History of Indiana University: The New Departure (1829-1833)

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CHAPTER III

THE NEW DEPARTURE

(1829-1833)¹

Inauguration of Andrew Wylie—the curriculum—compulsory attendance at early morning prayers—the building erected in the early 1830's—proposed dormitory plan—library—apparatus—increased attendance—activities of enemies of the College—attack on Dr. Wylie in the "Annotator"—political phases of the controversy—"Address to the Public" by students—petitions to the General Assembly—charge of sectarianism—dissolution of Hensdelphisterian Society and organization of Athenian and Philomathean.

In an Indianapolis newspaper printed on August 27, 1829, is an announcement over the signature of David H. Maxwell, the president of the board of trustees of the Indiana College, that on Thursday, October 29, the inauguration of Dr. Wylie as president of the College would take place. The members of the two College boards—the trustees and the visitors—are notified that they are expected to be punctual in their attendance on that occasion, while to "the literary gentlemen of our state especially," and to "the friends of education generally," a most cordial invitation is extended. And, as if fearful that the "literary gentlemen" and the "friends of education" may not be persuaded to attend the festivities in becoming numbers by the novelty attending the first inauguration of a college president in Indiana, the sagacious president of the board in a postscript adds, "Several addresses by students of the College, in English and Latin, will be delivered on the evening of the 28th."

It is quite evident that those having the management in charge hoped the occasion would be made to mark an era in the history of the College; and from all the evidence now accessible it seems reasonably certain that in this they were not disappointed. In the Indiana

¹Read by Judge Banta as the annual Foundation Day address, January 20, 1891, in the Old College chapel.
Journal of November 5, an unnamed correspondent tells something of the feast of reason enjoyed by "the trustees of the College and a numerous and highly respectable audience of ladies and gentlemen from various parts of the state" on that auspicious occasion. It is quite true, he makes no allusion to the several "addresses by the students in English and Latin," which the president of the board had promised; but I think we may take it for granted that the addresses were given, and well given at that, for those were days when it was a poor stick of a student who could not stand up before an audience and talk fairly well.

Be this as it may, the chronicler was not neglectful of the ceremonies and addresses of inauguration day. At the appointed hour, the courthouse being packed with an interested throng, he tells us that Dr. David H. Maxwell, after the delivery of "a chaste and appropriate Address, presented Dr. Wylie with the keys of the College and declared him duly elected and installed as its president." Then followed the inaugural address itself—"an inaugural," says our chronicler, "which occupied about an hour in the delivery, and which, for sound philosophy, expanded views of science and literature, lucid arrangement, nervous simplicity, and manly independence, may be honourably compared with the best productions of the kind in our country."

This, you say, is strong language, and so it is; but when on November 26, the Journal published the address in full, its editor, who was not a correspondent and not bound to praise, nevertheless wrote no less positively in praise of its "simplicity, elegance, soundness, and strength" than the unnamed chronicler had himself written. A pamphlet copy of that inaugural, dog-eared and time-stained, is before me as I write. Its very appropriate theme is, "Of What Advantage Is a College to the Community?" and on reading it after the coming and going of sixty years, since it was spoken, I am struck with what seems to be the conciliatory air pervading its every utterance and the seemingly far-away echo of some of its sentiments.

All men were not of one mind in those days (at least here in Indiana) as to the true place of the College. Indeed, there were a few who had such distrust of college-bred men as to deny the College

*Sixty years after 1829.
any place in a free state; while there were others whose ideas with reference thereto were so very hazy that they were as likely to turn up antagonists as friends. It accorded with the views of the orator of the day to take high ground in favor of scholastic training; and so he did, yet he did it in such a persuasive and conciliatory tone as not to antagonize those who should be less pronounced in their views than he. In well-chosen language he shows wherein the community would be the better by the liberal education of its four so-called learned professions—medicine, law, theology, and pedagogy—not forgetting to enlarge upon the benefit that would accrue to that “most respectable class in society, the farmer” by the education of such a “considerable number” of his class as the growing prosperity of the country would ultimately make possible.

Doubtless, that first of our inaugural orations would make dull reading to the most of us today; but let us remember that it was spoken for a people who were in the a, b, c, of knowledge as to the true mission of the College, and that if we have advanced beyond them in this respect our advance was made possible in a very large degree by this very address, and by the subsequent addresses appropriate to the times delivered—some here on commencement occasions, and others elsewhere in the state—by the same distinguished speaker.

It is a fact worth stating that, up to the time of Dr. Wylie’s coming, I can find no trace of an educational literature outside of the legislative acts and of the reports of education committees in the newspapers of our state. This inaugural address was the first educational address ever published in an Indianapolis paper, and, as far as I know, the first in the state; and up to 1835, of the dozen or more literary and educational addresses published in the capital papers, every one (save one) was from the pen of the president of the Indiana College.

Let us then, as generous scholars, treasure the memory of one who did so much to make possible the vantage ground of today.

Little more is known of the incidents of that first inaugural day than what is here recited. We may well believe that the president of the board as well as the president of the College was somewhat anxious as to the result of the day’s exercises. We have the testimony of Lewis Bollman that he and such other of the Washington College students as had followed the president to his new field of action were much concerned as to the impression their much loved preceptor would make. When one citizen was seen taking notes of the Doctor’s speech, Mr. Bollman could scarcely conceal his solicitude. What did it mean? Was the enemy already preparing for war? The young Pennsylvanian was bound to know; and so after the exercises were closed, he drew nigh to the notetaker and asked him what he thought of the address.

“It was a very ordinary address, sir—a very ordinary address. He used but two words that I do not know the meaning of,” was the unexpected reply!

Would that we could look back upon that old Indiana College at the time of the new departure, and see its professors and its students and their work. Its professors we know: Wylie, Hall, and Harney—men of renown even then, and each to become more renowned as the years go on; but who can tell how many, and who, were its students? No catalogue of the first College year 1829–1830 has come down to our time, and the legislative reports of the time are singularly deficient in information as to the number of students in attendance at the beginning of this first presidential year. The evidence on hand, however, warrants the conclusion that of our own Indiana students there were not to exceed twenty-five or thirty in attendance, but from a report (1829) we learn that there were students “from Louisiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and probably from New Jersey.” The writer of the report took a hopeful view of the future, predicting that the attendance during the year would not fall short of fifty, and I think it likely his prediction came true. It is known that a large number of Washington College students followed the president to Bloomington—so many that Washington College was nearly broken up for the time being, according to the testimony of Lewis Bollman.

The Indiana Seminary was organized as a preparatory school, and "The oldest catalogue in the University files is for 1830–1831, dated 1831. A statement in this catalogue to the effect that information concerning the College had been requested might indicate that no earlier one had been published. Another bit of corroborative evidence lies in a notation on an 1837–1838 catalogue—in somewhat faded ink—saying "8th catalogue." Again, Judge Banta, on pages 60 and 61, quotes from the "first catalogue," using statements found in the catalogue of 1830–1831, a fact which seems to indicate that he believed there was no catalogue in 1829–1830. On page 82 he calls this one "the first catalogue of which we have any knowledge." T. A. Wylie also says that the first catalogue was published in 1831."
can hardly be said to have ever advanced beyond it. Immediately after the passing of the self-chartering the College the trustees, assuming the transformation to be complete, declared that “The first session of the Indiana College will commence on the first Monday in June next.” But there was no change made in the course of studies. The professors on the ground were doing all they could. The greater number of their students were still in the preparatory studies.

In the fall of 1828 we learn, however, that a few students were pursuing the studies usually pursued in a freshman class, and that in one or two studies belonging to the sophomore year work was done—a condition of things that moved the trustees to pass an order at their fall meeting for that year requiring the professors to provide a course of studies for the four regular College classes. This requirement was complied with in part only. The studies for the freshman and sophomore years were marked out by the professors, and there they stopped. They were led to anticipate the president in the performance of a work in which he was so much interested. Professor Hall wrote to him months before his coming of this very need, and urged haste on the president’s coming, for he found a senior class awaiting him. James W. Dunn and Michael Hummer, together with a Washington College student, took their degrees at the College in 1829.

The first announcement of a complete curriculum of studies, and on the following December 3 this was printed in full in the Indiana Journal. As to the matter of that College course, it differed in no essential feature from the courses of study common to other colleges of the state of Indiana.

*For sketches of the first three, the first graduates, see Thopolus A. Wylie’s Indiana University, Its History and Progress (1820-1830), pages 166-168. Rollins removed to Missouri, where he was chiefly instrumental in founding the University of Missouri. As to the second, the second graduate, on page 65, according to T. A. Wylie, came here with Andrew Wylie with Seminary, was open for senior standing and not among the ten boys who entered the Seminary in 1824. (See page 11.) Wylie, through what appears to be a typographical error in his book, puts Stockwell in 1831 class, but all other sources of information indicate 1830. The editor has therefore taken the liberty of changing Judge Banta’s figures (on page 65) for the number of members in the first two classes, making them read 4 in 1830 and 5 in 1831, instead of vice versa. 66.*
Whether the "one-study" idea, in its application to the Indiana College course, was a new departure I cannot say; but the idea was not new to the common schools of the day. The plan then generally in vogue, and destined to be in vogue for many a year to come, recognized it to the fullest extent. After the boy of the district school had mastered the alphabet, he was set to spelling in his Webster's spelling-book, and not suffered to use any other book until he could not only spell every word in the book at sight, but pronounce every word at sight. He might have learned to read fairly well in the meantime, better it may be than his father or mother; but his teacher, blind to his advance in this respect, kept him pounding away at his spelling-book until he had gone through it in the required ways and required times. That done, learning to read was next in order. No matter how well or how ill the lad could read, when this work was entered upon, the first reading lesson in the old spelling-book was assigned him. Probably in anticipation of that great and eventful day, the boy had read that lesson over hundreds of times and knew it as well off the book as on:

She fed the old hen.
The old hen was fed by her.
See how the hen can run.

No matter, Begin at the beginning was the rule. The lad must stand up when his turn came and read it off to a master who, ten to one, was more intent upon catching some bad boy in a bit of mischief than he was on the lesson on hand. Toward the close of the pupil's reading era, writing was introduced, but that was a sort of byplay, and need not further be noticed. Arithmetic was the crowning work of his educational life. He might give one school quarter to its acquisition, or two or three; but many or few, after he once attained to the dignity of slate and arithmetic, he became a sort of country senior, the balance of whose school days were to be given to the greatest of all his school work—ciphering.

And so, I say, that the one-study plan was not a novel plan to the educational world; nor was it claimed to be, by President Wylie, at whose instance it was introduced in the Indiana College. "This method," says he in the first catalogue, "has been adopted by the president under the full conviction, founded on twenty years' observation and experience, that it possesses many and decided advantages over that, which is pursued in most colleges, of blending together a variety of studies."

Two recitations a day were required of all classes below the seniors, one in the forenoon and one in the afternoon—Greek or Latin before dinner, and Latin or Greek after dinner, for the freshman and half the sophomore years; and so on. The seniors attended only one lecture or recitation a day, but it was a long one—frequently three hours long; and especially was this apt to be the case when the Doctor's favorite subject, metaphysics, was the theme.

The one-study plan seems not to have worked well in the Indiana College. "It was," as is so well said by Dr. T. A. Wylie in his history of the University, "no doubt well adapted to minds like the president's, who had, in phrenological language, a great organ of concentrativeness, but not to the average minds of students, nor to the condition of things as they then existed." The plan was popular with the professors, we may suppose, for each could have the satisfaction of putting on an undivided load; but to the student it was not so popular, and in a few years it was abandoned altogether.

Another custom introduced at this time is worthy the attention of the modern student. Dr. Wylie was a stickler for early rising. He had been brought up in an age and a country where the maxims of "Poor Richard" were leaving their deepest impress, and it may be that he had thus caught something of the spirit of the "Early-to-bed-and-early-to-rise" philosophy. At any rate, he sought to impress upon the students under his charge the habit of early rising; and to that end it was made a law of the College, that the students should "assemble every morning shortly after daybreak for prayers." This was the requirement as written in the first catalogue, and it was the requirement that was enforced. And daybreak meant daybreak in those days, not daylight.

The hour, we may safely assume, was an inconveniently early one, and the evidence is abundant that the students were outspoken in their hostility to it. Except for this hard rule it would scarcely be remembered that the winter of 1829-1830 was an unusually mild and open
winter. A great deal of rain fell during that winter, and the sidewalks of that part of Walnut street leading from the southeast corner of the public square to the northeast corner of the College campus were not even paved with the rough unelastic limestone slabs that we, who came a quarter of a century later, found. The condition of the unpaved sidewalks of South Walnut street of a rainy, slushy, open winter I leave you to imagine. And so too, I leave you to imagine the high-stepping, dignified Wylie, pulling himself with all haste at break of day through a yellow mud the tenacity of which even yet is, on occasion, a subject of special wonder. To the unregenerate youth of those far-off days, who had been compelled to leave a warm bed at what he deemed an unreasonably early hour, the sight of the Doctor's laboring in the miring mud at break of day was a source of infinite delight.

The students of those times long lived to tell of their daybreak escapades. Lying in bed till the last moment, half-dressed with unbuttoned coats and vests, they scurried to the College, often to find themselves too late and the door closed in their faces. There, however, each belated man usually held his ground through roll call, and hearing his name he would shout back a lusty "Here!" which, if having no other effect, never failed to amuse his more fortunate comrades within.

This stern custom fell into disuse some time in 1832. It signally failed in its purpose, and the wise Doctor must have soon become aware of it. Instead of promoting early rising, it led to late hours in bed. I have heard the late P. L. D. Mitchell say that at his "fort," Lewis Bollman, Dr. McPheeters, and others testify to its prevalence more or less among all the students of the College.

It was a rule in those days that every student absenting himself from morning prayers was required to show a sufficient reason therefor to the president, and a tradition has come down to our times to the effect that the high degree of ingenuity, daring, and skill attained by some students in the framing of excuses had something to do with the abrogation of the rule. To such a high pitch was the art carried, that it came to be a kind of by-phrase, "It is a poor stick of a student who can't show a good excuse for having overslept himself!"

The most of you, I suppose, have seen the picture in Dr. T. A. Wylie's book of the first College buildings. The main one, a rectangular structure of three stories and many windows, with a deck roof and a pepper-box cupola, and resembling more (says our Dr. Wylie), "an old-fashioned New England cotton-mill" than a college, was once the Indiana College—in brick and mortar. I will not consume time on this occasion by any description of that building. It is enough to say that at the very meeting of the board of trustees when Dr. Wylie was chosen to the presidency, steps were taken looking to its speedy construction; and when, after the lapse of nearly twenty months, he entered upon his work, he found the walls up, the deck roof on, and a contract made for the speedy glazing of the windows. It was to be three years yet before that great building should be ready for occupancy. I say "great," because its dimensions were such as to call for an apology from the trustees to the General Assembly for building it.

The history of its erection is a most suggestive one. The first act of the board in reference to it was to appoint a committee of three of its own members to draft a plan. Architects in those days, it would seem, were not to be found in the West. About this time a legislative committee sent all the way to New York for a plan for a new statehouse, for which they paid $125. But the Indiana College could not afford to hire an architect, and so a committee was charged with the responsible duty of reporting a plan. But the committee never reported a plan. Two or three days after the appointment of the committee, the board instructed it to proceed at once and provide material that could be used in the construction of a college building on any plan that might thereafter be adopted. The truth is, there never was a plan agreed upon. Like Topsy, that building "just growed." In Professor Hall's The New Purchase it is said that the builders began excavating for a square building on the plan of the courthouse, then recently completed and the architectural ideal of the time, but that Dr. Maxwell and others interfered and secured a rectangular foundation. The builders had 300,000 bricks at their command, and it looks now as if
they had built skyward till the bricks ran out. In December, 1829, we learn that the board had in view—in addition to recitation rooms, library, and chemical laboratory—a great "college chapel, with ample galleries, so as to accommodate a very large assembly." At one end of the deck roof was to be a cupola, and at the other an astronomical observatory. By the next December to these ideas a new one was added. Nothing more is said of the cupola, for I suspect that had been put in place. The "indispensable necessity in some instances for different apartments for the inculcation of different sciences" is mentioned, and so is "the pressing necessity for a large hall, or chapel so called, for the use of students on commencement days" and for the accommodation of the public on these occasions, but the gallery had been dropped. The new idea comprehends the "dormitory system." The students must have "commons or lodgings," says the report of December, 1830, and thus is the question argued:

"The first apparatus to come into the College consisted of two globes, a terrestrial and a celestial, costing $31. We get this fact from this report of December, 1830; and in the same report we find the trustees importuning the General Assembly for an appropriation for a philosophical apparatus. After assuring the Assembly that the funds at the disposal of the board did not warrant the purchase by them, the report enlarges upon the great importance in an educational point of view of a philosophical apparatus. "What," exclaims the writer of this report—"is there more calculated to expand the mind and enlighten it, than the study and developments of experimental philosophy? Nature cannot be comprehended without its aid; and will the General Assembly, the guardians of this institution, who are bound as they love and respect the state, to protect, foster and exalt it; will they stand still whilst strangers at the distance of a thousand miles are generously giving it an impulse in its march onward?"

"Alas! alas! the General Assembly stood still. Fervent as was the appeal for material aid, not a dollar was voted—whereupon the board went off and bought an apparatus for themselves at a cost of $388.71. From a report made by Professor Elliott when he came to the department a few years afterwards, a report which has escaped the ravages of fire and time, we learn that this philosophical apparatus consisted in part, if not in whole, of an electric machine with battery and discharger, a galvanic battery, a small galvanic pile, an air pump with three receivers, and the mechanical powers complete."

"Nevertheless this is the first, and for that matter the last, that was ever heard of the dormitory plan in connection with the Indiana College."

"We cannot close this notice of the material surroundings of these first years of the Indiana College without a brief reference to the College library and apparatus. We saw in the address given last year that in the summer of 1829 Dr. Wylie, with the consent of the board, went to the seaboard states to beg money and books for a College library. Well, his mission was attended with success, as we have already seen [Chapter II]. This first College library was destroyed by fire in 1834, but a catalogue of the 235 volumes, in Dr. Wylie's hand, is still in existence, a perusal of which adds materially to the spirit of resignation one ought to feel for the burning of that library."

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"It is pleasant to note the signs of prosperity that followed the new president's coming. The 30 students in the College in the fall of 1829 grew to 47 at the beginning of the following year, 34 of whom were Indiana, 10 Kentuckians, 8 Pennsylvanians, 1 Tennessean, 1 Mississippian, 1 Louisianian, 1 Illinoisan, and 1 Missourian. Four students took their degrees at the first commencement in 1830. By the end of the next year (1830-1831), the whole number mounted up to 60, 3 of whom took their degrees at the second commencement. The next year (1831-1832) the whole number enrolled was 53, 5 of whom took their"
bachelor's degree; and in 1832–1833, 65 students were enrolled, 3 of whom were sent forth as graduates.

Did this not mean prosperity? Yes, for the times, it did.
And yet it was the prosperity that came amidst the storms of war.

Those who have kept the run of these Foundation Day papers have learned something, I trust, of the hostility manifested toward the Seminary from the first day of its opening, when the town lads with spelling-books and readers demanded admission to its privileges, up to the day when it was elevated to the dignity of a college by legislative enactment.

Whether the General Assembly was influenced in any degree to grant a college charter, by the hope that a college would meet with more favor than the Seminary had, is uncertain; but it is certain that it was believed that the ground for opposition to a state institution, whether real or imaginary, would be removed by the change. A new and more numerous board of trustees was provided (fifteen members); also a board of visitors on whom was conferred extensive powers of review. And, as if this were not enough, the charter itself provided against all the evils that had been complained of in Seminary times.

But the time had not yet come for the singing of the good-will-and-peace anthem over the Indiana College. On the contrary, the College had inherited all the Seminary's enemies and enmities, and it was by no means an unnatural inheritance. Those who expected these enemies to bury their opposition in the grave with the dead Seminary were doomed to disappointment. The College had been flung into the midst of a warlike people, and it was impossible for it and those connected with it to escape the fire and smoke of battle.

Before Dr. Wylie's arrival in Bloomington, he was made the target for severe animadversion by at least one paper in the state. Before his arrival, preparations were formally made for a combined attack upon the College and its management in the succeeding legislature by all its enemies; and hardly had that foe been met and overcome, ere were heard the first murmurings of that internecine war—the bitterest college civil war, I doubt not, ever waged in the West, and which ultimately resulted in the dismemberment of the faculty and came nigh disrupting the College itself.

No, the day of peace had not yet come to the Indiana College. The battle had to be fought out and was fought out; and while the story is not a pleasant one to tell, yet it falls within the purview of this history, and to escape its telling is to cease the writing.

But how can it be told? By the mere narrative of the events in the order of their sequence? This mode would result in injustice to the actors, and besides, that gives us a pointless tale. All history may not, like “all Scripture, be given by inspiration of God,” but it is nevertheless, when rightfully and truthfully written, “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” At least so I love to think. Two distinct controversies were waged during these gloomy years, and each was a product of the times—a sort of necessary result of certain moral forces then existing in our state. The external attack came first but in no sense was it the cause of the internal conflict. Each was independent of the other, and yet both were the resultants of similar forces; and so different is the state of society in Indiana today from what it was sixty years ago, that either story would be inexplicable if read only by the light of today.

It is due the occasion to say that when this paper was begun, it was with the purpose of carrying the story of our College down to the close of that period of domestic strife to which allusion has just been made, but such an accumulation of historical data relative to these times turns up, as we progress, that it becomes impossible to go further today in the story than down to a certain "spring exhibition" in 1832, on which occasion the dragon's teeth were sown that afterwards sprung into armed men almost to the undoing of the Indiana College.

Without going into an extended discussion of what, at this late and let us hope better day, may be regarded in the light of characteristics of the people of Indiana in the time of the early history of our state, I shall point out, for the sake of a somewhat better understanding of the men and events of the times, one or two of the most prominent characteristics of the Indianaans of the period.

I believe if I were asked to give a name to what I conceived to be the most prominent characteristic of the Indiana man of that time I should say, pugnacity. It is true this is a characteristic he had in
common with all other western men, but it was his characteristic nevertheless, and he possessed it in a high degree.

Next to his pugnacious spirit came a characteristic which for want of a better name may be called a spirit of intensity. Men felt more than they thought. More than is the case today they were given to act upon impulse rather than from reason. They were more emotional and were easier to be moved by the orator than is the case now. They felt more intensely than we do. They were more apt to act under the inspiration of the "hurrah" than are we. There was more of the "nobly wild and extravagant" in the character of that day than this. Those were the days when the river hero was "half-horse and half-alligator"; when the country hero was a "six-horse-team-with-a-bull-dog-under-the-wagon." It was a day when a militia brigadier general could empty a barrel of whiskey and a half-barrel of sugar into a public well and receive the plaudits of the battalion.

It was this intense, impetuous, extravagant spirit which drove the state not long after this time into that disastrous internal improvements system, the evil effects of which have scarcely yet disappeared.

After these characteristics, I would mention patriotism, sectarianism and orthodoxy, partisanship and sensitiveness. The Indianian was intensely and pugnaciously patriotic, sectarian and orthodox, partisan and sensitive.

Most of these characteristics belonged to him in common with all other western people, but not all. He was sensitive to criticism from outsiders as was no other people in all the Mississippi valley. Why? Well, he got more of it. There was a time in the history of our state when it was the fashion to "poke fun" at Indiana, and everybody did it. Why so? Taken all in all, it may be assumed that the early settlers of Indiana were the poorest class of men, in so far as money was concerned, that ever settled any state in the valley—a circumstance, however, not to be mentioned to their discredit. A large per cent of them had been impoverished by the Revolutionary War, or were the descendants of those who had been so impoverished. A still larger per cent emigrated to the state to escape the curse of slavery.

Of all the western states, Indiana presented the greatest natural obstacles to the home-maker. Its forests were not excelled in any state,
they could give us their African pronunciation of "Hoosiah!"

As late as 1854 the natural and necessary effect of all this odious criticism was to develop that sensitive characteristic of which I have before spoken. It is a characteristic the influence of which I am told is still felt in some of the staid and out-of-the-way places of southern and central Indiana, but I think this is scarcely true. But at and before and for some time after 1830, its influence was felt in every neighborhood. I can best describe the Indiana people of that period as standing huddled, "snouts out," on the defensive. All newcomers were suspected; all friendly critics were snubbed. Foreign teachers were received with misgiving, and there was a strong undercurrent of belief that a college under the control of such teachers would in some way become inimical to the best interests of the state.

From the first day of the opening of the Seminary, Professor Hall was confronted with a serious opposition growing out of this sentiment; and notwithstanding the fact that he tried in every rational way to show to the people there was no cause for their antagonism, he never quite succeeded. Harney encountered the same unreasoning and disagreeable opposition, and even before Dr. Wylie entered the state like opposition was manifested toward him.

In the Annotator, a paper published at Salem—a stray copy of which, issued on September 20, 1829, twenty days before the Doctor's arrival, I have managed to capture—appears the first attack on him ever made in the state, so far as is now known; and this I will read in illustration of the proposition under consideration:

[The article referred to is not included in judge Banta's manuscript. Evidently he read from the copy of the newspaper in his possession, which has since disappeared. It has been impossible to find anywhere a copy of the Annotator of this date, to supply the missing article. However, the following reply to it published in the Indiana Journal of November 5, 1829, gives an idea of the character of the attack:

Messrs. Editors: Some few weeks ago the Printers of the Annotator, a paper published in the town of Salem, thought proper to denounce the Rev. Dr. Wylie, as the slanderer of the Western Country, and to warn the parents of this state from placing their sons under the care and tuition of this libeller of Indiana. As a reason for this singular denunciation, and tender soliciude
Dr. Wylie himself replied in the same paper.

Let me briefly call your attention to one other characteristic. I have said the Indians of the early period were marked for their partisanship. They were intensely and pugnaciously partisan.

Political parties as we understand the term did not, however, exist in Indiana as early as 1830. It was not until some time in 1834 that we first read of Whigs and Democrats in the state papers. Prior to that time the politics of the state was factional. Sometimes the people divided on the most trivial of issues. The issue in the first general election held in the New Purchase was "Whitewater men or Kentucky men." Later the politics became still more factional, the people yielding to a sort of hero worship and following the leadership of this or that great man of the hour. In the domain of national politics they were Adams men or Clay men or Jackson men. In state politics they were Ray men or Noble men or Hendricks men. In county politics, here in Monroe county, they were Lowe men or Maxwell men.

William M. Lowe—or Judge Lowe as he was generally known—and Dr. David H. Maxwell were both of them men of force of character. Both were ambitious and both were politicians. Both served in the first constitutional convention of the state, and both were honored...
with office by the electors of Monroe county. Lowe's official life was confined mainly to local executive offices in the county, while Maxwell's was confined mainly to legislative offices. In a convention of the friends of General Jackson which met at Indianapolis on January 8, 1826, an electoral ticket was formed with William M. Lowe, of Monroe county, as one of the electors. Four days later the friends of Mr. Adams held their convention at the same place, when on motion of David H. Maxwell a committee was appointed to select the names of five persons "friendly to the present administration" to serve as presidential electors; and one of the five appointed specially to compete with Judge Lowe was James Armstrong of Monroe. Dr. Maxwell had himself served as an Adams elector in 1824.

On January 24 of that same year the Indiana College was chartered and its board of trustees constituted with a view to satisfying every body. Dr. Maxwell, the Adams man, was of course made a member of the new board, and so was his General Jackson competitor, William M. Lowe. In May following, Dr. Wylie was elected president, and in the following October we find him in Bloomington looking around. In the same month the board met and presumably Dr. Wylie with it. Be this as it may, at or a very short time after that meeting, Judge Lowe resigned his trusteeship. What did that mean? The old record gave no reason. Judge Lowe left no word written or remembered behind him explanatory of the causes of that resignation.

It is not always an easy matter to fathom the motives of a man, and especially of a silent man, but it is in general much easier to do it after than at the time. All the evidence at hand warrants the conclusion that Judge Lowe was preparing himself to take a part in the campaign already inaugurated against the College and those having it in charge. Maxwell was an Adams man and had doubtless been instrumental in securing the appointment of a Monroe county man to make the race against Lowe as an elector. Wylie was at least an anti-Jackson man and there is reason to believe that Harney was also. Of Hall's politics nothing is known.

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"Bunlaid's Tavern at Washington, Pennsylvania, was thronged with Westerners homeward bound from Mr. Adams's inaugural. Word that General Jackson was passing through had brought out a good share of the townfolk as well. Andrew Wylie, president of Washington College and destined to be a man of mark among the educators of his day, introduced himself to the distinguished wayfarer.

"You return, General, from a boisterous campaign."

"Yes, sir, from a boisterous campaign."

"A campaign in which you were not quite so successful as in some former ones," pursued Mr. Wylie.

"My success in those to which you allude was owing to the firmness of the brave men whom I had the honor to command."

Wylie was a Jackson man. "It is more honorable," said he, "to lose than to win if, indeed, things were managed as has been reported."

"Who can doubt it," agreed Jackson.

The educator replied that many found it impossible to believe "that such men as Adams and Clay would, in the face of the nation, engage in such a transaction."

"Let any man in his senses," cut in Old Hickory, "take a view of the circumstances. Let him compare the prediction of honest George Kremer with its accomplishment."

"Wylie repeated the argument that the 'talents and local situation' of Mr. Clay sufficed to justify the appointment. 'There is, however,' he added, 'another circumstance which, if true, will settle that point.'"

"Jackson asked what it was."

"The proposition that is said to have been made to you. Is that a fact?"

"The General's tone had been inaudible to those not standing very near him. At Wylie's last question he raised his voice. "Yes, sir, such a proposition was made. I said to the bearer, "Go tell Mr. Clay, tell Mr. Adams, that if I go to that chair I go with clean hands.""

The words were welcome to the ears of western Jacksonians."

From Marquis James, Andrew Jackson, Portrait of a President, pages 135-136.
“Friends of Learning” incorporated in their compositions the charges made in the memorial, and we are thus enabled to read in the language of the critics themselves their causes for criticism and for war.

1st. The professors manifest great partiality in attending to the interests of some sectarian students to the great prejudice and almost entire exclusion of others equally worthy, and treat their applications for redress with insult and neglect.

3rd. The faculty make use of improper means, to induce the English students to withdraw from the English and attach themselves to the Latin department.

4th. The faculty employ ushers incompetent to discharge the duties assigned them.

5th. The faculty neglect to spend in recitation the full time appointed in law.

A sixth charge is insinuated, says the address, to wit: “That the faculty inculcate sectarian principles.”

The second charge was leveled at the board, and was in effect that the board had sustained the faculty in a certain unjust, but unnamed, ruling.

To all these charges against the professors, the twenty-four students file their denial—general and special; and they further say: “We consider the publication of the memorial to be an ebullition of party feelings having for its object the promotion of political ends, and the destruction of the College.”

Whether this particular memorial was ever presented to the legislature does not now appear; but if the two or three dissatisfied students, its projectors, abandoned the controversy, there were those ready and willing to take it up. Four petitions were presented to the legislature the ensuing session from citizens of as many counties, calling for an investigation of both professors and trustees of the College. One of these was from William Lowe and sundry citizens of Monroe county. Another was from Washington county, Judge Lowe’s old home. Another was from Clark county, and still another from Scott.

Imagine four petitions going up to the General Assembly now in session at Indianapolis from citizens of as many counties praying an inquiry into certain abuses by trustees and professors of our beloved University. What consternation it would create! How much greater that consternation must have been in that day of weakness and l slteness!

The students were swift in sending up their remonstrance against these petitions, and with it went “sundry communications from different individuals.” Petitions, remonstrance, and communications were referred to the committee of education in each branch of the Assembly. In the Senate Dr. Maxwell himself was chairman of that committee, and in the House, Horace Bassett. Dr. Wylie, mounting his horse, rode up to the capitol, when “by request of the standing committees on education of the present General Assembly,” says a chronicler of the times, he delivered on Sunday, January 17, at the Methodist church, which was the largest in the town, a discourse on the subject of education, a discourse which was not only printed in the newspapers of the day, but received highly complimentary editorial notices, and a vote of thanks from the General Assembly itself. Maxwell’s and Bassett’s committees reported adversely to the petitioners, and so the campaign against the College proved a failure for that time.

But it was renewed the next year, and the next, and the next, and so on. There was to be no peace for the Indiana College yet awhile. If politics entered as a motive in the attack of 1829, as I think it did, it was soon eliminated, and sectarianism substituted in its place.

By the meeting of the next General Assembly (1830-1831), the enemy reformed his lines and the attack was renewed. Petitions came again from Monroe, from Clark, from Owen, and from Warrick counties, the burden of which was, Drive sectarianism out of the Indiana College!

Was it there to drive out? The faculty said it was not; the students said it was not; the board of trustees said it was not; and legislative committees said it was not; but what did all these denials amount to in the face of the fact that all three of the members of the faculty were Presbyterians? That was the quality of sectarianism the malcontents were warning against.

In the report of the trustees made December 8, 1830, after a solemn denial, the names of the fifteen trustees are set out, after which follows this somewhat remarkable statement:
Of this board it is believed four are Presbyterians, or at least were so educated; four Protestant Episcopalians; three Baptists; two Methodists; one Covenanter; and one a member of the Christian Society or Church. Out of such a mixture of religious opinion it cannot reasonably be supposed, that a majority could be prevailed upon to establish, or in any respect to countenance a sectarian domination.

Again the educational committees reported exonerating the College management, but the disturbance went on. There is evidence of a growing legislative discontent. Two or three members offered resolutions looking to the lowering of tuition fees; one member wanted the law changed so that orphan children could attend free; another that "poor and indigent students who are unable to educate themselves" should "receive tuition in said College gratuitously." But it remained for the member from Putnam to come forward with the most startling of all the propositions:

Resolved, That the committee on education be instructed to enquire into the expediency of so amending the existing charter of the State College at Bloomington, as to prohibit the trustees thereof from continuing after the expiration of existing contracts, any two professors or teachers of the same religious sect or profession; and also to prohibit the appointment hereafter of any two preachers of the same religious creed, as professors or teachers in said institution.

A petition from "Amos Lock and others" was of the same tenor; and resolution and petition being referred to the committee on education, that committee in vigorous language showed how a compliance with the prayer of the parties would result not only in making the qualifications of the Indiana College professors depend upon their church membership rather than their scholarship, but would be right in the teeth of the constitution, which declared "that no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious societies...; and no religious test shall be required as a qualification to any office of trust or profit."

In spite of all this threatening and warning and attempts at legislative tinkering, the College prospered. Its reputation spread abroad, and its classrooms were filled with students from almost every state in the West and South. At the opening of the fall term in 1830, it became necessary to establish a Preparatory Department, which continued down to the close of last year [1890], a period of sixty years.

In the spring of that same year (1830), the new departure carried away the old Seminary Henodelpisterian Society. "Too many great men found themselves members of that society," said one who had been one of them; and on February 12, 1830, Randall and Rollins and John L. Ketcham and Andrew Wylie, Jr., and five others—all of whom are dead now [1891]—save the venerable Judge Wylie, of Washington City—withdraw and organized the Athenian Society. The next year (1831), according to Lewis Bollman, the remaining members of the Henodelpisterian—Lewis Bollman, James D. Maxwell, P. L. D. Mitchell, the Dunns (James W., Samuel C., and W. McKee), and others—"disbanded and merged" (says Judge Wright) into the Philomathean Society.

The Indiana College was on the upgrade and rapidly becoming a center of light and learning in the state. Its president was recognized as the leader of the educational forces of the state. His addresses, whether from the college rostrum on commencement days, or to his torical societies, or to colonization societies, or to legislative assemblies, were fountains of instruction which the public press gave to the people as a part of the literature of the times.

To him who studies the history of the moral and intellectual growth of our state during its earlier and more plastic period, there comes the comforting thought that the men who judged that the time had come for the organization of a college in Indiana judged wisely and well. As we look back over the intervening years and read the story of our state's intellectual and moral and even material growth, that judgment stands vindicated on every page of its history.

And whatever may be in store for our loved Alma Mater in the future, in the catalogue of the forces for good in Indiana's earlier years, must forever stand written—Indiana College.