Winds from the Isis and the Cam

For a quarter of a century, the institution on Hartford’s College Hill had been just another New England college. Architecturally and otherwise there was little which set it apart from Amherst, Dartmouth, or the others. The curriculum was the classical-mathematical standard of the nineteenth century, and the “philosophy of education” was that of training the “faculties.”

As the College’s Catalogue stated, “the primary object of intellectual education, as distinguished from moral and religious disciplines, . . . should consist of a series of exercises calculated to improve the intellectual faculties, and to confer readiness and aptness of expression.” This would have been the educational purpose of each American college of the time, and the fact that the College recognized an obligation to inculcate moral and religious principles in no way made it unique.

In spite of the fact that the College had been founded by Episcopalians and had a Faculty and student body largely Episcopalian, there may have been some question as to what extent the College was truly “Episcopalian.” Morning and Evening Prayers were said daily in the Chapel, but only the use of the Prayer Book made Trinity’s daily morning and evening “chapel” different from “chapel” elsewhere. With the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut relations had been cordial, but the Church at large had never been overly generous in financial support. The “Public Examinations” of the College had been conducted by distinguished clergymen, and the College shared with the University of Pennsylvania the honor of sending the largest number of graduates to the General Seminary.

After Bishop Brownell’s resignation from the Presidency he remained on the Board of Trustees, but never had there been a legal tie to either the Episcopal Church or to the Diocese of Connecticut.

Much closer were the ties to the Parish of Christ Church, Hartford. The original impetus in the College’s founding had come from Christ Church, and a considerable portion of the institution’s financial support— to say nothing of the College’s direction and management— had been from that venerable parish. Indeed, there was some reason to feel that the College had been the child of Christ Church and that the College was, in some remote fashion, an appendage to the parish, for here were held the annual Commencements and the meetings of the Associate Alumni; here was the “church home away from home” of most of the students; and here members of the Faculty served as vestrymen and as clerical assistants.

With the tone of the College so mildly Episcopal, it was hardly to be expected that there would have been any extensive proselytizing. Some non-Episcopal student had been attracted to the Church either in spite of, or because of, the rather insipid Chapel worship, but there were those who came to College Hill as Congregationalists or Presbyterians and left the campus four years later without changing ecclesiastical connections, and it may be assumed that most of those who were members of the Confirmation Class regularly held at the College were from Episcopalian families. The College was apparently content to have itself described as “firmly committed to the Episcopal Church.”
and at the same time distressed that the Church
was not more firmly committed to the College,
especially when it came to the matter of finan-
cial support. To the non-Episcopalian commu-
nity, the “commitment” was minimized; to the
Diocese of Connecticut, the “commitment” was
magnified.

With such a bland religious atmosphere, it
must have been something of a surprise to those
on the outside when in the mid-1840's the Col-
lege became something of a minor battlefield be-
tween partisans of extreme “Churchmanship”
within the Episcopal Church.

The founders of the College were largely what
would have then been called “Connecticut
Churchmen.” Bishop Brownell and the laymen
from Christ Church, Hartford, were certainly of
this group which, while inclined to minimize
ritual and ceremonial, held steadfastly to Angli-
can doctrine and staunchly defended the particu-
lar claims of the Episcopal Church. Although
sometimes referred to as “Old Fashioned Church-
men” or even “High Churchmen,” the Episco-
palians of the “Connecticut” variety were soon,
with the advent of the “Oxford” or “Tractarian”
Movement of the 1830's, to be regarded as hope-
lessly “Low.” Among the early Faculty were
representatives of still another group: the “Ho-
bartian High Churchmen,” or the followers of
Bishop Hobart of the Diocese of New York.
The Hobartians represented what might be re-
garded as a next-higher level of “Churchman-
ship” from the “Connecticut Churchmen.” The
Hobartians were inclined toward a bit more cere-
monial and, perhaps because they had never con-
stituted a persecuted minority as had their breth-
ren in Connecticut, were even more pointed in
stating the claims of Episcopacy. Professor
Doane, although later to be strongly influenced
by the Oxford Movement, was, during his stay
at the College, of this group. So, also, were Fran-
cis L. Hawks, (whose services to the College
were both brief and peripheral), Horatio
Potter (who later became Bishop of New York and
who, incidentally, regarded all non-Episcopal or-
dinations as invalid), and John Murray Forbes,
Tutor at the College in 1830 (and who in 1848
entered the Church of Rome). Samuel Farmar
Jarvis was regarded as “High Church,” although
probably of neither the “Connecticut” nor “Ho-
bartian” type. None of the early Faculty were
representatives of the “Evangelical” or “South-
ern” Party, and this despite the fact that a num-
ber of the students came from “Evangelical”
dioceses.

During the Presidency of Bishop Brownell,
Connecticut and Hobartian Churchmen had got-
ten along quite well, for the differences between
the two groups were of degree rather than of
kind, and Bishop Brownell was not then one to
accentuate differences of any sort. Under Na-
thaniel Wheaton it seemed for a time that all was
still to be “sweetness and light,” but this was
not to be for long, for as the College’s demands
upon the Church increased, so did the Church’s
demands upon the College. And it was the com-
ing of Oxford Tractarianism to the Diocese of
Connecticut which was to make the College some-
thing of a pawn in the party conflict within the
Diocese.
The Oxford Movement, viewed from the perspective of history, was a healthful one, and it served as a corrective to the Church in the nineteenth century as much as the Evangelical Movement had in the eighteenth. Essentially, the Oxford leaders attempted to re-state the Catholic nature of the Church of England and to revive elements of worship and devotion which had been abandoned at the time of the English Reformation. By the mid-1830's, a mild form of Tractarianism had reached America and was being received by several of those who had connections with the College in Hartford. George Washington Doane, by now Bishop of New Jersey but with many friends among the Alumni, was one of the movement's foremost proponents. Francis L. Hawks, then at St. Thomas's Church, New York, had also become a Tractarian enthusiast and he, too, had many friends among the Alumni. On the Board of Trustees itself were the Reverend Dr. Harry Croswell of Trinity Church, New Haven, perhaps the first parish priest in the Diocese of Connecticut to advocate Oxford principles, and the Reverend Jackson Kemper who was later, as Missionary Bishop of the West, to carry Tractarianism to the region where the movement took deepest root.

The Reverend Dr. Jarvis, at nearby Middletown, although not a Tractarian, represented a type of “Churchmanship” considerably above the general tenor of the Diocese, and it was indirectly through Dr. Jarvis that the first rumblings of “High Churchmanship” were felt on College Hill. Upon his leaving the College, Dr. Jarvis conducted what amounted to a one-man school of theology in the rectory at Middletown where several of the graduates of the College had gone for preparation for Holy Orders. Whether because of his dislike for President Wheaton and his successor Silas Totten (possibly prompted by Jarvis’ own failure to achieve the Presidency), his penchant toward ecclesiastical intrigue and church politics, or a genuine distaste for what he regarded as the “Low Church” atmosphere of the College, Dr. Jarvis spared no pains in pointing out to his young theologues the inadequacies of the institution from whose Faculty he had recently been dismissed.

One of Dr. Jarvis’ proteges was John Williams ’35 who had studied Theology with the Doctor for two years following his graduation, while Dr. Jarvis was still an active member of the Faculty. When Dr. Jarvis left College Hill in 1837, Williams stayed on as Tutor in Ancient Languages, a position which he held until 1840. John Williams was a young man of parts and much respected by his senior colleagues, but however suave he may have been, the Tutor in Ancient Languages almost immediately found himself the eyes and ears of Dr. Jarvis on College Hill and, prompted to do so by his former mentor, Williams reported faithfully on the internal affairs of the College.

In what was perhaps his first report to Dr. Jarvis, Williams wrote on the day before Totten’s installation as President, that a “Low Church Party” or “clique” headed by the Hartford Trustees including former President Wheaton and the Reverend George Burgess, Rector of Christ Church, was endeavoring to gain possession of the College, a possibility evidently not entirely pleasing to Bishop Brownell. Perhaps Williams’ story of the “plot” was exaggerated, but Williams probably told Dr. Jarvis exactly what he wanted to hear, and the “Low Church” suspicions of George Burgess were not without foundation.

Whether, from his position as junior member of the Faculty, Williams understood its exact nature, there was something of a rift in both Faculty and Board of Trustees at this time. Although he had been unanimously elected to the Presidency, Silas Totten had actually been the Trustees’ second choice, and his name had been put in nomination only after Horatio Potter had been elected and had declined to accept the office. Totten had been eminently successful as a teacher, but there were those who feared that Dr. Wheaton’s departure from the College would “prove injurious to its prosperity,” and Bishop Brownell felt called upon to assure the Diocesan Convention that Totten was “a gentleman in whose talents, learning, zeal, and piety, the Church may repose implicit confidence.”
So far as the “Churchmanship” of the College was concerned, Totten identified himself, for the time at least, with the “Low Church” group, but there was no drifting of the College in the direction of Evangelicalism. Indeed, there was evidence that “High Church” principles were gaining favor among the Hartford Episcopalian community. In his Episcopal Address of 1841, Bishop Brownell conceded that Tractarianism was in the Diocese to stay, although he remarked that while he found much to praise in the Oxford Movement, there were many elements in Tractarianism “which we cannot approve.” Within the year, the Diocesan press was obliged to take cognizance of the “High Church” Movement, and the editor of the Practical Christian and Church Chronicle, A. B. Chapin, explained to his readers that the Church in Connecticut was neither “High” nor “Low” and that he deplored the use of these names. But the real beginning of “High-Churchmanship” in Hartford was the organizing of St. John’s Church in March, 1841.

Christ Church had been growing rapidly, and the beautiful Gothic building which had been dedicated in 1829 could no longer accommodate the worshipers. In 1840, Rector Burgess informed the Diocesan Convention that a division of the parish was imperative, and at a parish meeting on March 15, 1841, it was voted that a new parish would be created. The daughter parish was organized on March 18, 1841, and on April 20, 1842, a handsome Gothic structure on the present Athenaeum block was dedicated as St. John’s Church. “Churchmanship” was not the principal factor in the founding of St. John’s Church, but the founders of the parish were of a somewhat more “Churchly” inclination than those who remained at Christ Church, and this tendency was strengthened with the calling as first rector, the Reverend Arthur Cleveland Coxe, a young man of twenty-four, a “High Church” graduate of the General Theological Seminary, and a recent convert from the Presbyterian Church in which his father was a distinguished minister.

John Williams’ fears of a “Low Church” plot must have been completely overcome with the founding of St. John’s Church, for among the charter members of the parish was the entire full-time Faculty: Professors John Brocklesby, Abner Jackson, Duncan L. Stewart, and, perhaps to the surprise of many, President Silas Totten and Treasurer Thomas Belknap. The Hartford Trustees of the College remained with Christ Church, and the line was thus drawn between Hartford Trustees at “Low Church” Christ Church and the Faculty at “High Church” St. John’s.

It was natural that St. John’s Church should have cultivated the friendship of the students at the College. The first friendly gesture was that of providing free use — and this in the day of the rented pew — by the students of the south gallery and, whether because of “Churchmanship” or of the fact that St. John’s was a good half mile closer to the College, several of the students became communicants. Almost immediately St. John’s Church assumed a relationship with the College which had been similar to that of Christ Church in the earlier years and which was, indeed, even more personal and direct. Christ
Church was to remain the scene of the College Commencements and the meetings of the Associate Alumni and its successor, and the Christ Church members of the Board of Trustees were still to dominate, but with Arthur Cleveland Coxe and his successors, Edward A. Washburn and William Croswell Doane, a tie was formed between parish and College which brought enrichment to both. The parish contributed liberally to the College, and in a single year (during the post-Civil War fund-raising campaign) contributed $18,000. Clerical members of the Faculty assisted in the many services of the parish (three services on Sunday, daily Morning Prayer and daily Evening Prayer through Lent, and the Holy Communion on all festivals), and students were active teachers in the educational program of the Church.  

"High Churchmanship" seemed to flourish in Hartford. St. John’s Church grew in number of parishioners beyond all expectations, and Hartford booksellers were offering for sale such titles as *Puseyism no Popery* and *Looking Glass for High Churchmen.* On the Hill, the College officially tried to steer a middle course, as was reflected in the appointments to the Board of Trustees and in the awarding of honorary degrees. The election to the Board in 1840 of the Reverend William Cooper Mead, one of the most outspoken Low Churchmen, was offset by the election in 1841 of Dr. Jarvis, in 1845 of Arthur Cleveland Coxe, and in 1848 of the Right Reverend Frederick Dan Huntington, a High Churchman of the pre-Tractarian stamp. Although in the matter of honorary degrees Low Churchmen such as Alfred Lee (1841), George Burgess (1845), and Samuel Chase (1848), seem to have predominated, such High Churchmen as Arthur Cleveland Coxe (1845) and the Reverend William Ingraham Kip (1846) also received the College’s honors. Apparently the students were reading books of a Tractarian sort, for in 1845 the Reverend George Burgess (who had received a $600 legacy from a late Mrs. Hart) gave $500 to the College with the understanding that the sum be expended for periodicals or for volumes which had not "been charged with any tendency toward the errors of the Church of Rome." And the theological interests of both Faculty and Alumni were reflected in the organizing in 1846 of the “American Society” or the “Ecclesiological Society,” which was the first American group to formally study the science of Liturgics. Although it was intended by the society’s founders, Dr. Jarvis and Arthur Cleveland Coxe, that the membership should be largely from the college community, the New York Alumni assumed leadership under two New York clergymen with college connections, Thomas Scott Preston ’43 and John Murray Forbes, a former Tutor. With the domination of the New Yorkers, the Ecclesiological Society became identified with the General Theological Seminary, and the efforts of Coxe and Dr. Jarvis to re-organize a similar group on College Hill apparently met with no success.

Among the students, too, there was some evidence of High Churchmanship. In 1853, the student body held a "Missionary Service" in St. John’s Church for the purpose of securing inter-
est in and support for Racine College in Wisconsin,35 the High Church college of the Episcopal Church in the West.

While the College in Hartford was (depending on one’s point of view) gradually moving in the direction of High Churchmanship or holding its own against a drift toward Evangelicalism, the Alumni (and particularly the younger Alumni) were adding to the pressures. Leadership among the Associate Alumni had fallen to a group of moderate High Churchmen, particularly those who may be described as advanced Hobartians or those who were of the coterie of Dr. Jarvis. In 1837, Eben Edwards Beardsley ’32 became President of the Society, and in 1839 he was succeeded by John Williams. In 1841 Abner Jackson, then a Professor of the College and a communicant of St. John’s Church, became President and Jackson was, in turn, succeeded by the Reverend Joseph Scott ’27 in 1843.36 Under this leadership, the Associate Alumni pressed for both a closer relationship of the College with the Episcopal Church and a more “Churchly” (and, incidentally, a more “Academic”) atmosphere on College Hill, and in these endeavors they received, surprisingly, the full support of Bishop Brownell.

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees on August 1, 1837, Bishop Brownell reminded the Trustees that the Charter of the College (Sections 2 and 5) permitted the Trustees both to increase the number of Trustees and to create a Board of Fellows to whom the Trustees “may commit the superintendence of the course of study and discipline” and, acting on the strength of these provisions, the Bishop of Connecticut appointed a committee to determine the advisability of increasing the size of the Board.37 The following day Bishop Brownell appointed a second committee (Trustees Burgess, Sigourney, and Huntington) “to consider the expediency of appointing a Board of Fellows and if they [the committee] shall judge such appointment expedient to name suitable persons for the office; and to prepare suitable statutes for regulating the powers and duties of the said Board of Fellows.”38

At first thought, it may seem that the Bishop’s decision to implement Section 2 of the College Charter was merely an internal affair of the Board of Trustees. When it is remembered, however, that the Charter permitted the Trustees to select the Fellows “from their own number or otherwise,” it must at once become apparent that Bishop Brownell had seized upon an opportunity to “pack” the governing body of the College and to “pack” it in a way which would be to the satisfaction of the Associate Alumni. At any rate, and perhaps because of suspicions of the motives of the Bishop and the Associate Alumni, it was decided at that time not to proceed with the selection of a Board of Fellows.

Although the Trustees would not then concede to the wishes of the Alumni in creating a new but subsidiary Board, they did make a concession (either in the line of “Churchmanship” or in imitation of English university practice) in recognizing the entire college community as a single academic body under the name of the Academic Senate. In 1842 the Trustees published, in addition to the regular Catalogue of that year, the Catalogus Senatus Academicici, et Eorum qui Munera et Officia Academica Gesserunt, Quique Aliquovis Gradu Decorati Fuerunt, in Collegio Washingtoniensi, in which were listed the past and present Presidents, Trustees, Treasurers, Secretaries, Professors, Tutors, Librarians, students, and graduates, and which described the Trustees and Professors of 1842 as the Senatus Academicus of the College.

The Catalogus Senatus Academicici was reprinted in the Church Chronicle and Record,39 the paper of the Diocese of Connecticut, and its wide circulation in other Episcopal periodicals seemed to assure Alumni and others interested in the College that more revolutionary changes would be forthcoming. In December, 1842, an alumnus of the College (either from New York or, if from Connecticut, one who had been denied space in the Connecticut religious press) wrote an article in the Churchman, a High Church journal edited in New York by Samuel Seabury, the grandson of Connecticut’s first Bishop,40 “Alumnus Coll: Wash.;” as he signed
himself in the *Churchman*, noted the publication of the *Catalogus Senatus Academici* and chose for particular comment the fact that the publication had listed 229 graduates, a considerable number of whom had taken Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church, but of which only a small portion had remained within the Diocese of Connecticut. Apparent here was an unfortunate incongruity, for unlike the General Seminary, which was supported and controlled by the whole Church, the College in Hartford, which also served the whole Church, was controlled by a single Diocese, a situation which precluded any generous financial aid from the Church at large and any constructive changes in matters of "Churchmanship." Why, asked "Alumnus," has not "the full Church system" been carried out? Why are there not daily services? Why no regular observance of the Holy Year? Why "oblivion of all of the sacred rites?" This religious indifference, thought "Alumnus," was the cause of the College's financial and spiritual plight for, said he, "it is a piece of utter absurdity to point at what Church Colleges do in England, and insist on its being done here, until at least the one hundredth part of the means possessed by these Colleges is bestowed upon our own."42

Now, in the reference of "Alumnus" to the English "Church Colleges" is to be found a second clue (in addition to mere "Churchmanship") to what the Associate Alumni wanted. In England, the Tractarian Movement had centered in several of the colleges at Oxford, in America High Churchmanship had been disseminated from the General Theological Seminary in New York, and useful to the purposes of High Churchmen (whether Hobartian or Tractarian) would be a college from which High Church influence could emanate.

High Churchmen among the Alumni had long been dissatisfied with the institution's designation as Washington College and, as early as 1842, a move was afoot to change the name to one more directly associated with the Episcopal Church. At that time the name of "Brownell College" had been urged, but the good Bishop had apparently opposed this move, and two years later the Associate Alumni recommended that the Trustees take steps to change the name to "Trinity College." A committee was appointed to study the request, and although they were perhaps not moved by the theological implications in the petition of the Associate Alumni, the Trustees on May 8, 1845, concluded that as there were at least four colleges bearing the name of "Washington" (in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Connecticut), there was a danger of some intended legacy being lost to the College in Hartford and, as "our higher Institutions of learning are intimately connected with the cause of religion," the change of name should be made to Trinity College. A petition was immediately sent to the Connecticut Legislature which was then in session.44 Although the recommended change of appellation was undertaken with no apparent enthusiasm by the Trustees, that body did go on record as favoring some name which would recognize "the relationship [to the Church] and hold . . . it forth to its pupils and to the world,"45 but again, perhaps fearful of too close an association of College and Church in the public eye, the bill introduced in the legislature merely mentioned the confusion of the College with others of the same name, and no reference was made to the theological significance of the name "Trinity."46 The bill passed both houses of the Connecticut State Legislature on May 23, 1845.47 Eben Edwards Beardsley's later observation (much later, twenty years later) that the name Trinity was given to "attest forever the faith of its founders, and their zeal for the perpetual glory and honor of the one holy and undivided Trinity"48 was probably misplaced so far as the Trustees were concerned. With the Alumni, however, an end important to them had been achieved, and others were to be realized through the final creation of a board of Fellows and through a reorganization of the Academic Senate.

The High Church Alumni had finally resolved to do all within their power to remake the College into a little replica of the English university colleges in which the Oxford Movement had centered. At last, and unlike the College's founders, the Associate Alumni had definite ideas.
regarding a distinctively "Anglican" type of education and, although they perhaps imperfectly understood their model, what they wanted was perfectly clear in their minds. It is a moot point as to whether the Trustees, in creating the Academic Senate, had made a concession in the form of adopting English university college terminology as an alternative to more painful concessions in matters of "Churchmanship," but it was to the existing Academic Senate that the attention of the Associate Alumni next turned.

At the meeting of the Associate Alumni on July 31, 1844, the Alumni drafted a petition to the Board of Trustees in which they requested Alumni inclusion in the Academic Senate. Obviously what they wanted was a modification of the characteristically American government of the College in the direction of that of the English universities, whose terminology, rich in such names as "Hebdomadal Council" and "House of Congregation," had a strong attraction for the alumni leaders and in whose government the clerical alumni had such a large share. The alumni plan was to re-organize the Associate Alumni as the House of Convocation which, with the Trustees and Faculty, would form a third "chamber" of the Academic Senate. At this same time the Alumni pressed for the creation of a Board of Fellows, and the two matters were presented to the Trustees.

As to alumni representation (or participation) in the Academic Senate, Trustees George Burgess and Arthur Cleveland Coxe were constituted a Trustees' committee to work with alumni representatives in devising a plan which would be acceptable to the Associate Alumni. The committee reported late in the same day (July 31, 1844) that a plan could be worked out without much difficulty. The following day (August 1, 1844) the Trustees voted that the Standing Committee of the Board of Trustees should work with Associate Alumni on a plan for the establishment of a Board of Fellows and for the further organization of the Senatus Academicus in the hope that the changes in the College's organization might go into effect by the next Commencement in August, 1845.

Whether or not the Trustees had intended to give the Standing Committee carte blanche in the matter of collegiate re-organization, Arthur Cleveland Coxe and Dr. Jarvis busied themselves in learning all that they could about the English colleges upon which the College in Hartford was to be re-modeled. Immediately they gathered copies of the calendars (catalogues) and statutes of Oxford, Cambridge, and King's College of the University of London, an Anglican college in what was essentially a Dissenters' university. As Coxe wrote to Dr. Jarvis: "We need anything that will throw light on the internal conditions of the Universities and of such institutions as King's College. I am determined that Trinity College[,] Hartford[,] shall be made a college worthy of the Church and an example to the country."

When the Trustees met on August 6, 1845, "the wind," as a Trinity professor wrote in 1903, "blew distinctly from the banks of the Isis and the Cam, and brought with it the music of such terms as Convocation, Senatus Academicus, Dean, Vice-Dean, Bursar, Fellow, [and] Chancellor." At that time the Trustees adopted a series of resolutions which put into effect the plan which had been devised by the Standing Committee and representatives of the Associate Alumni, and these changes were incorporated into a body of statutes adopted by the Trustees on that date and published as an appendix to the College Catalogue of 1846. A Board of Fellows consisting of six Fellows proper (elected by the Board of Trustees) and six Junior Fellows (elected by the Alumni) was given the power specified in the original Charter. The Board of Fellows was given additional responsibility as the "official examiners of the College" who should concur with the Faculty in the recommendation of all candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, to revise the College statutes when necessary, and to supervise the Library, Cabinet, and Chapel.

The Senatus Academicus was declared to consist of the President, Trustees, Fellows, Professors, and all graduates of the College with whatever degree. All members of the Senatus Academicus, not members of the Board of Trustees,
were constituted the House of Convocation, a body empowered to concur with the Corporation (Trustees) in the institution, naming and endowing of Professorships, fellowships, prizes, and the like, and in nominating the Junior Fellows and candidates for degrees ad eundem gradum. Finally, the office of Chancellor was created. The Chancellor was to exercise a general supervision of the whole Academic Body with particular reference to moral and spiritual affairs and to hold periodic visitations of the College and to preside, when present, at meetings of the Board of Fellows. The Chancellor's visitorial powers were not, however, to conflict with the powers and privileges of either Faculty or Board of Fellows.

Bishop Brownell was, of course, elected the first Chancellor. The Trustees at once elected six Fellows: Samuel Farmar Jarvis, the Reverend Jonathan M. Wainwright (former rector of Christ Church, Hartford, and in 1845 on the clergy staff of Trinity Parish in New York), the Honorable William W. Boardman, the Reverend Thomas W. Coit (soon to become a member of the College Faculty), the Reverend William Croswell (son of Trustee Harry Croswell), and the Right Reverend Horatio Potter. The House of Convocation immediately organized and elected as Junior Fellows: the Reverend William H. Walter, the Honorable James W. Gordon, the Reverend Nathaniel E. Cornwall, the Reverend Eben Edwards Beardsley, the Reverend William Payne, and the Reverend John Williams.

A year later (in 1846), Convocation elected its first Dean (the Reverend Jacob Lyman Clark) and Vice-Dean (Professor Duncan L. Stewart), the offices which with the Registrar, Bursar, and "Delectus," added five new elements of English academic terminology to the campus in Hartford. In time the College became even more "English," if not more "Anglican." In 1847, the Catalogue became the Calendar and, in 1849, the three terms of the academic year were re-named the Advent, Lent, and Trinity Terms.

Almost sixty years later, a Trinity Professor described what had happened at the College in the mid-1840's as an attempt to put "warmth and life . . . into the College by clothing it with all the paraphernalia of English nomenclature" and perhaps, to a large degree, it was. At the time, however, there was some feeling, even among those who must have regarded the developments with the greatest favor, that "externals"—whether ecclesiastical or academic—could not be ends in themselves. In an address to the House of Convocation delivered in August, 1846, John Williams spoke to this point: "There has been, as we trust, revived among us, something of the old and true principle of the University... To have attempted...to revive those venerable academic forms and organizations, which in the ages when they spontaneously sprung up, were adequate expressions of real feeling, and adequate suppliers of real wants, would have been utterly meaningless. To have attempted...to copy...the present polity of foreign Universities...would have been even more absurd... The former...would have [been] the merest piece of antiquarian trifling...The latter...would have [produced] a body without a soul, a cumbrous machine without a motive power." Here was indeed a challenge to the College to make meaningful the recently-made changes in organization.

If Trinity College's "Revolution of 1845" made the College more "English" it also made the College more "Episcopalian." As the clergy were the most articulate segment of the Alumni (if not the actual majority), the granting of alumni participation through the House of Convocation in the government of the College was welcome by the Episcopalian clergy, and this new power was exercised gladly, particularly in recommending fellow clergy for honorary and ad eundem degrees. And at a time when the relative number of clergy on the Board of Trustees was declining, the Board of Fellows for fifty years had a large clerical majority.

But the closest tie of the College to the Episcopal Church was in the office of Chancellor. Before the creation of this office, Bishop Brownell had occasionally presided over meetings of the Board of Trustees, and, as presidents of the College had come and gone, the Bishop of Con-
necticut had been regarded perhaps as something of a “Super President,” to whom it usually fell to name Trustees’ committees. On September 28, 1848, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees recorded a most interesting item in the Trustees’ Minutes. John Williams had just assumed the Presidency, but on that date “at the request of the President, Bishop Brownell took the chair,” and from “the chair” the Bishop was not to be dislodged. And whether the procedure had been agreed upon beforehand, or whether the procedure was with John Williams’ approval or even previous knowledge, the Board resolved to petition the Legislature of the State of Connecticut for an amendment to the Charter of the College making the Bishop of the Diocese of Connecticut ex officio Chancellor of the College and President of the Board of Trustees. The following May the legislature passed the bill which once more placed Bishop Brownell at the head of the institution and thus, by legislative enactment, an official relationship had been created between Trinity College and the Diocese of Connecticut.

For weal or for woe, until 1888 no President of Trinity College was to be really and entirely President; the real President was to be the Right Reverend Chancellor. From the second function of the Chancellor, that of Visitor to the College, there developed still another body or “Board” which participated in the internal administration of the College. Bishop Brownell served in capacity as Visitor until his death in 1865, but with the election of John Williams as Assistant Bishop of Connecticut in 1853 he, too, was given the title of Visitor and thus was formed the Board of Visitors. In 1859, the Right Reverends John Henry Hopkins (Bishop of Vermont), Carlton Chase (Bishop of New Hampshire), George Burgess (by then Bishop of Maine), Horatio Potter (Bishop of New York), and Thomas March Clark (Bishop of Rhode Island) were added to the Board as a symbol of cooperation with the neighboring dioceses in the management of the College.

Trinity College had become more English, possibly more “Academic,” and certainly more Episcopal, but had it become more Christian? To be sure, many of the students had been influenced by the High Church tendencies which were being evidenced on College Hill, and many of them were doubtless shining examples of the best of that particular brand of piety. Throughout the late 1830’s and the decade of the 1840’s, the proportion of graduates who had taken Holy Orders was even higher than it had been in the earlier years; indeed, it was thought (erroneously, of course) in some quarters that the College existed primarily as a minor seminary for the training of clergy. Episcopal visitations (and a new organ installed in the Chapel in 1850) must have done at least something toward enriching the worship of the College. Several students conducted a Sunday School at the College for faculty families and other children in the neighborhood. Two others, acting in a lay capacity and under the sponsorship of St. John’s Church, Hartford, organized St. John’s Mission in East Hartford. In 1846, Arthur Cleveland Coxe gathered a group of students for the study of Church Architecture, and throughout the period the Missionary Society, encouraged and assisted by the Episcopal clergy of Hartford, was one of the more prosperous and active student organizations. All in all, there was much to suggest that the re-organized College was moving in the direction of a Christian community of Trustees, Fellows, Alumni, and students. The apparently amicable concessions of the Trustees to the feelings of the Alumni seemed to reflect a Christian charity, and the wheels of the new machinery appeared to have been lubricated by the milk of human kindness. So, perhaps, it was—with the exception of the unfortunate case of President Totten.

From the beginning of his term as President, Silas Totten had been unpopular. Despite his abilities as a teacher and his reputation as a scholar, he somehow failed to inspire confidence as an academic administrator. Perhaps Totten was too eager to please. Perhaps, too, he was a joiner of causes. In the Hartford community Totten had tried to be a good citizen. Occasionally he lectured at the Young Men’s Institute, a literary and debating society for the
young businessmen and apprentices of the city. And despite what must have been his scientific turn of mind, he was a devotee of the pseudo-science of Phrenology and could, on occasion, write glowing endorsements in the local press of lecturers on the subject. On Sundays he conducted services at St. Mary’s Church, a struggling mission in Manchester. During the first years of his Presidency, Totten had identified himself with the Low Church element which controlled the Board of Trustees, but possibly sensing that the winds were blowing from the direction of the Isis and the Cam, he joined the rest of the College Faculty in helping to organize St. John’s Church.

Try as he might, Silas Totten could not please, and by 1845 there was a definite move afoot to remove him from the Presidency. Ironically, the move was headed by those whom he had hoped to win by his transfer from Christ Church to St. John’s. Arthur Cleveland Coxe had little use for President Totten and did all in his power to make the unhappy college president even more uncomfortable. During the spring vacation of 1846, Totten went to the West, probably in search of a more congenial employment, and while still on vacation he suffered a physical breakdown. By mid-June he had partially recovered, and by the opening of the College in September he was back in Hartford defending himself and his administration against his critics.

Obviously, the leadership of President Totten left something to be desired. Not only was there a falling-off of the number of students as entering freshman classes became notably small, there was even noticed a serious demoralization of the Faculty. In March, 1848, Arthur Cleveland Coxe wrote to his colleague on the Board of Trustees, Samuel Farmar Jarvis, “The Examinations are a humbug; I think [that] no one is doing, or trying to do anything, Till Totten Goes!” Perhaps the students themselves showed their dissatisfaction with the administration when they burned the college outhouse. Trustee Coxe, of course, reported the incident to his friend Dr. Jarvis and used the occasion to again castigate President Totten. “Cloacine Hall,” he wrote, “was burned down, lately, by the Students; & is now rebuilding. Nothing else is in a state of edification on the premises; the fact is [that] there will soon be better accommodations for the bowels than for the brains in that famous seat of science.”

By the end of the academic year of 1847-48, President Totten had reached the end of human endurance and at the meeting of the Trustees on August 2, 1848, he submitted his resignation to take effect after Commencement the following day. The Trustees accepted the resignation which had so long been urged upon the unhappy President. Totten was asked by the Trustees to sit for a portrait by Mr. James Flagg – the portrait to be hung in the Library along with the portrait which had been made of former President Wheaton at the time of his leaving the Presidency.

The Board was not slow to choose a successor to Silas Totten. A committee consisting of Trustees Brownell, Croswell, and Coxe – all of whom had been hostile to Totten – was appointed to consider a new President, and the following day the name of John Williams, then Rector of St. George’s Church in Schenectady, New York, was proposed by the Committee; and Williams, perhaps the long-desired successor, was unanimously elected to the Presidency of Trinity College at a salary of $1,200 and house.

Totten was out, but he was not jobless. And, in a way, he went on from Trinity College to even greater things. From Hartford he went to the College of William and Mary as Professor of Belles Lettres, which position he resigned in 1859 to become Chancellor of the University of Iowa.

But Totten did not leave College Hill graciously, and he could hardly have been expected to. Among his few friends in Hartford, and they probably were few, Totten sought to appear as the victim of a High Church conspiracy headed by Professor Jackson, Arthur Cleveland Coxe, President-elect Williams, and particularly Dr. Jarvis. And in his hasty departure from Hartford, Totten had not been able to make a satisfactory financial settlement with the Trustees. Within a month he presented a claim for what the Trustees Minutes described as “additional
salary or compensation for past services." Evidently the claim was a legitimate one, for the Standing Committee was given "full power to compromise the same." No satisfactory agreement was made at the time, and in the spring of 1850 Totten brought suit against the College. In April, 1850, Treasurer Belknap and Trustee Huntington were delegated to deal with the late President in his "claim and suit," and, from the absence of further references to the case, it may be assumed that some sort of settlement was made.

The verdict of his contemporaries—and that of history—is that Totten failed as an administrator. But in view of the sweeping changes just described, and assuming that the changes were for the better, the Totten Administration must be regarded as one of the most dynamic decades in the College's history. And it would be hard to believe that all of this progress was made in spite of President Totten. Certainly some of it must have been because of him.