wheel is no good in a minute of a week. It takes weeks and

weeks of faithful work.

Alma foot ball warriors have won glory and championships on the gridiron. Her base ball teams have demonstrated her superiority on the diamond, but we can't say so much for the track teams.

Prospects now look the brightest ever, but don't let it stop there. Get out, word hard and make a reality the prophecy that the coveted pennant will be brought back from Hillsdale next June to wave in the Presbyterian breeze.

CAPT. CHAPEL.

## Found.

A stick pin, in the Almanian item box. The first time anything has been found in the box since Christmas. Owner, may apply at the office and claim same.

Mistress—"How does it happen, Jane, you never saw finger bowls before? Didn't they have them at the last place you worked?"

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ism; it advocates collectivism. Eliminating personal liberty, it should shackle humanity into industrial slavery. Gone then is progress; gone, the very goal of advancement; gone, the reward of merit and genius; gone, all that urges man onward and upward. Lost then, our wonderful industrial progress; forgotten, our marvelous civilization. Socialism fails.

What, then, is Democracy's future? Is there no panacea for the ills of government? Must we lie helpless in the grip of this mighty problem? Must we conclude that the strong will forever rule, the weak forever be crushed, that the survival of the fittest is the only law of life? Is there no remedy for inequality, for injustice? Never has a nation faced a greater opportunity; never has failure involved the ruin of a nobler destiny. We cry out for strength and in our very bitterness is found relief. That we strive for better things is proof that there are better things. There is a remedy. In Democracy itself is found the panacea for the ills of Democracy.

Guided by the past, America must not attempt to solve her problems in a day. National character, national ideals, national evils are the result of the entire life of a nation. If past history has proved one thing, it is that no nation can once for all solve its social, industrial and political problems. By evolution are they created, and by evolution they must be eradicated. Evolution alone is producing a more perfect government.

The careful student of present day politics can detect a tendency toward this perfection, this evolutionized democracy. We can see it in the desire to eliminate corruption; in the aim for truer, better legislation; in the efforts to delegate more powers to the people. We find it in the widespread introduction of the primary election, in the increasing number of independent voters, in the popularity of the initiative and referendum. But the most prominent characteristic is the general, national demand for reform. On American soil, the good and the bad, present in every phase of life, have locked themselves in an irreconcilable conflict. All over the land it may be seen,—fierce, unrelenting, deadly. By it, America must rise or fall.

College men! This contest is especially significant to us. The fate of Democracy rests upon its leaders; they control the masses. Then let them be statesmen, not demagogues. Good government must always be by the aristocracy of intellect and character. The educated man, then, bears a divine commission. He can raise the standard of political ethics. It is his duty to initiate reform; to mould, to guide public opinion; his duty to educate the less favored, to lift the masses to a higher plane. College men, Democracy is calling to you; calling for true leaders and followers; calling for honesty, integrity, morality; calling for those who dare to do; calling for men—"Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy, men whom the lusts of office cannot kill." Hark to the call of Democracy! Your denial may mean the heart-rending wail and anguish of a nation's fall; your support, the triumphant climax of all history, evolutionized democracy.

### Sophomore Occurrings.

The class was royally entertained by the Ladies' Aid Society the other evening. An unequalled good time is reported by all.

If all reports are true "Johnny," "Kef" and "Frak" can run some, even after playing two games of basket ball and in memories of a third.

Harry Willoborough Marsh still insists that one must go down town, in order that one can come back. Miss Winifred Maria Mark-

At a recent meeting it was decided that we tour Europe, this coming summer vacation, in a body. Every member of the class is again requested to deposit his fee with our treasurer before March 18.

We wish to inform Mr. Harry Lyons that it is against the rules of Wright Hall to ask permission to go walking with a girl.

College men are very slow, They seem to take their ease, For even when they graduate, They do it by degrees.—Ex

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### COLLEGE HISTORY.

Continued from first page.  
 conclusion the committee could come to was that a college must be founded, come what may. Consequently there can be found upon the minutes of the Synod meeting of the following year 1886, held in Grand Rapids, the resolution together with others, "Resolved, That in view of all the facts brought before us, we will, with God's help, establish and endow a college within our bounds." The resolution was swiftly carried into effect and on Sept. 12, 1887, Alma college opened its doors to the youth of Michigan.

From that time till now its growth has been rapid. Beginning with the two buildings, the present administration building and Pioneer

five in 1887-8 the student body has grown to an average of over three hundred.

In 1891 three degrees were conferred; '92, four; '93, seven; '94, two; '95, three; '96, eleven; '97, five; '98, twelve; '99, four; 1900, five; '01, eleven; '02, seven; '03, eighteen; '04, twelve; '05, eight; '06, seven; '07, seven. The growth of the library from a handful of books in the library or recreation room to one of over 20,000 volumes is a testimony to the generosity of the friends of the college. The yearbook tells the same story. The new Hall, the pride of the college, repeats it. The number of members in 1887-8 was twenty-three.

The endowment has increased by leaps and bounds and at present is between three hundred and four

alumni, in whatever profession or calling of life they may be, are standing for christian gentleness and character, the foundation of which was laid for them at Alma.

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From an enrollment of ninety-

hundred thousand dollars, being on the four hundred thousand side of the fence. Scholarships, student helps, special funds, and all such means of revenue claimed by most colleges are fast becoming a part of Alma.

What the future holds in store none can say. As is generally known large plans are in the making for a great celebration in 1912, which will bring with it increased endowment and more funds for other purposes. What the college needs most is more room. A new gymnasium, a new administration building, an auditorium of some kind, and a general beautifying of the campus ought to be brought about in the near future. In the meantime, let the good work go on. Our ministers are filling a fair share of the Michigan pulpits, our missionaries are bearing their share of the battle in foreign lands, our



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