CHAPTER XIV

The Secularization at Trinity College

George Williamson Smith assumed the Presidency of Trinity College with the full confidence of the Board of Trustees. His humane and generous treatment of the undergraduates soon won him the support and even the love of the students. His frank and open manner in dealing with the Alumni made him the idol of the "old grads." With such unanimous support, President Smith was in a position to institute some much-needed reforms, and the first years of his administration were marked by many changes for the better. The general morale of the College was much improved, and the good name of the institution was soon restored. Excellent faculty appointments had been made, and there was reasonable progress, for a small college, along the lines of instructional equipment.

In view of our last chapter's lengthy description of student activities, it may seem that the energies of the College were directed entirely toward the extracurricular. Such, however, was not the case, for admission standards had been raised, the pace of instruction was appreciably accelerated, and considerable progress had been made toward a modernization of the curriculum.

Traditionally, students had entered Trinity by examination, and formal entrance examinations for sub-Freshmen had been held at Commencement time and again before the opening of the Christmas Term in September. These examinations were similar to those given by other colleges, but there was always the subjective element in such a system, and the College Association, of which Trinity was an active member, had long urged a standard system of admission to the member colleges. Trinity had taken her stand on the general matter of more regular and more rigid standards, and especially in the English requirement. But the admission question was being seriously complicated by the rise of the public high school which, particularly in the West, placed little emphasis on the Classics, long the core of the Trinity curriculum. By 1881, Trinity was obliged to announce that the College's admission standards were those recommended by the Association of Colleges in New England, and in 1884 Trinity began to admit students "by certificate."

In many respects, admitting by certificate represented a raising of the admission standards, as students could enter Trinity upon proof of graduation from any accredited (although the term was not then in common use) secondary school. In this regard, Trinity had merely fallen in line with most of her sister colleges. But in another way, admission by certificate could have been regarded as a lowering of standards as the important thing was no longer the content of the school course, but the completion of it.

The admission of students who had not previously studied Latin and Greek necessitated a change in the curriculum and, at the same time that the decision was made to admit by certificate, an accommodation in the curricular offering was made so as to permit those deficient in Classics still to graduate with a degree. The older B.S. program had been something of an accommodation along this line, but the course had never been popular, as the Trinity B.S. had, since it represented a shorter period of study than the A.B., been a sort of second-class degree. Although the course of study for the B.S. had been
lengthened from two and one-half years to four years in 1875, two years of Latin were still required, and it was still the intent of the Trustees to have the B.S. differ from the A.B. only in the inclusion of Greek in the Arts Course.

The big change came in 1884, when four distinct curricula were announced. One could still take the traditional A.B. with the usual Latin and Greek, but with a bit more Metaphysics, History, and Political Science. For the B.S. there were two curricula. Those who entered with considerable English, Latin, and Mathematics could complete the degree requirements in three years. Those who had little school preparation in these areas would take a four-year course with much Latin in the freshman year. For those whose interests were not expressly scientific and who had no inclination to study Greek, there was a fourth course in which the Greek of the A.B. course was replaced by Modern Languages. That was the course in Letters. Actually, the second B.S. curriculum was essentially an "Arts" course and was called the "Course in Letters and Science" in the College Catalogue. All curricula included rather generous election, so that the program of the senior year came to be largely elective for those who had been admitted without condition.

The requirements for the several degrees were apparently rigidly enforced, for students who entered as candidates for the Arts degree frequently slipped into the other less exacting curricula, and not infrequently a student failed to keep up with the curriculum of his second choice and spent his senior year as a "Special Student, not Candidate for a Degree." The curricular change represented a reform insofar as it placed Trinity in line with other colleges, but at Trinity there were almost as many problems created as were solved. The enhancing of Modern Languages by including them in the new curricula was regarded as a progressive step and one welcomed by the undergraduates. There was not, however, any provision made for the study of French and German beyond the second year, and the students felt that they were obliged to leave a Modern Language just before they were able to master it. Phi Beta Kappa, too, had its concern about the B.S. students (who usually completed the degree in three years) and who, because they pursued a less rigid course, were able to obtain higher grades. Election to Phi Beta Kappa had come to be based largely on class standing, and the question was seriously raised whether A.B. students were not being placed at a serious disadvantage, especially, since it was then assumed at Trinity, that the very nature of the Honor Society presupposed a knowledge of Latin and Greek.

The newer curricula did not immediately become popular, for as late as the academic year of 1890-1891, of the 122 students enrolled as candidates for bachelors' degrees, 87 were A.B., 19 were Letters and Science, 16 were Science, and one was Letters. And there seems to have been no serious effort made during the nineteenth century to improve the courses other than the A.B. The Arts students, who still seemed to be the chief concern, were pleased with the addition in 1891 of electives for the Juniors and an increase in the number of electives for Seniors. At that time, two-thirds of the senior work and two-fifths of the junior program became elective. The inclusion of Hebrew and Sanskrit as electives seemed (in the opinion of the Tablet editor, at least) to place Trinity "a step in advance of other small colleges." The addition at this same time of "compulsory work in the gymnasium" for Freshmen and Sophomores was not so enthusiastically accepted by those affected. In 1895, the freshmen and sophomore years were also "liberalized" when Freshmen were given an opportunity to study French and German. The students were now convinced that Trinity had "caught up" with the other colleges.

And, along with the admissions and curricular changes, came a reconsideration of the Trinity M.A. In 1884, the Alumni Association "voted to request the Trustees to make the degree of Master of Arts dependent on competition," an obvious attempt to put an end to the granting of the Master's degree "in course," ad eundem, or on a more frankly honorary basis. In reality, all Masters' degrees granted by the College were, strictly-speaking, honorary. "In course" simply
meant "in course" of time, and not "in course" of study. To be sure, the Master's degree was totally meaningless at the time, so far as it represented, or did not represent, academic attainment. It was, however, a useful element in public relations, for its conferral gave the College a sort of second-class honorary degree, and the honorary degree (of whatever sort) was a means of gaining good will at no cash outlay.

Because of the usefulness of the honorary Master of Arts in this regard, the Trustees could hardly have become enthusiastic about its abolition. Nevertheless, after consideration by a committee appointed to study the question, the Trustees decided that "after the Commencement of 1888, the degree of Master of Arts will be conferred upon Bachelors of Arts of three years standing, who shall, by examination or otherwise, satisfy the Faculty that they have successfully pursued a course of study equivalent to the work of one academic year." The new rule, however, was probably one of those honored more in the breach than in the observance, for the College continued to grant the degree of Master of Arts "in course" in numbers even greater than before the new rule had been adopted.

In 1896, Trinity conferred upon Professor Luther the Ph.D. "in course," the only such degree ever granted by the College and, oddly enough, at a time when the honorary Ph.D. was under the ban and after it had been denounced by all of the accrediting agencies.

The new policy on the M.A. did have the effect of attracting graduates who were actually in residence and who were bona fide graduate students. The first of these, Joseph Wellington Shannon '87, was in residence during the academic year 1887-1888 and took his M.A. in 1889. In 1893, the Holland Fellowship was set up to provide a stipend of $600 to $700 for each of three men selected yearly to study on the "post-graduate level." Although the Holland Fellowships later became undergraduate scholarships, one graduate, William Joseph Miller '92, studied at Harvard as Holland Fellow during the academic year of 1892-1893. The Henry E. Russell Fellowship (endowed in 1896) was intended to provide two years of non-professional graduate study at Trinity or at some foreign university.

The first Russell Fellow, Frederick MacDonald Goddard, B.S. '96, who was graduated with honors in Chemistry and Physics, spent a year at Trinity and a year at Goettingen but did not take a degree either at Trinity or elsewhere before his death in 1900.

In 1898-1899, there were three resident graduates: James Riedell Tucker, a Yale graduate; Woolsey McAlpine Johnson, Russell Fellow and the son of Professor Charles F. Johnson; and Henry Jones Blakeslee, who held the rank of Assistant in the Physics Laboratory. By 1900, Trinity had come to be recognized as something of a center for graduate study, especially in Chemistry and Physics. The work in these departments by Professors Robert Baird Riggs and William Lispenard Robb was widely recognized, and in December of 1900 the College reported the presence at Trinity of several candidates for degrees at German universities who were carrying on their research in the Trinity laboratories.

Paralleling these developments were remarkable improvements in the College Library. In 1883, the book collection had numbered but 20,500 volumes, the Library itself was open but three hours each day, and the library staff consisted of the Reverend John Humphrey Barbour and whatever student help he could secure. Thomas Ruggles Pynchon had been the nominal Librarian until 1882 but Barbour, who was vicar of Grace Church in Parkville, was appointed Assistant Librarian in 1873 and since that time had been, for all practical purposes, the Librarian. In 1889, Barbour resigned to become Professor of New Testament in the Berkeley Divinity School. Barbour was succeeded by Professor Hart who served until 1899 when he, too, left Trinity to join the Berkeley faculty.

Barbour had made a catalogue of the entire book collection, a card catalogue which replaced the earlier title catalogue which had been made forty years before, but throughout this entire period most of the work was done by "untrained though well-wishing student amateurs." As a result, there were grotesque errors in cataloging, and many books were lost by mis-shelving.
The students constantly complained that the Trinity Library was not being kept up to date and that the book collection was more suitable to the older curriculum than to those curricula which had been adopted in 1884. In 1896, an outside observer noted that the "Library is somewhat wanting in new books," but that it was rich in the possession of some rare and valuable old books and manuscripts. This same writer noted the unique collections of English and Irish theological pamphlets published between 1700 and 1840, the almost complete file of General and Diocesan Convention Journals, the 250 volumes on Liturgics, the 200 volumes on Canon Law, the 130 Greek Lexicons, and the 180 medical works published between 1600 and 1750. He also mentioned that the Trinity Library had files of many scientific periodicals and a large and useful collection of government documents. But perhaps this visitor to the campus missed the large collection, for the time at least, of English Literature which had been built up under the direction of Professors Edwin E. Johnson and Charles F. Johnson, the scientific collection built up by Professors Bolton, Riggs, Cheesman, and Robb, and the many volumes in History and Political Economy gathered by Professor Ferguson. By 1900, the book collection consisted of 39,682 volumes, the library hours had been increased to five or six each day, and the College had at last come to employ a full-time librarian, Mr. William Newnham Carlton.

President Smith had a definite influence on the physical appearance of the Trinity campus and one which later generations were to deplore. It will be remembered that the original Burges plan had been modified several times and that President Pynchon had wisely persuaded the Trustees to construct only such portions of the Great Quadrangle as were necessary at the time of the move. But it will also be remembered that the first three buildings to be erected (Seabury, Jarvis, and Northam) were strictly in keeping with the Burges plan.

The original design called for a row of faculty residences as one of the sides of the smaller quadrangles, but in 1883 the Trustees decided to locate the President's mansion several hundred feet north of the outside line of the proposed North Quadrangle and quite close to Vernon Street. Not only was the building to stand outside the quadrangle, but it was constructed, as was the house nearby then being erected by Professor Ferguson, in the style known as "Queen Anne." In his first Report to the Trustees, President Smith raised the question of whether, because of the great expense of building in the "Gothic" style, the Burges plan should be followed in the addition of new buildings at Trinity. And, as was true in so many other matters, Smith was able to convince the Trustees that his proposal had merit. On June 28, 1884, the governing body of the College "Voted — In the opinion of this Board, any buildings that may hereafter be erected should be located and constructed as existing needs and resources of the College may
The President's Mansion

require, whether or not the same may be in pursuance of the Burges Plan so called.\(^{38}\)

The policy was put into effect with the construction of Alumni Hall. This combination gymnasium and auditorium was placed just east of what would have been the line of the North Quadrangle, and its architectural style was what was then called a "Spanish-Chateau Type."\(^{39}\) The Jarvis Physical Laboratory, which was completed the year after Alumni Hall, was also placed outside the eastern line of the South Quadrangle of the Burges Plan and was built in the "Romanesque Style!"\(^{40}\)

While Jarvis Laboratory was nearing completion, the College received a most unusual gift. The Reverend Delgarus Robinson, vicar of Wormwood Scrubs, near London, England, presented "the stone frame and mullions of a window from the ancient palace of Whitehall," which were described at the time of their arrival as in "the perpendicular style of architecture." Although it was impossible to use the window in Jarvis Laboratory, the college authorities stated at the time that they "proposed to give the window a conspicuous place in some new college building."\(^{41}\) But the gift was not even removed from the crates in which it had been sent. The containers were simply labeled "Old Stones From England" and were placed in a college basement where they remained until the construction of the present College Chapel in the late 1920's when the stones were incorporated into the sacristy of the Friendship Chapel.\(^{42}\)

With the completion of Jarvis Physical Laboratory, the Trinity campus represented an appalling hodge-podge of academic architectural styles. Jarvis and Seabury Halls and Northam Towers were "Gothic," two residences were "Queen Anne," Alumni Hall was "Spanish-Chateau," and Jarvis Physical Laboratory was "Romanesque." The older three were of stone, and the newer two were of brick. And in addition to these obviously permanent structures, there were the flimsy, frame St. John Observatory and the old eye-sores which had existed since the occupation of the new campus. The old wooden shed which had been used by the stone cutters on Jarvis Hall (to the north of which building it stood) was finally taken down late in 1887,\(^{43}\) but the old gymnasium remained. After Alumni Hall had been built, the old gym had been used for a time as living quarters for the commons waiters.\(^{44}\) Later the building was used as a student reading room (for newspapers, magazines, etc.), by the Professor of Modern Languages as classroom and office, and for instruction in mechanical drawing. The old gym burned down in the spring of 1896, much to the delight of the students who stood by and cheered as flames consumed the Ruins of the old gymnasium.
unsightly old landmark. But this was not the end of this type of structure at Trinity, for hardly had the embers of the old gym cooled when an almost exact replica was erected to the south of Seabury Hall to provide a French classroom, a mechanical drawing room, and a reading room. The students called this building "Martin Hall" for Professor Winfred R. Martin, whose French classroom was located there. Fortunately, Martin Hall remained only a few years. In 1902, it was replaced by a commons building of two stories. The students called the new commons "Stickney Hall" for Mr. and Mrs. Stickney who managed the college dining facilities from 1900 until World War I.

The undergraduates, by their irreverent naming of the less sightly campus buildings, strongly indicated their disapproval of the Trustees' failure to carry out the great plan for the three magnificent quadrangles devised by William Burges. In an article for College and School, Professor Charles F. Johnson in 1890 simply stated that there was no immediate prospect of carrying out the Burges plan. Although this was doubtless the determined policy of the Trustees, Johnson went on to state, however, that "it is the dream of some of the younger and more enthusiastic Trinity graduates to see these [Burges] plans materialize in stone." And here was to be found the problem which could hardly find happy solution—a romantically-inclined alumni body which had accepted the completion of the Burges plan as necessary to the realization of the College's destiny and a Board of Trustees and an Administration which had abandoned the plan, largely, perhaps, because immediate needs of the College demanded compromise at worst and postponement at best.

Perhaps the intention of the College's governing board was to eventually carry out the Burges quadrangles, for in supplying material for encyclopedia and magazine articles, the administration consistently provided cuts of the Burges plan. But in March, 1891, the Tablet pointed out the incongruity of paying lip service to the plan and at the same time erecting inferior buildings. This policy, the Tablet stated, was especially dis-graceful in view of the increased resources of which the College was boasting. The announcement, in 1891, that a biological laboratory was the next building scheduled for construction was to cause the Tablet to take up the plea once more for a return to the Burges plan. The Tablet deplored the scattering of "a heterogeneous collection of buildings of different architectural style" at random about the campus. The Tablet pressed for completion of the quadrangle rather than to erect buildings "of cheaper construction," arguing that the College must build not only for the present, but for the future as well.

The Tablet's plea was of little avail, for late in 1893 the Trustees published the plans for a Natural History Building which had been prepared by William C. Brocklesby '69. Brocklesby's design was a squat, two-storied, terra-cotta and brick building with basement and was as aesthetically pleasing as any first-class public high school building which might have been erected at the time.

The Natural History Building or the Biological Laboratory (the names were used interchangeably) was estimated to cost $40,000, and the Trustees wisely planned to raise an additional $20,000 endowment for the upkeep of the facility. During the fall of 1893, President Smith spent much time in New York City, urging the New York Alumni to contribute to the venture. It was hoped that construction could begin in the spring, but there was no immediate response to the Trustees' appeal for funds. Rumors of an anonymous gift of $25,000 were unfounded, and it seemed for a while that the $60,000 would not be forthcoming. Actually, the Trustees could hardly have selected a less opportune time to begin a major fund drive for, by mid-summer of 1893, the country was in the midst of one of the most severe economic panics the nation has ever experienced. Railroads failed, banks closed, factories were forced to shut down, and by the summer of 1894 there were over four million Americans without jobs.

At Trinity there were diversions—both from the depression and from the embarrassing inability to secure the funds necessary to erect a
Hall of Natural History. In the fall of 1893, the campus was brightened, both literally and figuratively, with the installation of electric lights and on June 27, 1894, a magnificent flagpole was dedicated with a parade of military companies and speeches by Judge Hamersley, Senator Joseph B. Hawley, and other notables.

The depression at least had the effect of reconciling some of the idealists to buildings which were “unpretentious but useful,” and those who still hoped for a completed Gothic Great Quadrangle could take comfort in the Trustees’ decision to place the Biology Building out of the way on the south end of the campus and in line with Jarvis Physics Building.

As the clouds of economic depression began to lift, the Trustees resumed their efforts to raise funds for the Hall of Natural History. By June, 1898, small contributions had totaled $460, and Trustee J. Pierpont Morgan had pledged $10,000. Even the students were making pledges. Two undergraduates together subscribed $45.00, resolving to wear last year’s suits and to contribute the equivalent of new suits to the Building Fund. On June 27, 1899, the Trustees bravely broke ground for the new building even though the Natural Science Building Fund then stood at only $1,505 exclusive of Mr. Morgan’s pledge and after they had rejected a proposal by the New York Alumni to advance $40,000 “from the principal funds of the College.” By June, 1900, additional contributions of $16,693.34 had been received. The new structure was completed in July, 1900 and dedicated on December 7 of that year. The building, which a year later was named Boardman Hall in recognition, or anticipation, of a gift to the College from the widow of Trustee William Whiting Boardman, was somewhat different in its final form from the original plan by Mr. Brocklesby. It was somewhat larger, had more brick and less terra cotta, and was of three stories rather than two. But, it was still squat.

The dedication was a big day at the College. There were addresses by Dr. William H. Howell, Professor of Physiology at Johns Hopkins University, and by Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, DeCosta Professor of Zoology at Columbia University. There were letters of congratulations from Cambridge University, Queens College in Cork, Ireland, Queens College in Belfast, the Universities of Zurich, Würtzburg, Edinburgh, Dublin, Leipzig, Giessen, Geneva, Lausanne,
Boardman Hall
Braunschweig, Göttingen, Utrecht, Bonn, Oxford, Toulouse, Moscow, Tokyo, and Freiburg, University College, Cardiff, Wales, and Trinity College, Dublin. 71

It was doubtless J. Pierpont Morgan's gift which made possible the completion of Boardman Hall, and it was this gift which caused Morgan suddenly to become interested in the College and especially in the Department of Biology. Morgan had been on the Board of Trustees since 1886, and his election to the Board was probably in recognition of the contribution made toward Alumni Hall by his father, Junius S. Morgan, who was then living in England. J. Pierpont Morgan never attended the Trustees' meetings and, despite his great wealth, he had never contributed to the capital funds of the College. Even his gift toward Boardman Hall had been made with some reluctance. 72

But as his contribution toward Boardman Hall had amounted to one-fourth of its total cost, 73 Morgan came to feel a particular responsibility for the instruction which was to be carried on within its walls. And, it was most certainly to be expected that a building devoted to the study of Biology should be presided over by a Professor of that branch of science.

When Biology was introduced to the curriculum in the 1880's the instruction was first supplied by Herbert W. Conn, Ph.D., from Wesleyan, 74 and then for a while by the Reverend Frederick Gardiner, Jr., A.B., of Pomfret, as Instructor in Natural Science. 75 Biology was a popular study at Trinity, 76 and when it was first suggested that a Chair of Biology be created, Bishop Williams had hoped that Gardiner might "be called to fill it," in which event, the Professor could serve as rector of St. James' Church. 77

Nothing, of course, came of the Bishop's proposal, for it was not until the time of the building of Boardman Hall that the Trustees were able to give serious thought to a Chair in Biology, and by that time there was no possibility of using the new appointment as an accommodation to the Bishop of Connecticut. The Trustees intended to appoint a scholar of the highest calibre, and it was J. Pierpont Morgan who came to the rescue in agreeing to underwrite the Professorship in Natural History to the extent of $3,000 per year for a period of five years. 78

With this guarantee, at a time when Trinity's highest-paid Professors were being paid $2,500 per year, 79 the Trustees were in a position to attract a distinguished Biologist to the Chair which they named the J. Pierpont Morgan Professorship of Natural History. The man selected for the
new position was Charles Lincoln Edwards, B.S., Lombard College, 1884; B.S., Indiana University, 1886; M.A., Indiana, 1887; and Ph.D., Leipzig, 1890. Edwards had been on the faculties of the Universities of Texas and Cincinnati and had been prominently associated with the learned societies of his field. His researches in Marine Biology had taken him to the coast of Florida and to the Caribbean, and his findings had been published in the scholarly journals. At a salary, princely for Trinity, of $3,750, Professor Edwards was a natural complement to the other Professors in the sciences, Drs. Riggs and Robb.

Trinity was equally attractive to Professor Edwards. Boardman Hall was equipped with five large aquaria and other up-to-date equipment for the study of Marine Biology. Such equipment and the generosity of Alumni and others in securing specimens for the Museum of Natural History led Professor Edwards to hope that the College might help him fulfill a lifelong ambition by providing him with a “Floating Laboratory,” i.e., a 90-foot sloop to be fitted out for summer cruises to the Bahamas. Princeton had sent an expedition to Patagonia, and Bowdoin had sent one to Labrador. Trinity might send one to the southern waters.

The Trustees gave their approval to the project, but they were insistent that the management of the Floating Laboratory should be independent of the College and the Trinity Marine Laboratory was, therefore, chartered under Connecticut law as a separate corporation. The idea was an interesting one, and one which inspired another Trinity song, “A Smart Trinity Man,” by Philip Curtiss '06, the smart Trinity man being, of course, Professor Charles Lincoln Edwards. But good as the idea of a Floating Laboratory was, there was no great response from the Alumni, and the Laboratory was never put afloat.

Although J. Pierpont Morgan could not be induced to sponsor Professor Edwards’ Floating Laboratory, he paid his $3,000 each year toward the salary of the Professor, and when the original agreement expired in 1905, Morgan agreed to continue the arrangement for a short while, but without obligation to assume the entire amount of Professor Edwards’ salary, nor even for the $3,000 of the original agreement. The annual gift was reduced to $2,250 in 1906, and the salary of Professor Edwards was reduced at that time to $3,000. But Morgan once more raised his contribution to $3,000 the following year and continued to pay the amount until 1908. Edwards’ salary of $3,000 was continued until that time.

The Trustees had perhaps assumed that Morgan would ultimately endow the Chair of Natural History, but when he merely agreed to continue his annual contribution for a limited time, efforts were made to raise the money from the Alumni. During the summer and fall of 1908, the College Treasurer wrote to numerous friends of the College. Perhaps feeling that there was something strange about being asked to endow a Professorship bearing the name of one of the wealthiest men in the United States, most of those who had been dunned either ignored the request or sent replies in which all manner of excuses were offered for their inability to contribute, and by the end of November, 1908, only $463.25 had been raised. By the summer of 1909, an additional $1,068.25 (in amounts from $.25 to $200) had been contributed, but this sum was used to pay the salary directly, and none of it was retained as endowment capital. That year the Professor of Natural History’s salary was reduced to $2,000, and the following year just a bit more than half ($1,090) of the reduced salary was contributed by Alumni and friends.

In 1910, Morgan gave the College $100,000 which, although not specifically intended for the Professorship, yielded $4,155 for many years, and this more than compensated for the loss of the annual gift. In 1916, Morgan’s son gave Trinity an additional $150,000, this sum to be used for benefit of the Library.

It was during the administration of George Williamson Smith that great internal changes in the College occurred—changes which were to completely reorient the institution, and changes which were to bring crises which, had they not been happily resolved, could have destroyed Trinity College. Superficially, most of these prob-
lems may appear to have been financial, but *au fond* they were much less simple than that, for the financial problems (the perennial problems) were merely symptomatic of other matters which had to do with the personality and capacities of George Williamson Smith, the size of the student body, and the relationship of the College to the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Connecticut. And, in a way, all of these more basic concerns were so closely related that they may properly be considered simply as facets of a single question: What was the place and function at the beginning of the twentieth century of the small, church-related college for men?

Ever since 1849 the Bishop of Connecticut had been Chancellor and Visitor of the College. The Chancellor had been a powerful force in the affairs of the institution and, as it was the Chancellor who presided at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, many of the policies of the College were, without doubt, determined by him. Bishop Brownell, the first Chancellor, was much respected as the Founder of Trinity and the office had, indeed, been created to honor Bishop Brownell as Founder.

Bishop Williams, the second Chancellor, had had a long connection with Trinity, a connection which had begun, in fact, with Williams' undergraduate studies at the College and which had continued, after his resignation from the Presidency, as Lecturer in History. Abner Jackson was a close friend of Chancellor Williams and it was to Williams that Jackson owed his appointment as President. Thomas Ruggles Pynchon, too, enjoyed the favor of Bishop Williams and, despite the fact that the Chancellor was sometimes referred to as "Dean of the Faculty," an informal title of which the good Bishop would hardly have approved, Pynchon pretty much went his own way, except for occasions when he got himself into difficulties from which he could extricate himself only with Bishop Williams' help. Both Jackson and Pynchon accepted the situation without question. Both had spent the greater part of their adult lives in the Diocese of Connecticut and, as the church-related college was then conceived, some sort of official relationship to the Diocese was assumed.

When President Smith came to Trinity in 1883, he came as a complete outsider. He was not a Trinity graduate; he had never been resident in the Diocese; he probably had never known Bishop Williams personally; and he had had little experience in academic circles. Certainly, he had not read the Charter and By-Laws of the College with any care for, when he began his actual work at Trinity, he found the Presidency somewhat less than he had expected, so far as the powers of office were concerned.

Smith soon learned that the President of Trinity College had no *real* power—that he had no authority to call meetings of the Board of Trustees, that he had no means of dictating any policy of his own, and that there was a constant appeal from him to a higher jurisdiction. Despite these frustrations, Smith's early years were, as we have seen, marked by notable successes. Although technically lacking in authority, Smith had been able to persuade, and by persuasion he had been able to bring about such revolutionary measures as a modernization of the curriculum and a modification of the architectural plan of the campus—certainly no mean achievements for one who regarded himself as second in command!

George Williamson Smith did not question the fact of Trinity's Episcopal heritage, nor the ideal of some sort of relationship with the Episcopal Church, and certainly he seems to have fully accepted Trinity's traditional attitude toward formal religious observance. One of his first acts was to revive the Sunday morning services and to raise the standard of music for the Chapel at a time when most of the singing talent was being drained off to paid positions in the boy choirs of the Episcopal Churches of Hartford. And in his first report as President of the College, Smith declared that Trinity would *not* follow the trend of American colleges in de-emphasizing religion, arguing that Trinity could equal but not excel the "secular colleges" in academic matters and that it was in the religious and moral emphasis that Trinity could find her reason for being.
There was considerable evidence that Trinity was doing just what President Smith had claimed. Charles McLean Andrews '84 noted that when he went to the Johns Hopkins University as a graduate student he found the atmosphere less "decidedly Christian" than at Trinity.97 Morgan Dix, rector of Trinity Church in the City of New York, noted the "Christian stamp" upon the graduates of Trinity College,98 and the Rev. Dr. McConnell, rector of St. Stephen's College, remarked at a meeting of the Philadelphia Alumni that the Trinity men he had known had "always impressed him as being gentlemen and Christians."99

Smith was proud of his successes and felt that he had begun a work that would bring personal satisfaction, and this feeling had prompted him to decline consecration as Bishop of Easton in 1885. But despite outward appearances, there was considerable friction between the Chancellor and the President. Professor Martin, who knew and respected them both, declared that Bishop Williams "had an instinct and gift to rule as pronounced as that of any cardinal," and that Smith, when he attempted to resist Williams' rule, "found himself in the chill of a practical diocesan excommunication."100

The conflict came to a head in November, 1888, when Smith was elected Bishop-Coadjutor of the Diocese of Northern Ohio.101 There were again the earnest entreaties that Smith decline the honor and remain at Trinity. Although the students felt that this time Smith would leave, they urged upon him an obligation to remain to complete the good work which he had begun, and they asked him to stay at Trinity to preserve the "firmer and healthier college tone" which had been evidenced during his administration.102 Numerous individuals among the Alumni wrote letters to the President praising his work and deploring the possibility of his leaving,103 and local alumni groups drafted petitions and resolutions to the same effect.104 The Trustees, too, declared their "unanimous approval and entire confidence" in President Smith.105 Hartford's most famous citizen, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), wrote to President Smith suggesting that he "tell those Ohio people . . . that people are very well satisfied with you where you are, and are tired of this intermeddling. We can't afford," he wrote, "to furnish bishops for any Maryland and Ohio that comes along, and we cannot have ourselves being annoyed and made uneasy all the time this way."106

President Smith suddenly found himself in a strong position and one in which he could again afford to be just a bit coy. Despite the unanimous expressions of approval, Smith was slow in indicating his decision, so slow, in fact, that after a delay of over a month, the Tablet, which had been so enthusiastic in its support of the President's remaining at Trinity, began to editorialize on the matter of the Trinity Presidency. Noting that Trinity had lost three Presidents to the Episcopacy and with the possibility of losing still another, the editor of the Tablet again raised the question of the desirability of having a clergyman as head of the College. The better the President, he pointed out, the greater attention he receives and thus is increased the possibility of removing a man from the very work in which he achieves his reputation. Laymen are not subject to this danger and a layman as President would, furthermore, dispel "the impression that we are merely a divinity school." And then the editor came to the particular case of President Smith, pointing out that as a clergyman-resident in the Diocese of Connecticut, he was doubly responsible to the Bishop – because of his canonical residence and because of the Bishop's position as Chancellor of the College. As "the bishop is practically president," he wrote, "... if any conflict arises between them [Bishop and President] as to a matter of discipline[,] the President[,] by reason of his position in the diocese[,] may be unable to enforce his authority." Although the editor expressed hope that Smith would not leave, he also suggested that if such were to be the case, the Trustees would select one who would be "thoroughly unfettered" – in other words, a layman.107

Student journalists, as well as others, often editorialize on subjects of which they have imper-
fect knowledge. In this case, however, the Tablet's editor had, by intuition or by information, gained a perfect understanding of the internal situation at the College. But what he could not have known was that the Trustees were already acting along lines similar to those suggested in his editorial. Certainly, none were more aware of the tensions between Williams and Smith than the Trustees. Professor Martin has suggested that President Smith agreed to stay at Trinity if the office of Chancellor were to be abolished and if the President of the College were to be made President of the Board of Trustees. But whether there was actually a "deal" or not, it was Bishop Williams, who could be gracious as well as dictatorial, who at a meeting of the Board of Trustees held on November 21, 1888, suggested that the Trustees petition the Connecticut General Assembly to repeal the amendment to the Charter which had made the Bishop of Connecticut ex-officio Chancellor of the College. The motion was carried, and a Trustee Committee was appointed to prepare a bill. On January 24, 1889, the bill was introduced in the House of Representatives by a Mr. Sanger of Canterbury, and on February 20 it was passed by joint resolution of both houses. Thus was ended Trinity College's forty-year official tie with the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut.

In mid-January of 1889, after the Trustees had voted to amend the College Charter, but before the bill had actually been introduced, George Williamson Smith announced that he had declined consecration as Bishop-Coadjutor of Northern Ohio and that he would continue as President of Trinity College—a decision that met with general satisfaction. Late in February, Mark Twain accompanied President Smith to New York City to attend a meeting of the New York Alumni where he immodestly, but characteristically, took the credit for Smith's continuing in the Trinity Presidency.

The charter amendment of 1889 had simply repealed the amendment of 1849, and the act of the General Assembly merely repealed the article of the Charter which had created the office of Chancellor. But although the Chancellor's office now had no legal sanction, the title was retained by Bishop Williams as Chancellor and Chairman of the Board of Visitors until his death in 1899. The Board of Visitors, too, was continued, although without legal sanction, but as the members died no replacements were made, and the last Catalogue to carry a list of the Visitors was that of 1905–1906.

The severing of the tie with the Diocese of Connecticut did not mean that there would be an immediate secularization of Trinity College. There were, of course, those who would have preferred to have it so, but there were many more who supported a strong Christian, and even Episcopalian, emphasis. President Smith had been careful to see that there was no proselytizing, and his administration had been praised for this stand. Those who wanted to retain the moderate Episcopalian influence were always articulate, and such persons were particularly hostile to the idea that Trinity's Anglican tradition (and connection) had impeded the College's progress. And those who were most ardent in support of an Episcopalian emphasis felt that Episcopalians had a particular responsibility to Trinity and to the other colleges which had been founded by Episcopalians. In an address to the New York Alumni Association, Bishop Potter had deplored the fact that Episcopalians and others, criticize the College and point to the small student body as a damning feature, Episcopalians do nothing to help it grow. Bishop Paddock's brief publication brought forth a letter to the Tablet by a Congregationalist Alumnus in which the writer stressed the liberal attitude of the Trinity Faculty toward non-Episcopalians. This writer, who signed himself "Nu," stated that he would want the Episcopalian Faculty at Trinity to teach his own sons and that Episcopalians...
are overlooking a splendid opportunity in send­ing their sons to such non-Episcopalian colleges as Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Dartmouth, or Am­herst. President Smith, too, as well he might have, regretted that Episcopalians did not support their colleges.

With the severing of the direct tie to the Dio­cese of Connecticut, Smith thought that the charge of “sectarianism” could be made no longer and that there would be a rapid increase in the size of the student body. One of his first pro­nouncements after his agreement to remain at the College was that a new dormitory and li­brary would have to be built and that both would cost some $300,000. The President was able to convince the Trustees of the desirability of en­larging the student body, a move the Alumni had long urged, and the governing board obligingly decided not to limit the number of enrollments and to admit all qualified applicants. The Trus­tees soon came to think in terms of an under­graduate body of 200, and this at a time when the students, both regular and special, numbered but 136.

But whatever the hopes of the President and Trustees, the number of students did not in­crease. Nor did the reference to Trinity as a “sectarian” institution subside. These two points were joined in an article in the New York Eve­ning Post which compared the Catalogues of Trinity College for the late 1830’s with that of 1890-1891. Particular mention was made of the fact that the College had experienced a remark­ably small growth during the last fifty years, and the comment was made that such was the charac­teristic of “sectarian” colleges. And in commenting on the article, the Tablet noted that Trinity College was a double loser—non-Churchmen do not support the College because of its Episco­palian influence, and Episcopalians do not support the College any more than they do “secular” institutions.

President Smith had his own ideas on the problem, and they were not entirely without merit. His plan was to totally dissociate the Col­lege from the affairs of the Diocese of Con­necticut and at the same time achieve some sort of informal relationship to the Episcopal Church at large. His success in eliminating the office of Chancellor had not been his first step, nor was it to be his last in this direction. Traditionally, the President of Trinity College had been elected to the Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Academy of Connecticut and all Presidents except Eliot, Kerfoot, and Jackson had been so honored. Smith had been elected in 1886, but he resigned the fol­lowing year, probably in the interest of dis­sociating himself (and the College) from the affairs of a strictly Diocesan institution. In June of 1891, President Smith asked the Trustees to look into the matter of Trinity’s relation to the Berkeley Divinity School, a Diocesan school, but one which had actually begun as the Theological Department of Trinity College. The Trustees ap­pointed a committee (Bishop Williams and Luke A. Lockwood) “with reference to a change in the Berkeley Divinity School, so as to relieve the President [of Trinity College] of his compulsory membership on the Board of Trustees of that Institution.” The committee, however, made no report to the Board.

A year later, President Smith asked the Trust­ees to request the next General Convention of the Episcopal Church to enact a canon to give the clerical Faculty at Trinity College the same standing “as officers in a general institution or chaplains in the army or navy.” The committee to which the proposal was referred recommended that the matter be dropped because of the many complications which might arise. The committee report was accepted but not made the vote of the Board, for the Trustees immediately resolved to petition the General Convention as the President had originally requested.

A memorial to the General Convention was drafted and on October 10, 1892, it was presented to the House of Bishops at the Convention held in Baltimore, Maryland, by Bishop Niles of New Hampshire, a Trustee of the College. The peti­tion was referred to the Committee on Memo­rials which, in turn, referred it to the Commit­tee on Canons. The Committee on Canons recommended a change in Canon 15 which would permit “Professors in any institution of learning”
to retain canonical residence in a Diocese other than the one in which the institution was located. The motion was adopted by the House of Bishops and, upon ratification by the House of Deputies, the clerical members of the Trinity Faculty were removed from the absolute control of the Bishop of Connecticut. But although the amending of Canon 15 of the Episcopal Church removed one more possible restraint upon the Trinity Faculty, it in no way recognized a special connection of the College to the General Convention, nor did the canon mention Trinity College, or any other institution, by name.

President Smith still had one final piece of unfinished work in his efforts to extricate Trinity College from the Diocese of Connecticut—the ex-officio position of the Trinity President on the Board of Trustees of Berkeley Divinity School. Perhaps emboldened by his previous successes, Smith began to fight the question out at the meetings of the Berkeley Trustees. On December 8, 1894, he asked that the Berkeley Charter be amended so as to remove the President of the College from the Berkeley Board of Trustees. As the Berkeley Trustees took no immediate action, Smith opened the question two months later, and this time he became quite insistent. The connection of the President of the College to the Divinity School was injurious, he said, to the College. And the relationship, he argued, did not reflect the true situation, for he noted, perhaps incorrectly, that the understanding had always been that the Trinity graduates should go to the General Seminary rather than to Berkeley. In an attempt at mollification, the Berkeley Trustees assured President Smith that the arrangement between the Divinity School and the Trinity President was intended simply “to honor the Head of the College.” Smith was urged to withdraw his request, but he would not, and the Trustees of the Berkeley Divinity School ultimately succumbed to George Williamson Smith’s demands.

Trinity’s President had finally cut all ties with the Diocese of Connecticut, but he had not secured a new and larger connection with the whole Episcopal Church, and it might be seriously questioned whether this was what he really intended to do. At any rate, Trinity College had been legally “secularized”—so far as any official relationship to any portion of the Church was concerned.

But the legal “secularization” had little immediate effect upon the everyday affairs of the College. The old schedule of Chapel Services, for example, was maintained—evening services as well as morning, even though evening chapel had, by this time, been abandoned at most of the older colleges. The special services, such as the reading of the Litany daily during Lent, continued. Students, of course, had their complaints about chapel. One wrote to the Tablet insisting that compulsory chapel was “an infringement on the personal rights of religious thought and action,” and the editor of the Tablet once asked that more “outside” preachers be invited to the Chapel, but many of them suffered in silence and simply “read Sunday newspapers under the pews.”

The religious organizations continued in their former fashion. The Missionary Society continued to meet regularly, to support a scholarship in St. John’s College, Shanghai, and to provide leadership for a boys’ club at Grace Church and Sunday School teachers for various parishes in Hartford. During Lent of 1897, the Missionary Society sponsored a series of lectures by “outside speakers,” and the attendance of forty persons at the meetings attested to the fact that the society was still an active institution on campus. And in 1890 the Missionary Society was joined by a second religious organization—the St. Paul’s Guild, whose stated “object was to deepen the spiritual life of the students.” President Smith gave the guild his blessing and addressed the first regular meeting of the group. Unfortunately, however, the life of the organization was short.

Nor did the ending of the official ties to the Diocese of Connecticut result in the hoped-for increase in the number of students. President Smith could slant a report by a clever use of statistics to show a slight increase, but the conclusions must have deceived nobody. In a report to the Alumni for 1893, he stated that there had
been a notable growth of the College and a growth which could be attributed to the newer curricula which he had introduced in 1884.144 The Catalogue partially confirmed Smith’s claim, but not entirely. During the academic year of 1893–1894, there were listed eighty students in the Arts course (nineteen seniors, nineteen juniors, nineteen freshmen, and twenty-three sophomores), eighteen in Science, nine in Letters and Science, and one in Letters. There were also twelve special students.145 Thus, it could be argued that the Arts students had maintained the same strength as before the introduction of the new curricula and that the increase was in the newer courses. But there was another side to the matter of undergraduate statistics. In 1893–1894, there had been 122 students enrolled in the College, but nine were “special students not candidates for a degree.” In 1894–1895 the number rose to 123. Twenty of these students were “specials,” leaving only 103 students actually candidates for degrees, a situation to be accounted for largely by the Trustees’ resolution of 1889 to admit “all qualified applicants.”146

The growth of the College was, to be sure, disappointingly slow, but it still had to be accounted for. In 1894, the Tablet blamed the retention of the study of Latin and Greek,147 but no mention was made of the B.S. courses which did not require these languages. On another occasion, the Tablet blamed the College’s name of “Trinity” which suggested that the institution was either “in some way a Theological Seminary, or a place preparatory to such a seminary.”148

Sidney George Fisher, who could always serve as a catalyst in any unresolved situation at the College, published a little pamphlet which he hoped would clarify matters regarding Episcopalian colleges in general and Trinity in particular. Church Colleges: Their History, Position and Importance, With Some Account of the Church Schools149 appeared in the summer of 1895, and in it Fisher restated many of the ideas regarding church relationship which had been expressed during the past few years. A brief account was given of the secularization of the College of William and Mary, and there were definitions of the relationships of such institutions as Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania to the Church. There were also sketches of Kenyon, Trinity, Hobart, St. Stephens, and the University of the South, a statistical table of church schools, and reprintings of several addresses on the subject of higher education by George Williamson Smith.

Fisher’s pamphlet inspired the Reverend Dr. Charles F. Hoffman to invite the heads of those colleges, seminaries, and schools which had either historical or active connections with the Church to a conference which was held in December of 1895 at his home in New York City. Hoffman was particularly interested in securing a uniform standard for granting the A.B. degree for the Episcopalian colleges, and his efforts led to the organizing of the Association for Promoting the Interests of the Protestant Episcopal Schools, Colleges, and Seminaries. George Williamson Smith was elected one of the vice presidents.150 The “Association” had little success, for it never developed into the “accrediting agency” which its founders intended. On May 1, 1896, the association met in New York City, and all that was agreed upon was to offer the three prizes of $300 each to the students at Trinity, Hobart, Kenyon, St. Stephens, Lehigh, and the University of the South. Although the scheme was intended “to bring the colleges into closer relationship with each other,”151 The Trinity Tablet complained that the prizes were hardly in keeping with the newer developments in college curricula as they were to be awarded not in special competition, but for an examination to cover Latin, Greek, English, Mathematics, and Physics, and this would eliminate from the competition all except the A.B. students.152 The “Association” was badly conceived and it, fortunately, soon disappeared.

At this same time, President Smith was becoming involved in a grandiose plan to convert Trinity College into a university! For a college president who was under constant pressure from the Alumni to increase the number of students, the involvement was a natural one – perhaps one of desperation. And, in a way, the new movement was something of a turning to the Hartford Com-
munity when it was felt that the Episcopal Church had withheld the financial support which the College needed. The movement began somewhat nebulously when in 1895 several members of the Hartford Board of Trade proposed that there be created in Hartford a scientific school somewhat along the lines of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, which would train young men from the Hartford area "in mechanical engineering and applied mechanics." The technical school idea had not originated at the College, but President Smith and Professor Luther were active members of the committee which was appointed to formulate the plans, and from the beginning it was assumed that the institution would be an adjunct to Trinity College and that it would make use of the Trinity facilities. The Executive Committee of the Trustees was receptive to the idea and voted to provide whatever land the technical school should require. There was some question at first as to how the expense of the undertaking should be shared between the College and the city of Hartford and as to whether other institutions would be included in the arrangement, but as evidence of good faith the Trustees voted to "gladly cooperate in the establishment of Colleges in the City of Hartford in connection with Trinity College under university Government." There was, naturally, a great deal to be explained to those most directly interested in the welfare of the College, especially as the Catalogue had for many years explicitly stated that the sole purpose of the College was "to afford the opportunity for obtaining a liberal education." President Smith attended the meetings of the local alumni groups assuring them that the technical school project was not incompatible with the objectives of the College, but that it was to be encouraged as a means of "bringing the college more in touch with the citizens of Hartford." If the Alumni were not convinced of the merits of the project, the students were, for both President and students had hopes, although for different reasons, of enlarging the student body.

The Trustees had approved the plan in principle, but there was much difficulty in getting down to particulars. The Hartford people were insistent that there be free tuition for Hartford students, as the technical school was intended to be "pre-eminently a Hartford institution." Even the most conservative estimate assumed the raising of $300,000—a new building and equipment would require $50,000; the endowment of two Professorships (one of applied mechanics and one of steam engineering) would need $100,000; and an endowment of $150,000 would provide for assistants, working engineers, and technicians. And it was, perhaps, this large sum of money to be raised which saved Trinity College from becoming permanently committed to a program which would most certainly have changed the very nature of the institution. The Hartford community was still suffering the effects of the Panic of 1893, and no money was in sight from that quarter—even though the hope of Hartford money was what made the project so palatable to the college authorities. And even a broadening of the sponsorship to include civic leaders from neighboring towns brought no contributions. Smith continued to press the technical school idea among the Alumni, but again with no success. The technical school project, obviously, was not gaining much support. Smith, vainly having spent his energies during the winter of 1895–1896 for the proposed technical school, asked for a six-months leave of absence. The Trustees granted the leave and appointed Thomas Ruggles Pynchon as Acting-President, and under Pynchon (or perhaps any Acting-President) it was hardly to be expected that the technical school plans would have been furthered. And even the most optimistic promoters felt that it would be unwise to begin a formal canvass for funds until the nation's economy had recovered. So far as Trinity College was concerned, the technical school idea was "put in moth balls." But not so the "University" plan to which the Trustees had subscribed in June of 1896. Here several arrangements were made with other edu-
cation institutions which were intended to broaden the range of instruction open to Trinity students and to pool the resources of the several cooperating organizations. An arrangement was made between the College and the Hartford Hospital whereby the facilities of the hospital were opened to the Trinity students who intended to study Medicine. The Trinity students were permitted to observe surgical operations and to "follow interesting cases under the careful explanation of noted physicians." Some of the Trinity students availed themselves of this facility, and the early success of this program prompted the Executive Committee of the Hartford Hospital to admit the Trinity students "to the course of lectures delivered before the Training School for Nurses." A similar arrangement was made with the Connecticut League of Art Students, which opened their studios and instruction to the Trinity students as an elective course. This arrangement was reciprocal, and members of the League were permitted to attend lectures and recitations at the College. Although there was no great number of "cross-registrations," several members of the league attended lectures at the College during the Christmas Term of 1897–1898, and the Catalogue as late as 1900–1901 described the offerings of the Art League and the Hartford Hospital as "Instruction in Art and Medicine." With the temporary "shelving" of plans for the technical school, President Smith began to play down the university idea to the Alumni. Speaking in Boston on February 10, 1898, he told the Alumni that "Trinity is not a university[,] but a college in the true sense of the word," and that Trinity is "not prepared at present to cast aside the time honored studies." But further developments in Hartford made it obvious that while the President was "playing down" the university idea to the alumni, he was "playing it up" in Hartford. For several years the College Catalogue had noted that the Hartford Public Library, the Watkinson Library, the Library of the Connecticut Historical Society, the State Law Library, and the Case Memorial Library at the Hartford Theological Seminary were available to the Trinity students. In 1900, the Trustees took "steps . . . looking to a closer affiliation and inter-relation of the different libraries in the city of Hartford."168

Trinity's graduate work in the Sciences had attracted much attention, and there was some feeling that the offerings might be extended to the Humanities. As the Hartford Theological Seminary developed the Program in Missions which in 1911 was to be organized as the Kennedy School of Missions, many courses were instituted at the Seminary in Oriental Languages. Professor Martin of the Trinity Faculty was teaching several of these courses, and there was serious thought given to offering them at the College rather than at the Seminary. The suggestion was never put into effect, and it may have been the presence of two women in Professor Martin's course that stood in the way of carrying out the suggestion. President Smith, no matter how badly he wanted new students, made it clear that he did not favor co-education. At the Commencement Dinner of June 27, 1900, he responded to the Hartford sentiment toward co-education with a stern, "Gentlemen, we won't do it that way."171

In 1901, the technical school plan was revived perhaps largely by President Smith. The local press took up the cause once more and urged not only a first-class scientific school but also "a great school of commerce." And this time the university idea received the support of a much respected member of the Faculty, Professor Martin. In the Trinity College Bulletin, a publication authorized by the Trustees in June, 1899, and intended to serve, in part, as a vehicle for publication of the results of the Faculty's scholarly research, Professor Martin boldly declared that "the College has no alternative but to go on, and that rapidly, until Trinity College becomes a University universally regarded as a center of the highest intellectual work." Princeton, his Alma Mater, Martin noted, had evolved under President Woodrow Wilson from a small college to a great university, and Trinity could do the same. Trinity should acquire a first-rate Faculty – at
least one scholar in each department, and a first-rate man, he said, would be "cheap at $7,500 per annum, the sum paid such men at Columbia and at Chicago." And as a first step toward achieving this goal, Martin suggested a huge endowment ($100,000 or $150,000) to attract a single renowned scholar to the Trinity College Faculty.

This was the "last gasp" of the university idea. Martin's suggestion was not followed—perhaps it could not be followed. George Williamson Smith ended his services as President of Trinity College in 1904, and a single announcement was made regarding the possible opening of the technical school at the time his successor assumed office, and thus died the grandiose idea of the technical school and the university of Hartford which was to result.

The technical school plan was a fiasco, as was that of the university, but the resignation of George Williamson Smith came not over this issue, but rather, as in the case of his predecessor, Thomas Ruggles Pynchon, over a serious matter of student discipline.

President Smith, as we have seen, had met with many frustrations as well as successes, and some of his greatest disappointments had immediately followed his greatest victories. The year 1888 was, it would seem, the turning point in George Williamson Smith's career at Trinity College. Smith had been instrumental in breaking the official ties with the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, but he had not been able to place the College in a more favorable relationship with the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. This "secularizing" of the College had aroused an understandable hostility on the part of Connecticut Episcopalians which was only to increase through the years. And when the President turned to the Hartford community for support, the former close association with the Episcopal Church always stood in the way. The College maintained its old Episcopal characteristics and did not make any great appeal outside Episcopal circles and this despite the fact that Episcopalians in general never seem to have felt any particular affection or responsibility for Trinity. As late as 1897, almost the entire Senior Class were Episcopalians. At that time there were twenty-one Episcopalians, one Romanist, one Congregationalist, and two with "no particular religious belief." Of the Class of 1900, all but six were Episcopalians. That year two were Congregationalists, one Presbyterian, one Reformed, one Christian Scientist, and one with no affiliation. But in the statistics for the Class of 1900 was revealed a genuine indication of the secularization of the College. Of the Alumni whose occupations could be determined in 1900, 225 were clergymen, 129 were lawyers, 59 were physicians, 43 were in mercantile pursuits, and 41 were engaged in manufacturing. Of the 21 members of the Class of 1900, only two intended to study Theology. The chapel preachers were still Episcopal clergymen, and it was not until March 24, 1901, that the first non-Episcopalian, the Reverend Joseph H. Twitchell, pastor of the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, was invited to preach at the College. Episcopalians still controlled the College, but no longer the Episcopal clergy! By 1903, there were only five clergymen (excluding the President) out of twenty-three on the Board of Trustees, and at that same time only three clergymen on the Board of Fellows.

With the Alumni, too, 1888 was the turning point. At first they had rallied 'round the new President and had given him unreserved support. Alumni contributions swelled the College coffers, and the Old Grads thought that a bright future awaited the institution. But when Smith alienated Connecticut Episcopalians and failed, at the same time, to secure a new base of support in the Hartford business community, he was obliged to make new demands upon an already generous Alumni, which they were naturally to resist. The Alumni refused to support the Floating Laboratory, they would have nothing to do with the proposed technical school, and they could never be brought to endow the Morgan Professorship. Even the contributions to the cost of erecting Boardman Hall seem to have been made under protest. President Smith had not lived up to his expectations, and especially displeasing to the
Alumni was his failure to enlarge the student body!

Perhaps President Smith retained the confidence and respect of the Trinity undergraduates longer than that of any other interested group. There were, to be sure, occasional lapses from the good order which Smith had restored, but his first years at Trinity were marked by an unusual propriety on the part of the students. The collegians occasionally took to breaking bottles on the "Long Walk," but President Smith was generous enough to overlook these lapses. In 1888, he felt so confident in his dealings with the students that he told a newspaper reporter that "there is no need of discipline at Trinity in the old sense of the word." But 1888 may also have marked the "beginning of the end" of the friendly relations between President and undergraduates, for it was at just about that time that the St. Patrick's Day rushes became a regular part of the Trinity extracurriculum. And as time went on and the St. Patrick's Day brawl became more bloody, there were occasions when even the most permisive college president would have been disturbed. The Lemon Squeezer incident of 1895 suggested a throwback to the disorderly days of Samuel Eliot, and as the century drew to a close there was a new rash of hazing which, too, was suggestive of practices at the College in the unhappy days of President Pynchon.

These trends, naturally, annoyed President Smith, and for once he seemed unable to exert his former paternal influence. Strained relations with ecclesiastical authorities and Alumni were soon reflected in his dealings with the students. And the undergraduates, formerly so respectful to his authority, now made the President the butt of some mild practical jokes. When Smith was on leave of absence, a "For Sale or To Rent" sign was placed on the President's house, and once in the *Ivy* the students, in an "Ivy Dictionary of College Slang," defined "PREXY" as "A man with a gray moustache who is seen on Vernon Street several times during the year, but is more often off on a trip somewhere."

Once more the vicious cycle began, for as the students became less respectful of administrative authority, the President, supported by the Faculty, became more repressive. The outbreak of the Spanish-American War provided a distraction which postponed the inevitable break. The students at first were in high spirits. King Alfonso XIII was burned in effigy, and during the spring of 1898 the students properly voiced the slogan "Remember the Maine!" A military company was organized, first in "a spirit of jest," but the members soon got down to regular drill under students who had come to Trinity from military preparatory schools or who had "received military training in some of the state organizations." Professor Robb was called by the federal government to assist in laying electric mines for the defense of New London, and by Commencement, 1898, nine Trinity undergraduates and twenty-three Alumni had answered the call to the colors. The number of volunteers would have been much greater had not most of the undergraduates been minors who failed to get parental permission to enlist.

The war again almost brought a general demoralization of the student body, and the big "blow-up" came in March, 1899, when, as punishment for a particularly brutal hazing session, four Sophomores were suspended. When the undergraduates signed a petition denouncing the alleged tyranny of the Faculty, the entire Sophomore Class was summoned before the Faculty and ordered to give a full account of both the hazing incident and the Class' part in circulating the student petition. The Sophomores appeared before the faculty but, as the local press reported the affair, followed a "know nothing policy," whereupon the entire Class was suspended for six weeks.

Once more the newspapers were filled with reports of events on Hartford's College Hill. The Faculty and administration were much embarrassed by the publicity, but they held firm on the matter of the suspension. The undergraduates were indignant, and once again they found support from the Alumni. The New York Association took immediate action and sent a committee to Hartford to meet with President Smith. The President refused to be moved by the demands
of the New York Alumni, and it was finally the Board of Fellows who came through with a proposal for a compromise. The fellows suggested that the College delete the rule against hazing and that the students vote to abolish the custom. Early in May a College Meeting was held, and by an almost unanimous vote the students formally abolished hazing. The Senior and Freshman Classes then petitioned the Faculty to reinstate the suspended Sophomores, and the Faculty yielded to the extent of shortening the suspension by ten days.195

But the damage was done! The students showed their distaste for President Smith by asking that the Baccalaureate Sermon be preached by someone from outside the College. But here, again, the President stood firm and answered the request by reminding the Seniors that he had already decided to preach the sermon himself, "as it is the custom of Heads of Colleges to do." But fully aware of his low standing in student estimation, he added: "I shall very much regret if this arrangement is distasteful to the class."196 Perhaps Smith, too, had lost his effectiveness as a teacher, for he was soon to be relieved of all teaching duties and allowed to devote his entire time to administrative affairs.197

The unfavorable newspaper publicity which had dealt with a tyrannical Faculty and a rowdy student body had a terrible effect. Several parents withdrew their sons and, during the summer of 1899, it seemed that there might not even be a Freshman Class for the coming September. President Smith began searching the highways and byways for students. When normal recruiting techniques failed, the President secured funds from some of his friends, and with this money he was able to offer remission of tuition and even money for personal expenses. Forty students were gathered by this means, but even President Smith was obliged to admit that "they were not first-class men."198 In fact, many of them were so poorly-prepared for college work that Harold Loomis Cleasby, valedictorian of the Class of 1899, was appointed Tutor, in which capacity he was, as the Tablet wrote, "to undertake the somewhat thankless task of aiding backward students in their classical work." But the Tablet also made the most of a bad situation by noting that the addition of a Tutor to the Faculty ("He will be a regular instructor," wrote the Tablet) was "an Oxford idea." And even Professor Martin went along with this suggestion, for he soon expressed the hope that "this class of teacher, . . . so important in the English Colleges," would be retained.199

Despite Cleasby's efforts, many of those who had been admitted as Freshmen in 1899 flunked out, and at the end of the year only nineteen of the forty remained.200 President Smith, who had always favored enlarging the student body, now was obliged to change his tune and to rationalize in favor of the small college. At a meeting of the Boston Alumni, he stated that "the old idea was never to want more than 100 students. A small college, but one of the first class." And in his attempt to make the lemon sweet, perhaps more to himself than to the Boston Alumni, Smith argued that an increase in the number of students would mean an increase in the expense of operating the College. Furthermore, a student body of three hundred would change Trinity's character, and the students in such a large college would lose all the present social advantages. Finally, he suggested: "If we want to grow into a large college we can do so as well as any other college, but do we want this?"201

And the answer to President Smith's rhetorical question was supplied by Professor Luther with an emphatic "Yes!" To the Hartford Association of Yale Alumni, Luther said: "Trinity, still a small college, now has twice the number of students enrolled fifteen years ago; and we mean to double that several times and faster. Doubtless there is a maximum number of students in excess of which is not desirable that a single institution should accept candidates. Just what that number is I do not know. . . . "202

Professor Luther's ideas were more indicative of alumni feelings than were President Smith's defeatist rationalizations. Soon the Alumni urged the Trustees to reduce the tuition fees so as to
attract students. The idea, however, was not accepted by the Board because of the poor financial situation of the College and perhaps, too, because of the miserable results of President Smith's recruiting of the year before.

When the College opened in September, 1900, the students were dismayed at the small number of Freshmen. The Class of 1904 was the smallest class for many years, and the undergraduates feared that if subsequent classes were to be equally small there would be little possibility of Trinity's participation in intercollegiate athletics. The Tablet came up with an ingenious idea. Not content to have the Class of '04 remain small, that frequent giver of good advice, the Tablet, urged the students to undertake their own recruiting campaign by encouraging their friends to transfer to Trinity from other colleges. The undergraduates were urged to tell their friends in other institutions of the advantages (!) of going to Trinity, and to "have them spend a week or so at college with you. Surely," said the Tablet editor, "the spell will work upon them, and they too will learn to love life 'neath the elms' . . . ." The plans unfortunately met with little success, and the Class of 1904 numbered only six men at graduation, the only year in which more Masters' degrees were granted than Bachelors.

Although the undergraduates were unable to swell the ranks of the Class of 1904, they spent the academic year in serious efforts to see that the Class of 1905 should be at least of the usual size. The Press Club was revived, and news releases (all favorable, of course) of College events were sent to some fifty newspapers, including the large dailies of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Washington, and Chicago. Alumni, too, joined in the effort. Judge Buffington was particularly active and that most loyal Alumnus set his own goal of doubling the student body. Repeatedly, in the Tablet and in letters to friends, he urged that the student body be doubled. This, he said, could easily be done if each student in the College would bring in another man. And, most important of all, Buffington wrote countless letters to prospective students whose names had been supplied by Alumni and undergraduates. Frederick E. Haight '87, too, brought several students from St. Paul's School in Garden City, Long Island.

When the Christmas Term opened in September of 1901, it was found that the Class of 1905 was the largest for a number of years. The Tablet congratulated Judge Buffington "and his able associates among the Faculty, alumni, and undergraduates upon the result of their efforts in the 'student-getting' cause." but no mention was made of the greatest factor in the size of the Freshman Class. The Trustees had, in desperation, suddenly reversed their former policy on remitting college fees as a means of attracting students. Explaining that the College owed the city of Hartford something for its exemption from city taxes, the Board voted to admit without fee those Hartford youths who could not otherwise attend college. Twenty additional students from the Greater Hartford area both swelled the Class of 1905 and went far toward reorienting the College toward the Hartford community – so far, in fact, that under George Williamson Smith's successor, Trinity came to be called "The Hartford Local."

Again there were many "dropouts," and throughout the College there was a pessimistic spirit. Several football games had to be cancelled because of low morale, and there was some question as to whether there would even be a Trinity Ivy in 1903 because of the small Class of '04. George Williamson Smith, already a bitter and austere old man at sixty-seven years of age, had lost his former charm. Smith was unpopular with the students and with the Alumni, and both groups blamed him for the condition of the College – for the depressed spirit and for the failure to secure more students. And now financial worries were added to President Smith's list of vexations. The fiscal year of 1901-1902 had closed with a deficit of $62,281.70.

Perhaps Smith, like several of his predecessors, tried to please. At least he was to make one more turn in his losing battle to enlarge the College and at the same time revive the sagging finances.
Having lost the support of Episcopal Churchmen, and having failed to inspire much confidence among the Hartford community, President Smith finally gave thought to securing state support for Trinity College. Suddenly he sang the praises of the state universities of the western states and expressed regret that the older states of the Northeast had done so little to support higher education. Comparing Connecticut to Kansas, Michigan, and Iowa, where a higher education was open without tuition fees to all young people of the state, President Smith suggested that Connecticut might at least go as far as New York, Vermont, and New Hampshire, and provide free scholarships to all who might be qualified for college admissions. 216

But he could hardly have made a less welcome suggestion to a College which, although always small and sometimes less than academically select, was nevertheless eminently proper and proud of the social standing of the undergraduates and Alumni. Smith's new hint of admission of "all comers" and of state subsidies was unthinkable. Sydney George Fisher, writing to the Tablet, expressed fears that an increase in the student body along the lines suggested by President Smith would "let in a flood of persons who would destroy the social character of the college as the alumni recollect it." 217 The Board of Fellows, which had been meeting regularly to consider the general condition of the College, responded to the President's latest proposal with a demand that the Trustees remove George Williamson Smith from the Presidency of Trinity College. This was serious business. The Trustees gave Smith a copy of the Fellows' Report and advised him to prepare his defense. 218

Smith's reply to the Fellows' Report was a thirty-five page Confidential Report . . . to the Trustees in which he defended his administration, chided the Fellows for having "discharged no useful function during the past twenty years." The Fellows had insisted that there was much discontent on the part of the Alumni, but Smith declared that he had seen no evidence of such discontent, and that any dissatisfaction on the part of the Alumni would have been brought to his attention by the alumni representatives on the Board of Trustees. The Fellows noted that Trinity had "not kept pace in growth with other New England colleges," but Smith supplied statistics which revealed that Trinity's enrollment, while not keeping up with several of the leading institutions, was about the average of all New England and Middle Atlantic Region colleges and that other colleges than Trinity had not grown. To the more specific charge that Trinity's enrollment had actually decreased during the past twelve years, Smith found several convenient explanations. Trinity's high tuition and living fees had taken the College out of competition with comparable colleges; many young men now prefer to attend scientific schools rather than liberal arts colleges; several students went along with Dr. Robb when he resigned in 1902; and the bad publicity given to student disorders in 1899 had given the College an undeservedly bad name. The Fellows also noted that President Smith had been relieved of instructional duties so as to raise money, but that he had met with little success. The defendant here had no direct answer, but he was able to point to the recent depressed economic condition of the country and the increased cost of operating a first-rate college.

And then the President went on to state what he thought was wrong with Trinity College. The troubles of the institution, he felt, were largely the fault of the Alumni and Fellows who, "very much like a South American Republic, [find] 'the remedy for every evil, real or imagined, personal or Academic, being a Revolution.'" The College had been too much subject to alumni pressures in refusing admission to less affluent students. The College still had the "sectarian" stigma, which precluded support from outside the Episcopal Church, while Episcopalians accepted no responsibilities for the institution. Furthermore, the Episcopal Church was small in comparison with other ecclesiastical bodies, and such Episcopalians as do support Church colleges, "seem to work for the Church rather than the general welfare." Thus, George Williamson Smith defended his twenty years as head of Trinity College.

Whether the Trustees were convinced that
Smith’s administration had been a success is much to be doubted, but at least they did not rush to carry out the recommendation of the Board of Fellows. After a lengthy discussion of both the Fellows’ Report and the Report of President Smith, the Trustees voted to return the Fellows’ Report and to advise the Fellows that the points raised in their report represented the opinions of individual signers and not the Board of Fellows and that the Fellows had acted upon a matter which did not fall within their province. The charges brought by the Fellows and the recommendation to dismiss President Smith were doubtless common knowledge, and the Trustees decided to do their own explaining of the internal situation at Trinity. They voted “to prepare a statement for distribution among the alumni and friends of the College, showing its condition and capacity for carrying on the work committed to it.”

The Trustees issued a brief pamphlet, The Aims, Accomplishments, and Needs of Trinity College: A Statement by the Trustees to its Alumni and Friends, which seemed to be more a vindication of President Smith than a confirmation of the charges brought by the Board of Fellows. The past twenty-five years were boldly described as a period of gains for the College. Trinity was described as a “family college for the liberal training needed as a preparation for the ordinary work of a cultivated man or for the pursuit of scientific or professional specialization.” And so firmly was the College committed to that type of education that it had no intention of altering the traditional Trinity plan and purpose. Furthermore, Trinity recognized both the religious and intellectual elements in the curriculum with the chief purpose, however, being “educational, not ecclesiastical,” and the religious emphasis intended “for developing the educated, Christian man.” Also, Trinity would remain a small college! “The method is costly, but the noble impulse which prompts the devotion of some part of the accumulation of today for the benefits of future generations . . . is one that does not count the cost.” And, in conclusion, the Trustees advised the friends of the College that a Trinity education could be ranked with the best that could be offered.

But this did not get President Smith “off the hook.” It did, however, give him a chance to leave Trinity graciously and on June 5, 1903, he submitted his resignation to the Board of Trustees. In his communication to the Board, Smith asked that his resignation take effect on June 30, 1904, and that he be considered as on leave “for personal reasons” until that date. The resignation was accepted with the customary regrets. Professor Luther, as senior member of the Faculty, was made Dean of the College, and two weeks later he was designated Acting-President. There was doubtless much relief felt upon Smith’s resignation, but there was apparently no unkindness. The Faculty passed resolutions expressing regrets, and the Hartford newspapers editorialized on the brighter sides of Smith’s Presidency. Professor Martin attempted to explain to the Alumni that Smith’s resignation was, given the circumstances, inevitable—and that President Smith was the victim of a situation over which he had little control. And Sidney George Fisher, in a pamphlet also intended for alumni circulation, described George Williamson Smith as “the best President Trinity ever had.” The Trustees designated Smith President and Professor of Metaphysics Emeritus and voted him a lifetime pension of $3,000 per year. Following Commencement, 1903, Dr. and Mrs. Smith sailed for Europe, and during the eight months they were abroad Smith sent regular reports of his travels to Professor Martin who passed them on to the College family through the Trinity College Bulletin. Smith spent the summer of 1904 in Vermont and then lived in retirement in Washington, D.C.

At the time of the acceptance of George Williamson Smith’s resignation, the Trustees had appointed a committee to nominate a successor. The Committee consisted of William E. Curtis, Luke A. Lockwood, the Reverend Francis Goodwin, Judge Buffington, and Colonel Jacob H. Greene. The committee’s first choice as successor to George Williamson Smith was Anson Phelps Stokes, Jr., then Secretary of Yale Univer-
University, and one who had been eminently successful in raising funds. When it was known that Stokes could not be induced to leave Yale, the committee turned to Acting-President Luther. Late in January and early February, 1904, Luther was called to Pittsburgh by Judge Buffington. There, on a five-day visit, he met with the more prominent Pittsburgh alumni, was entertained at luncheons by several Pittsburgh clubs and societies, was taken to visit several preparatory schools in the Pittsburgh area and the Westinghouse Electric Company plant, and was guest of honor at a reception given by Judge Buffington at the Pittsburgh Club and at a smoker for all Pittsburgh Alumni. Obviously, the Pittsburgh people were "looking him over."

On April 30, 1904, Flavel Sweeten Luther was unanimously elected President of Trinity College. The following day, the election was announced at the baseball game between Trinity and the Massachusetts State College. The announcement met with prolonged applause, and in the evening the entire student body marched to Luther's house on Columbia Street and cheered him for almost half an hour. In an interview with a reporter from the Courant, Luther insisted that the election was a complete surprise and that the announcement had come "like a clap out of a clear sky."

And, in this same interview, Luther stated the policy which was to guide his administration of fifteen years. The College would be enlarged—there would be more students, more professors, and more money. And first of all, there would be a closer relationship between Trinity College and the Hartford community. Trinity was well on the way toward becoming "The Hartford Local."

Luther's election seemed to inspire a new confidence. The Tablet immediately declared that Luther became President "at a time when the students, the alumni, [and] the friends of Trinity are not only willing but anxious to be led by a strong man." And as evidence of the new spirit, Trinity got a new song, "Dr. Luther," sung to the tune of "Mr. Dooley," seven stanzas and chorus, composed by none other than Judge Buffington. The Alumni Association, too, as we shall see in our next chapter, was inspired to undertake what was probably the most phenomenal fund-raising drive in the College's history.

On Wednesday, October 26, 1904, Flavel Sweeten Luther was inaugurated with the most impressive academic ceremonial ever witnessed in Hartford. The day began at 8:30 A.M. with the celebration of the Holy Communion in the College Chapel. At 10:00, an academic procession with delegates from thirty-three colleges, universities, theological seminaries, and technical schools (all in academic regalia) formed on Prospect Street and marched to Parson's Theater where the Inauguration Ceremony was held. At 2:00 P.M. the Inauguration Dinner was served in Alumni Hall, and at 3:30 P.M. a football game between Trinity and Stevens Institute of Technology (Trinity 5—Stevens 0) was played on the Athletic Field. At 5:00 P.M. there was a reception by President and Mrs. Luther, and from 7:00 until 9:00 P.M. there was an illumination of the College and "singing by the alumni and students on the campus."

The high spot of the day was, of course, the inaugural address, in which President Luther stressed the idea of "Education for Service." Although he had no fault to find with the content of the traditional arts curriculum, Luther injected a new practical objective. "The object of education," he said, "is to fit men and women to serve." And this, it may be said, was to be the guiding philosophy of Luther's administration.