



Princeton College.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY
OF THE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
OF
PHILADELPHIA.

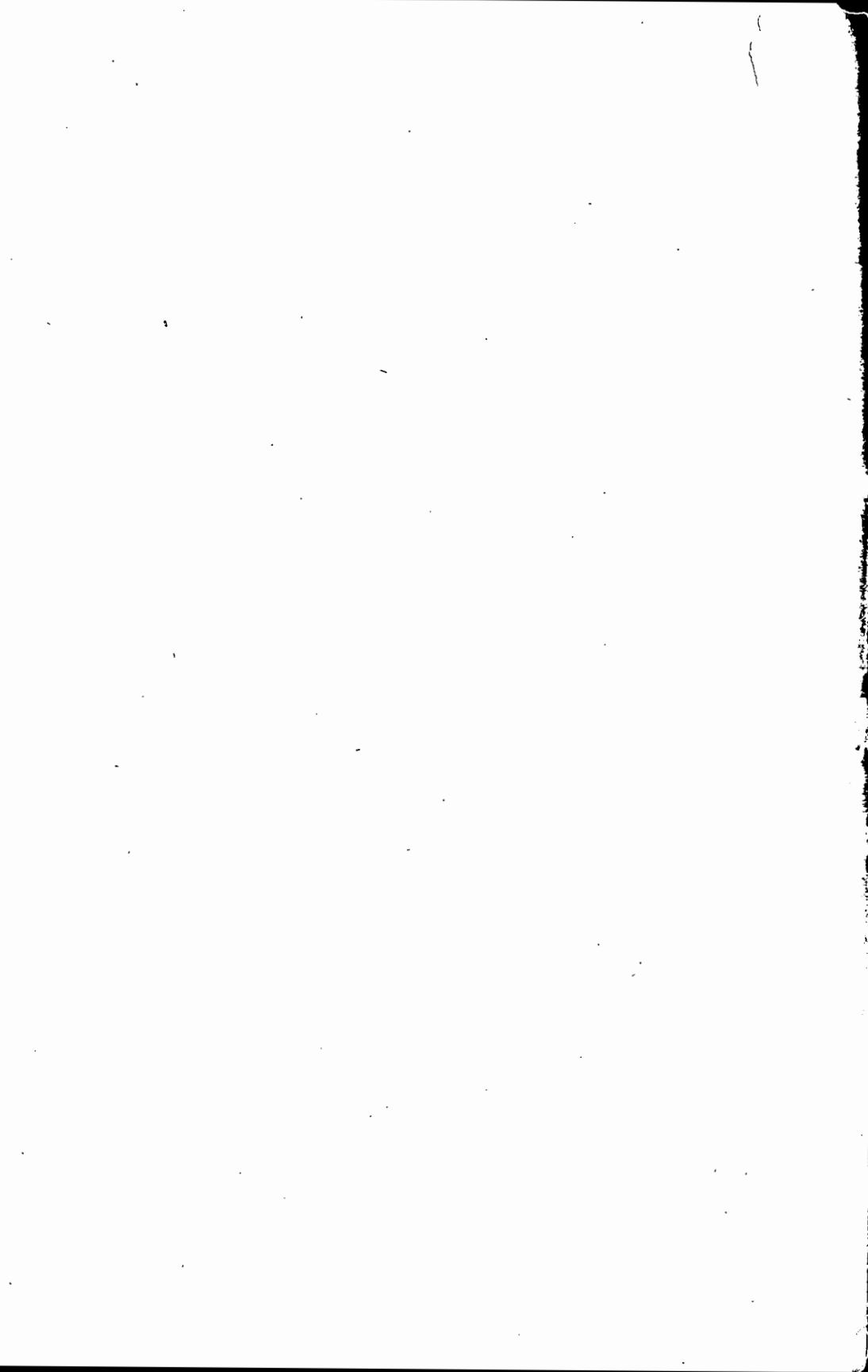
PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. CHANDLER, PRINTER, 306 & 308 CHESTNUT STREET.
1869.

J 378

P 95

P 9576

VA027



PRINCETON COLLEGE.

The College of New Jersey has a history which is both honorable to itself and valuable to the church and to the country. No one can inquire into the causes of its origin, or dwell upon the incidents of its eventful existence during the past one hundred and twenty-three years, without acknowledging its important contributions to the science, philosophy, literature, and religion of the whole Republic. A brief sketch of its history is its *most potent appeal* to those who seek a full, comprehensive, and safe education for the young men of the nation.

This ancient College owes its origin to various causes, but the desire to train men for all the liberal professions, the wish to promote sound learning, and especially to provide a thoroughly educated ministry, were the chief ones which gave existence to this institution. Yale College and Harvard University in the North, and William and Mary College in the South, had been founded—and the people of the Middle States demanded equal provision in the way of a large and attractive educational school.

In the year 1746 a charter was obtained, with some difficulty, for such a College. The title of the charter

is—"A charter to incorporate sundry persons to found a Colledge passed the great seal of this Province of New Jersey, tested by John Hamilton, Esq., President of His Majesty's Council, and Commander-in-chief of the Province of New Jersey, the 22d October, 1746."

Under this charter the Rev. Jonathan Dickinson was appointed President, and the College was established at Elizabethtown, N. J. Upon his death, in 1747, the students—about twenty in number—were placed under the care of the Rev. Aaron Burr, and the institution was removed to Newark, N. J. An enlarged and more liberal charter was granted by Gov. Belcher of New Jersey, September 14, 1748. On November 9, 1748, the Trustees elected the Rev. Aaron Burr, President, and in Newark on that day, was held the first commencement, and there the first honorary degree—that of A. M. was conferred on Gov. Jon. Belcher, of New Jersey.

Subscriptions were now set on foot to aid the College, and in 1753 the Rev. Samuel Davies and the Rev. Gilbert Tennent were sent to Great Britain and Ireland "to solicit additional benefactions." Their mission was very successful, many hundred pounds being contributed by persons in different positions in life, and of various religious denominations. The General Assembly of Scotland ordered a *national* collection, and Baptist, Independent, and Presbyterian ministers recommended the object. Mr. Whitefield lent his aid; and among the contributors were the Bishop of Durham and Mr. Cromwell, the great-grandson of the Protector. The funds collected were devoted to the erection of a College edifice, and the "little village of Princeton was chosen for

its location." "The edifice sacred to liberty" was built in 1756 and 1757, and called "Nassau Hall," in honor of William III. It was the largest building in the country, and could accommodate one hundred and forty-seven students. In 1757 Governor Belcher and Rev. Aaron Burr died, and the College lost its greatest patron, and able President. Then followed, as Presidents, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, who died in 1758; the Rev. Samuel Davies, in 1759; and Dr. Samuel Finley, in 1761. Within the space of twenty years the College had been called upon to mourn the loss of five Presidents: Dickinson, Burr, Edwards, Davies, and Finley, an array of the most eminent names our country had as yet produced. Perhaps no college in the land can boast of such a series of distinguished men among its early Presidents. The College had now obtained considerable reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. The Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, of Scotland, was elected President, and upon August 17, 1768, began his long and successful administration. Subscriptions were again solicited in every part of the country, from Massachusetts to Georgia, and nearly £3,000 were collected by 1775. Among the contributors may be especially mentioned the Phillips family, of Boston, who gave "£500, lawful money," a great sum in those days. The prospects of the College seemed now to brighten, and its friends came readily to its support. It was a temporary gleam, for with that very year, 1775, came on the "long war of the Revolution," with Great Britain, and the exercises of the College were greatly interrupted. All its affairs were dark and discouraging in the extreme.

Dr. Witherspoon was a member of the Continental Congress from 1775 to 1782, and along with Richard Stockton, a graduate of the first class of Nassau Hall, signed the "Declaration of Independence."

To the immortal honor of the College let it be said, that in the "times that tried men's souls," the name of no Tory appears upon its catalogue. The College building was occupied by both armies in turn, as a barracks and a hospital, in 1777 and the following years. The battle of Princeton was fought and won within sight of the College, the enemy were driven from the building, and a cannon ball fired by our forces entered the Chapel (now a part of the Library), and destroyed the portrait of George II., presented by Governor Belcher. A portrait of Washington, painted by the elder Peale, now occupies the same frame. The building suffered great devastation from both armies. Washington presented fifty guineas to the College, but the sum was devoted to his portrait. In the summer of 1783 the Continental Congress met in the Library of Nassau Hall, and were present also at the celebration of the Fourth of July by the American Whig and Clisophic Societies. At the Commencement of that year (1783), Congress, the Ministers of France and Holland, and Washington himself were present. Ashbel Green, the valedictorian, at that Commencement, in behalf of the College authorities and his fellow-students, publicly thanked the "Father of his Country," for his distinguished services.

The funds of the College were greatly impaired, if not entirely lost by the war; its buildings injured, and the

number of its students much reduced, but by great effort means were obtained to restore the buildings and pay the salaries of the Faculty.

Dr. Witherspoon died on November 15, 1794. His administration was the longest and in many respects the most trying in the early history of the College. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, his son-in-law, now became President, and with such Professors as Dr. Walter Minto and Dr. Jno. Maclean, Sr., who really introduced the "New Chemistry" into this country, a career of prosperity seemed to be opening for the College. But again was the prospect clouded. On the 6th of March, 1802, a fire destroyed all but the walls of "Nassau Hall." Her friends, however, stood ready with open hands, and from funds collected in the Middle and Southern States, the College was again rebuilt, and at the same time were erected the two buildings now occupied as recitation and lecture-rooms.

Dr. Smith resigned on account of impaired health, in 1812. His administration was successful, and his influence upon the students very remarkable. Dr. Ashbel Green was elected President the same year, and under him also the College prospered greatly, as was shown by the increased size of the classes. In 1822 Dr. Green resigned, and was succeeded in 1823 by the Rev. Jas. Carnahan, D. D., a graduate of the College. From various causes there was a diminution of the number of students in the years 1828 and 1829, but about this time the College was thoroughly re-organized. Prof. John Maclean, Jr., was appointed Professor of Ancient Languages; Professor Dod was placed in the Mathema-

tical Chair; Dr. Torrey in that of Chemistry and Botany; Professor Vethake in that of Natural Philosophy; Professor Hargous took charge of Modern Languages; Professor J. Addison Alexander became Adj. Professor of Ancient Languages; Professors Henry, Jas. W. Alexander, Jno. S. Hart, and Stephen Alexander, were also shortly after added to the Faculty. Instead of diminishing the number of the Professors, and decreasing the salaries, the policy of *enlargement* was pursued, and the result fully justified the course of Drs. Carnahan and Maclean, who devised the scheme. The number of students now rapidly increased, and from one hundred and twenty it rose in a short time to more than two hundred. In the latter part of Dr. Carnahan's administration, the average number of students was just double of what it was in the beginning. His was the longest and most successful administration in the history of the College. Under him were erected the East and West Colleges, the Halls of the Societies, the Chapel, and several residences of the Faculty.

In 1854 Dr. Carnahan was succeeded as President by the Rev. John Maclean, D. D. On the 10th of March, 1855, "Nassau Hall" was again destroyed to its walls. The insurance and funds contributed by its friends did not defray one half the expense of its restoration; the cost was defrayed mainly from the *earnings* of its *Professors*. The old walls were happily retained, and the building, slightly modified and entirely fire-proof, stands substantially as it was one hundred years ago. Dr. Maclean closed his long and successful collegiate service of *fifty* years in 1868. Under his administra-

tion the number of students arose at one time to three hundred and fourteen, the largest in the history of the College. In 1852 and '53 an endowment was begun, chiefly in the form of scholarships. In 1863, in consequence of diminished revenue on account of the late civil war, an appeal was made to the friends of the College for a permanent endowment. Through the exertions of Dr. Atwater, one hundred thousand dollars were raised, of which sum John I. Blair, Esq., contributed thirty thousand dollars, to endow the Chair of Physical Geography and Geology, of which Professor Arnold Guyot is the incumbent. Mr. Blair was, therefore, the first to set a most noble example. Mr. James Lenox and his sisters added thirty-five thousand dollars to endow the Presidency. Near the close of Dr. Maclean's administration, Gen. N. Norris Halsted determined to erect an Observatory; and that noble monument of his liberality, costing more than fifty thousand dollars, is now nearly completed. Mr. Blair, Mr. Lenox, and Gen. Halsted, are, then, the great benefactors of Princeton College. Capt. Silas Holmes and Dr. John N. Woodhull made bequests of twenty-five thousand dollars each, to establish new Chairs. Other donations have been made, but the names of the donors would swell these pages beyond a proper limit. One name, however, we must not omit. Dr. George Musgrave Giger, for many years Professor of Latin, gave his fine library, and devised his whole fortune, (nearly thirty thousand dollars,) after the decease of his uncle, to endow the Chair of Latin.

Nassau Hall has always been a *national* College, and its graduates are to be found in every section of the coun-

try. In the late war more than one hundred and fifty of its former students were in the army and navy of the Union, occupying every position, from major-general down to the ranks. Many, also, who were natives of the South joined the Confederates. The strife is now happily ended, and all her alumni can again fondly rally around their beloved *alma mater*. Her history is one of which all can feel proud. The *fourth* of American colleges in age, she has ever been among the foremost in all other respects. Among her Presidents we need but name Edwards, Davies, and Witherspoon. The present generation can recall among her distinguished Professors, Dod, the Alexanders, Dr. Torrey the eminent Botanist, Professor Henry, now at the head of the Smithsonian Institute and the real discoverer of the principle of the electric telegraph, who were for many years members of its Faculty. Among the present active Professors we need name but two, Stephen Alexander, the extender of La Place's nebular hypothesis, and Arnold Guyot, the first of physical geographers. Among her four thousand three hundred alumni, she can point to those who have occupied the highest positions in the country, and in professional life. Witherspoon and Stockton have been spoken of; James Madison, the fourth President, was a graduate of 1771; Aaron Burr and George M. Dallas, both Vice-Presidents, were also alumni of Nassau Hall.

Nearly nine hundred ministers of the gospel, and more than four hundred physicians, have gone forth as graduates from her walls. About one hundred and twenty-five have been Presidents or Professors of other

institutions. The celebrated Dr. Benjamin Rush was a graduate, and through him Dr. Witherspoon was induced to leave Scotland, and assume the Presidency. The first Professor of Anatomy in this country, Dr. William Shippen, was one of her sons. The first medical diploma given in this country, was to Dr. John T. Archer, a graduate of 1760. Dr. William Burnet and Dr. William Shippen were both surgeons-general of the American army. More than three hundred have held high judicial and political positions in this number, there were no fewer than twenty-five members of the Continental Congress. There have been nearly fifty Senators, and at one time one-sixth of the Senate were graduates of Nassau Hall; eight have been judges of the Supreme Court, four have been Attorneys-General, and twenty-six have been Governors of States.

In the Class of 1804 are found the names of Theodore Frelinghuysen, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Philip Lindsay, Samuel L. Southard, and other distinguished men. Drs. Hodge, Baker, Biggs, Maclean, Beatty and John Breckinridge, Bishops Johns and McIlvaine, Governor McDowell and Gen. P. F. Smith, were students here together in 1814-18, and the next years are crowded with the names of those who have attained distinction in the various walks of life. The names of her great men would fill pages—their lives fill volumes.

It is in behalf of such an institution that an appeal for an endowment is made. She has just called from Europe one of the most distinguished metaphysicians of the age to occupy the place once filled by Witherspoon. A number of friends have already subscribed liberally

for the endowment of the Presidency. Mr. John C. Green has given one hundred thousand dollars for buildings and library. Mr. Robert Bonner and Mr. H. G. Marquand have each given ten thousand dollars for a gymnasium.

And now, friends and alumni of Princeton, your aid is asked to sustain the old, and to introduce new departments into the curriculum, that this ancient seat of learning may still stand in the foreground of our colleges, prepared to perpetuate her past honorable record, and fitted to embrace all the requirements of the age and our progressive country. It is proposed to raise at least one hundred thousand dollars south and west of Princeton.

In view of what the college has done for the Church and the country, what she has contributed to science and literature, it is hoped that this appeal will not be made in vain.