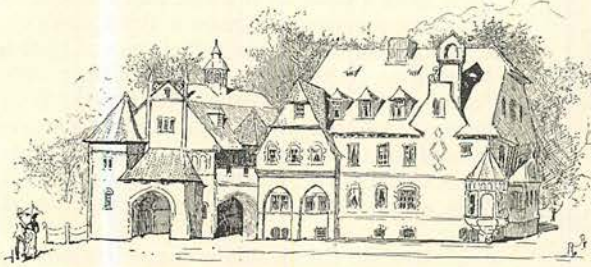


## COLLEGE FRATERNITIES.\*



SIGMA DELTA CHI CLOISTERS AND CHAPEL, S. S. S., YALE.



**F** college fraternities in the United States one significant fact may pass unquestioned—they have retained the affection and kept the support of a large number of those who knew them best. On their rosters are found not only the names of undergraduates, but also those of men who long since left youth and folly far behind. Indeed, one now and then runs across a name that adds a certain dignity to the catalogue and becomes an inspiration for ambitious youth. Of these many find no small satisfaction in identifying themselves from time to time with the life of the various clubs and societies of which they were members when boys at college; they take a mild, half-melancholy pleasure in reminiscent talk, and delight to meet and wander with half-regretful sadness in halls where youth wears the crown.

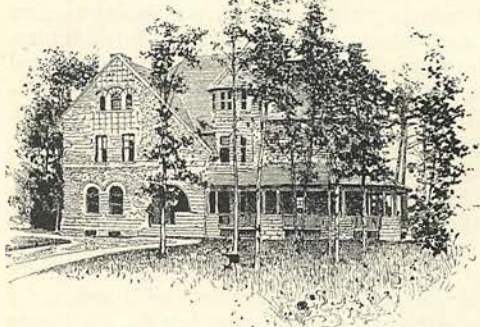
The charm of life in the society hall is much easier for one to imagine than for another to relate. A stereotyped phrase, "mere boyishness," fails to explain it; a compendium of dry facts and arguments would be farther still from picturing the life that often masquerades under the thin veil of a half-pretended secrecy.



WHIG HALL, PRINCETON.

More "sweetness and light" seems always to have been the goal towards which the fraternities strove, and the story of their development is a plain tale of natural and steady growth from small beginnings.

Towards the end of the first quarter of the present century the social life of our colleges had become barren—not more barren, perhaps, than it had been for many years, but relatively so in view of the fact that life was becoming richer and the spirit of the times more liberal. Boys from families in which puritanical methods were obsolete naturally hated the puritanism of college discipline; they chafed at the petty decorum of the stuffy class-rooms, and fretted at the deadness of the iron-bound curriculum. Almost the only means of relaxation countenanced by the faculties were open



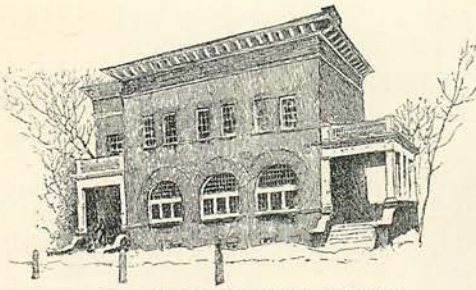
KAPPA ALPHA LODGE, CORNELL.

debating societies, which met on the college grounds, and to the meetings of which both professor and student might go. In view of the fact that students, from the days of Horace down, were wont to hold their preceptors as their natural enemies, the presence of professors did not increase the popularity of these societies. Indeed, they languished. Here was the opportunity of the typical college fraternity.

Of these societies the first to assume the characteristics that are now recognized as their essential, albeit it soon lost them, had been Phi Beta Kappa. It was founded at Williamsburg, Virginia, December 5, 1776, in the very room where Patrick Henry had voiced the revolutionary spirit of Virginia. The story is a simple one: John Heath, Thomas Smith, Richard Booker, Armistead Smith, and John Jones,

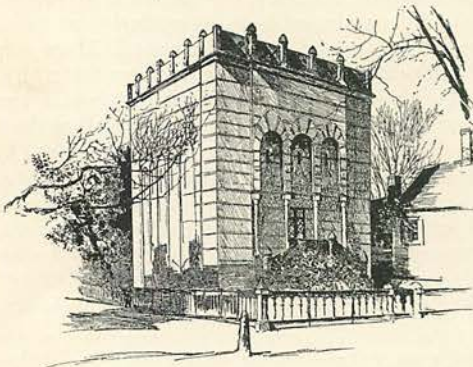
\* For friendly assistance in the preparation of this article the writer cordially acknowledges his obligation to Mr. John De Witt Warner, of New York.





HASTY PUDDING CLUB-HOUSE, HARVARD.

students at William and Mary College, then the most wealthy, flourishing, and aristocratic institution of learning in America, believing that there was room for a more effective student organization than the one of a Latin name that then existed there, and recalling that one of their number was the best Greek scholar in college, resolved to found a new society, the proceedings of which were to be secret, to be known by the name of the three Greek letters that formed the initials of its motto — Phi Beta Kappa. The minutes are discouraging to those who would like to consider Phi Beta Kappa as a band of youthful enthusiasts planning a union of the virtuous college youth of this country, who were afterward to reform the world; and even more so to those who have declared infidel philosophy to be its cult. Youths of fine feelings and good digestion, they enjoyed together many a symposium like that on the occasion of Mr. Bowdoin's departure for Europe, when, "after many toasts suitable to the occasion, the evening was spent by the members in a manner which indicated the highest esteem for their departing friend, mixed with sorrow for his intended absence and joy for his future prospects in life." They called themselves a "fraternity." More thoroughly to enjoy the society of congenial associates, to promote refined good-fellowship, was the motive of these hearty young students who founded the first of the true Greek-letter fraternities, with (to quote from its ritual) "friendship as its basis, and



"KEYS" HALL, YALE.

benevolence and literature as its pillars"—one which thrived in their day as its successors on the same basis flourish in ours. So far from being inspirers, or a product, of American national spirit, or of a union of the wise and virtuous to which they invited all known American colleges, the only reference in their record to the Revolution is the single mention of the "confusion of the times" in the record of the final meeting; and the only recognition of the existence of other colleges is the record of the granting of charters for "meetings" at Harvard and Yale, which institutions were never mentioned again.

Meanwhile Cornwallis was coming nearer, and after having chartered additional chap-



"BONES" HALL, YALE.

ters,—Beta, Gamma, Delta, Epsilon, Zeta (Harvard), Eta (Yale), and Theta,—the Alpha, or mother chapter, passed out of existence.

From Epsilon and Zeta have descended the latter-day chapters of Phi Beta Kappa. Of the fate of Beta, Gamma, Delta, Eta, and Theta nothing is known. After a lapse of seventy years, William Short, of the mother chapter, at the age of ninety, traveled from Philadelphia to Williamsburg and revived the Alpha, which, however, soon succumbed to the vicissitudes of its college. It is not known what was its first follower. But of those whose activity have been continuous to date, Kappa Alpha, founded in 1825 at Union College, adopting with its Greek name a badge planned similarly to that of Phi Beta Kappa (except that it was suspended from one corner, instead of from the center of one of its equal sides), and inspired by similar ends, began





BERZELIUS HALL, S. S. S., YALE.

the career that has made it the mother of living Greek-letter societies. For Phi Beta Kappa has long since become an honorary, as distinguished from an active, institution, though the reunions of its chapters, especially of the old Zeta, "Alpha of Massachusetts,"—now the Massachusetts Alpha,—founded at Cambridge in 1779, are still noteworthy events.

Even before Phi Beta Kappa came into existence, Oliver Ellsworth, afterward Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, had founded Clio Hall at Princeton, and a few years later, in 1769, Whig Hall arose at the same college with James Madison, afterward twice President of the United States, for its founder; and from that day to this these friendly rivals have never ceased to exert a healthful influence on the intellectual life of Princeton. These were the prototypes, and are the most vigorous survivals, of what, for nearly a century, were the most flourishing and numerous of student societies—the twin literary societies, or "halls," generally secret, and always intense in mutual rivalry, which have been institutions at every leading college in the land.

Another and a third, though less homogeneous, class of student societies may be best described by noting separately its only important examples—at Harvard and Yale. The Hasty Pudding Club of Harvard also took its rise in those interesting and formative years just subsequent to the close of the Revolutionary war, and was founded, as its constitution says, "to cherish the feelings of friendship and patriotism." For the display of the latter virtue the club for many years was wont to celebrate Washington's Birthday with oration and poem, with toasts and punch. Alas, for these degenerate days! Conventional

theatricals have taken the place of poem and oration, though, for aught I know, the toasts and punch may yet survive. "Two members in alphabetical order"—so ran the old by-laws—"shall provide a pot of hasty pudding for every meeting," and it is said that this practice is still religiously kept. That the banquet was not lightly considered by the old Harvard clubs may be seen in the tendency to exalt in the name of the club the peculiar feature of the club's fare, the Porcellian taking its name from the roasted pig—classical token of hospitality—that one of its bright young members provided for the entertainment of his fellows on a time when the feast fell to his providing. But the Porcellian has not wholly given itself up to the things that go with banqueting, for no other college society has so fine a library as it possesses. Indeed, its seven thousand well-selected and finely bound volumes might be coveted by many less fortunate small colleges. The A. D. Club is a younger rival of the "Pork," and, in the comfort of its house, the brilliancy of its dinners, and its good-fellowship, is by no means inferior. The development of this species of undergraduate activity has taken a widely different and rather unique form at Yale. The Yale senior societies are the most secret and clannish of college societies. No outsiders ever enter their buildings, and their goings and comings are so locked in mystery that one can only guess what their aims and purposes are. A passion for relic worship and a taste for politics are generally ascribed to both, though the class of men taken by Scroll and Key differs widely from that chosen by Skull



DELTA KAPPA EPSILON HALL, YALE.





ALPHA DELTA PHI (EELL'S MEMORIAL) HALL, HAMILTON.

and Bones — the men of the former being selected, it is supposed, for their social position and qualities of good-fellowship, while those of the latter are usually good scholars or prominent athletes.

Thus we have the three classes of student societies — the old literary societies, still flourishing in the older colleges of the South, but languishing elsewhere, except at Princeton, where Clio and Whig are still the great institutions of the student body, and at Lafayette, where the Washington and Jefferson are scarcely less prosperous; the peculiar local institutions of Yale and Harvard, *sui generis* and not to be propagated; and the Greek-letter system of chartered fraternities, the chartered corporations of which are to-day the most prominent characteristic of American undergraduate social life.

The interval of thirty-five years from the founding of Kappa Alpha to the outbreak of the civil war was the golden age of these fraternities. They sprang up and multiplied with a persistency that should forever make firm the doctrine of the strengthening power of persecution. They were not confined to any one grade of college or to any particular part of the country. They flourished every-



ALPHA TAU-OMEGA HALL, SEWANEE.

where, and increased in number through almost every imaginable combination of the letters of the Greek alphabet. Many, of course, have vanished from the face of the earth. Of those that still remain, Delta Kappa Epsilon, founded at Yale in 1844, is the largest, and has now above 9000 members, representing 32 active chapters situated in 19 different States; Psi Upsilon, originated at Union in 1833, enrolls some 6600 members, distributed among 19 chapters in 10 States; and Alpha Delta Phi, founded at Hamilton in 1832, has a membership nearly as large. Delta Kappa Epsilon appears to have made good its claim to be recognized as a national institution; and while certain smaller fraternities are favorites in particular parts of the country, all barriers are rapidly disappearing before these three favorite societies in their march towards representation at all the important colleges of the country.

Though fraternities are organized less frequently now than formerly, because of the



DELTA KAPPA EPSILON HALL, ANN ARBOR.

increased difficulty of competing with those that have been long established, still, as the colleges themselves grow, the chapters of the most flourishing fraternities grow with them; so that the increase of the system, as a whole, is both very regular and very considerable. Up to 1883, the date at which the latest general manual of the fraternities appeared, there were enrolled among the 32 general college fraternities of this country, forming an aggregate of 505 active chapters, no less than 67,941 members, representing every possible profession and branch of business, every shade of religious and political opinion, and every State and Territory of the United States. But these figures by no means tell the whole story of





ALPHA PHI (LADIES') LODGE, SYRACUSE.

the growth and spread of the "little" college fraternities. Many colleges and advanced technical schools in every section of the country, besides welcoming the general fraternities to their privileges, have ambitiously started and preserved local fraternities that are limited or have no branches at other institutions, but nevertheless often enjoy a large share of local patronage. These societies, of which there are 16 now in existence, had a membership of 4977. But this is not all. The female students, not to be outdone, about a dozen years ago began to organize sisterhoods, from which males were ignominiously debarred from membership, and had meantime succeeded in building up 7 prosperous societies, with 16 chapters and 2038 members, situated mostly in co-educational institutions. When to this grand total of 74,056 names are added the large membership of the Princeton halls, the Harvard clubs, and the Yale senior societies, already described, together with the very numerous class organizations in various colleges, it may be seen how firm a hold the spirit of co-operation has taken upon the collegians of the country. The fraternities have grown far away from the persecutions of their early days, when the hands of all men and faculties were raised against them. Because they met in secret, and held themselves free from the intrusion of the faculty for one night in the week, and adorned their poor little badges with Greek letters, all evil and rebellious conduct was charged against them. Though their purposes were sensible enough, and good rather than evil has come from them, a nameless stigma of bad parentage still rests upon the whole system, to live down which, by an overplus of actual and visible good attainment, has not been possible till within recent years. But prejudice has an unequal contest with conviction. Through persecution, and poverty of opportunity, and lack of means the new society men fought their way towards solid ground, finding in their struggles and in their ambitions for the success and honors of their fraternities an incentive and charm college life had till then never yielded.

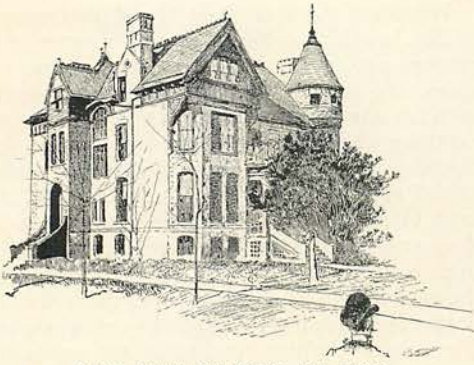
Whatever may have been the shortcomings of the American college boy of a quarter of a century ago, want of energy was not one of them. To take off his coat and go to work with his hands seemed to him the most natural thing when he needed a society lodge. In this way was built, in 1855, the famous "log-cabin" of Delta Kappa Epsilon at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. The site selected was a deep ravine, far away from any human dwelling. Neighboring farmers were hired to fell the trees and to raise the frame of this ark of a house, forty-five feet in length by ten in height. The entire chapter (including its youngest member, now an orator of national reputation several times elected to Congress) rested not until they had plastered the outside crevices with mud. Inside the room was nicely ceiled, and furnished with good tables and chairs, a carpet, and several pictures. The walls and roof of the building were ingeniously deadened with saw-dust and charcoal, so that not the remotest whispers could reach the ears of curious eavesdroppers, if any such should have the temerity to penetrate to the recesses of this sylvan retreat. "A cooking-stove, with skillet, griddles, and pots complete, was the pride of the premises," writes an old member, "where each hungry boy could roast his own potatoes, or cook his meat on a forked stick, in true bandit style."



DELTA KAPPA EPSILON LOG-CABIN, KENYON.

The building of this lodge gave a great impetus to the owning of society homesteads. Before this the various chapters had been accustomed to rendezvous stealthily in college garrets, at village hotels, or anywhere that circumstances and pursuing faculties made most convenient. But when the assurance was once gained that the fraternities might own their premises and make them permanent abiding-places, the whole system became straightway established on a lasting foundation. In 1861, at Yale, the parent chapter of





ALPHA DELTA PHI LODGE, ANN ARBOR.

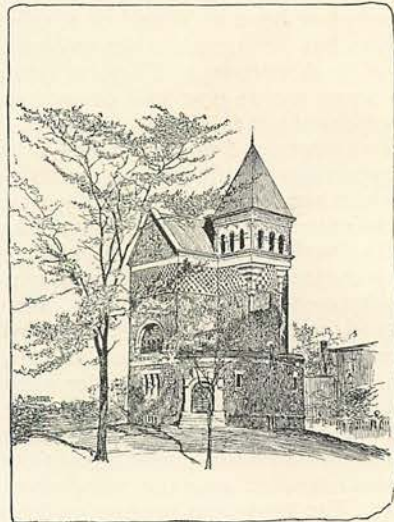
the same fraternity, Delta Kappa Epsilon, built for itself a two-story hall in the form of a well-proportioned Greek temple, and this proved to be the beginning of a long epoch of more and more elaborate house-building, the culmination of which has scarcely been reached at the present day.

From the temple-shaped hall with its facilities for the routine work of the chapter, its dramatic and social festivities, the most enterprising fraternities progressed gradually towards ample homesteads, thoroughly equipped for dealing with every phase of student life, including the furnishing of comfortable board and lodging, which, in some features, excelled the average dormitories. The work began in earnest about fifteen years ago, but the past two or three years have excelled all the others combined, both in an intelligent understanding of what was needed to make the houses thoroughly habitable and creditable in appearance, and in the amount of superior work planned in detail or actually accomplished. A critical comparison of the specimens in existence reveals the fact that pretty nearly every kind of known architecture has been tried. At Princeton one may see in the twin temples of Whig and Clio copies of the Ionic architecture; at Cambridge, should he visit the A. D. Club, he could scarcely fail to notice



CHI PSI LODGE, AMHERST.

that this hospitable mansion is the veritable traditional New England homestead, with its air of little pretense and much comfort. At Yale, "Bones Hall" is venerable and picturesque when covered by the foliage of its ivy; the magnificent building of "Keys" is of Moorish pattern; the new "Wolf's Head" society, at the same college, honors our ancestors in the "Old Home" by choosing a corbel-stepped gable, "fretting the sky," to which the English and the Dutch of several centuries ago were noticeably partial; the stone Delta Psi lodges at New Haven and Hartford are veritable castles for strength and ruggedness of outline; no gentleman would need a more tasteful or finely located villa than one of the fraternity houses which he would find at Ithaca; while by Delta Kappa Epsilon at Amherst has been



DELTA PSI HALL, S. S. S., YALE.

introduced, and by Sigma Delta Chi at Yale has been elaborated, what seems probable to become the reigning type—that of "cloisters," in which are lodged the members, joined by gallery or covered way to the "chapel," where are celebrated the rites of the chapter.

If the fraternities as a whole have had a weakness, it has been for what they were pleased to believe was the "Queen Anne style"—a "spread" of red bricks, irregular, very irregular, tile roofs, and an unknown quantity of bowed windows, with the usual accessories of modern stained-glass "Venetian" blinds, and unlimited opportunity for portières. These experiments, as embodied by some amateur architect, most likely a well-meaning but untrained member of the chapter, have not always been successful; but lately the bizarre mode has given way to better taste, and in all probability the next efforts of the fraternities



at house-building will be characterized by solidity rather than show, by harmony rather than conspicuousness. Several of the college faculties have, with the consent of their boards of trustees, presented enterprising societies with valuable building-sites on their grounds; and where their invitations have been accepted, they have no cause to regret their generosity.

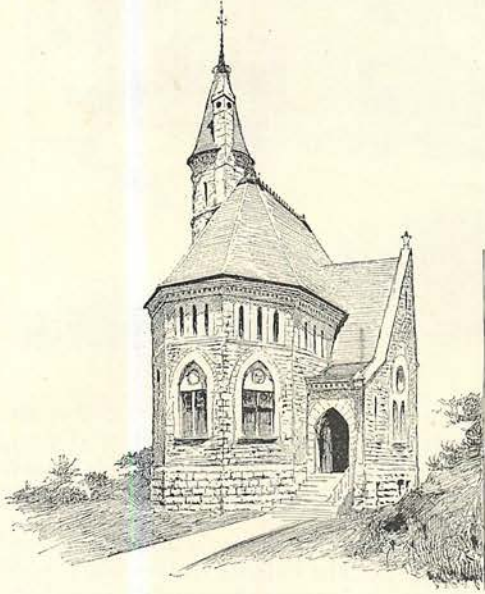
In interior decoration the houses of the American college fraternities differ no less radically than in external appearance. At a Western lodge the members are often content with, and indeed think themselves fortunate if



EPSILON PHI LODGE, WILLIAMS.

of the three societies just named contains a strikingly beautiful emblematic window, designed by Tiffany & Co. of New York. The Samuel Eell's Memorial Hall, at Hamilton College, is itself a tribute to the brilliant young founder of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity, who died after a short career of great promise at the Cincinnati bar as a law partner of the late Chief-Justice Chase. Other representative lodges have been built or beautified by the generosity of individuals.

With the aid of rich sons and generous parents and friends, the loading down of college lodge-rooms might easily be carried to an unfortunate extreme, especially if a false spirit of rivalry should gain a foothold in our college world. But at present there seems little danger of this. An honorable ambition prevails among the leaders of the best fraternities to make their homes complete and attractive in every particular, but beyond this they do not seek to go. The energies of those who



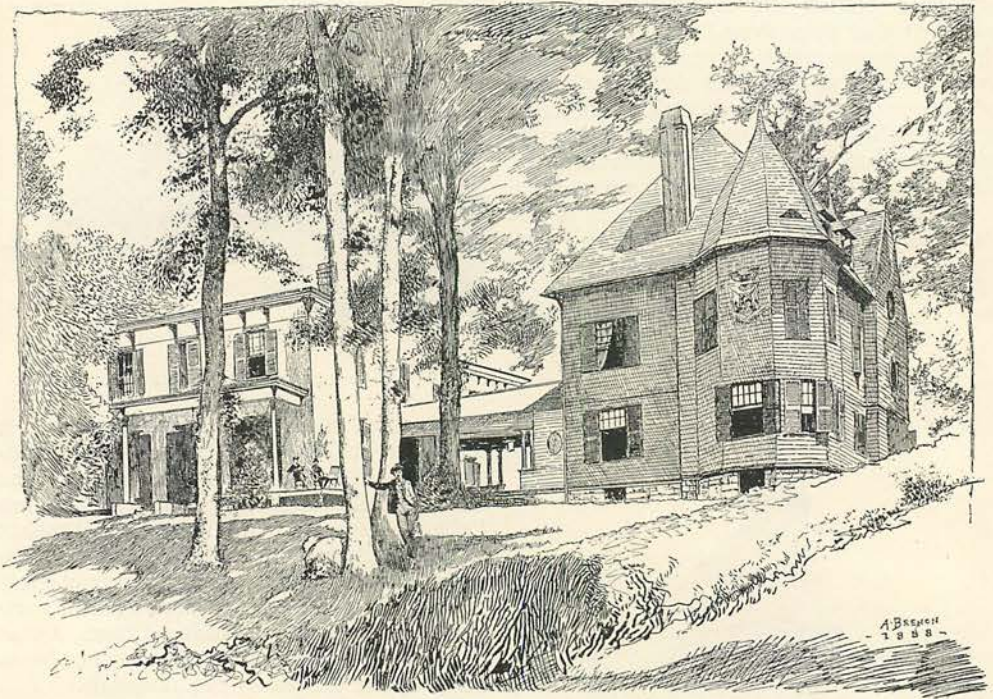
DELTA PSI LODGE, TRINITY.

they have at their command, the bare necessities of life, while not a few of the wealthy chapter-houses of the East are furnished with all the luxury and refined taste of the highest modern art as applied to club life. For instance, the lodge-room of the Delta Psi fraternity in New York City is magnificently furnished in Egyptian designs especially imported from Thebes for this purpose, at a cost of several thousands of dollars; and in the buildings of the Alpha Delta Phi at Wesleyan, the Psi Upsilon at Cornell, the Chi Psi at Amherst, and the Sigma Phi at Williams may be found wood-work, furniture, and objects of art which would be in no wise out of place in the most attractive of modern city homes. Several of the foremost chapters, such as the Sigma Phi, the Alpha Delta Phi, and the Kappa Alpha of Williams College, have been presented with valuable memorials by the friends or relatives of deceased members, which are introduced so as to form conspicuous features of the buildings. Thus the last



DELTA PSI HALL, NEW YORK CITY.





DELTA KAPPA EPSILON LODGE AND HALL, AMHERST.

have charge should be directed especially to adorning the chapter-houses with what illustrates and improves student life in general, and with what is of particular importance to the members of the college or university at which the chapter-house is located.

Of the value of the real and personal property belonging to the ten American college fraternities that are represented by at least one chapter-house each, and the leaders by

five or more, it may safely be said that the sum is fast approaching a million of dollars; while numerous other fraternities and chapters have well-invested and rapidly accumulating building-funds.

The fraternity literature is another interesting subject. The hideous reptiles and winged monsters, the burning altars and dungeon bars, and other such fantastic symbolism with which the magazines and newspapers of some of the fraternities are decorated, prove to cover interesting and oftentimes useful tables of contents, including reminiscences of college life and literary articles by prominent graduates, news-letters from the chapters at the different colleges, personal gossip concerning alumni, official notices from the officers of the fraternity, editorial comments, and notes from exchanges. Two or three of these society periodicals have attained a large circulation. The fraternities have not confined their energies to current papers, however, but have compiled elaborate record books of their members, in the form of catalogues, which, besides containing the names and occupations of members, give succinct sketches of the chapters and the colleges at which they are situated, interesting tables of residence and relationship, and brief biographical sketches of the most distinguished graduates. But decidedly the freshest and most characteristic literature possessed by the fraternities are their song-books, where,



ALPHA DELTA PHI LODGE, WILLIAMS (MEMORIAL PORCH).



in varied and not always correct verse, the youthful laureates have sung the praises of their clans, comrades, festal nights, the charms of good-fellowship, and many other such tempting themes for the imagination and the heart.

Till about a dozen years ago few or none of the fraternities had a strong executive government, but were managed by the oldest chapter, or by several chapters in turn, and by the hasty edicts of the general conventions of the order. But this system proving inadequate, the leaders conceived and boldly acted on the idea of taking the general executive administration of the college fraternities out of the hands of the undergraduate members, at the same time appealing to the graduate members to assume an active share in their welfare. So far their success has been noteworthy. The graduate councils, which now form the executive department of most of the leading fraternities, are ably managed, and graduate associations of the larger fraternities have been formed in most of the important cities. They hold reunions, banquets, and business meetings, and in most essentials serve as graduate chapters of their orders, cementing old college ties and forming new ones between members of different colleges; and several of the fraternities, such as the Delta Psi, the Delta Phi, the Delta Kappa Epsilon, the Alpha Delta Phi, the Psi Upsilon, the Zeta Psi, and the Delta Upsilon, have lately taken the advanced step of establishing in the large cities regular club-houses, which are well equipped, and well patronized by men of all ages; while at Chautauqua, the "Wooglin" club-house, with its ample accommodations and grounds, is the summer headquarters of the Beta Theta Pi, by a graduate corporation of which it is owned.

The legislative functions of the fraternities still rest with the annual conventions, which are usually held with the different undergraduate chapters in turn, when, be-



FIELD MEMORIAL WINDOW, KAPPA ALPHA LODGE, WILLIAMS.

sides the transaction of routine business, the several hundred students present from all parts of the country are occupied with social courtesies extended to them by local residents, and with literary efforts in the form of orations and poems, often delivered by members of the fraternity who have attained eminence in public life.

In view of the facts already presented in the course of this narrative, a defense of the fraternities, a summing-up of all the reasons on which their existence and continuance might be justified, seems altogether superfluous. This one significant feature of the case may however be offered to the dubious without comment, as pointing its own moral—that so far, whenever the majesty of the law has been invoked by still obstinate faculties or trustees to drive the fraternities from their institutions, the law has upheld the continuance of the societies and the free rights of the students to join them, provided that in doing so they do not violate any of the proper functions of the college. It was so in 1879, when the faculty of the University of California tried to disband a society which had been allowed to erect a house on college land, and was met by the hostile criticisms of the entire press of that State; it was so in 1882, when the president of Purdue University, Indiana, striving to compel students entering his university not to join any of the societies, was prevented by a decision of the superior court of that State, and in the end resigned his office. The one notable exception to this rule is the case of the College of New Jersey. Here the faculty succeeded in expelling all the fraternities; but it was before the era of their house-building. All of those chapters



KAPPA ALPHA LODGE, WILLIAMS.





PHI KAPPA PSI (MEMORIAL) LODGE, GETTYSBURG.

which have built houses are now incorporated institutions, paying taxes on their real and personal property, and entitled to the full privileges and protection of local and State laws.

They therefore appear to rest on a more solid basis than mere sufferance; and however ardently certain individuals may wish to see them abolished, it is extremely doubtful if even an organized crusade against them, headed by all the college presidents in the United States and the majority of the faculties under them, could succeed in doing more than to drive the reputable societies into a temporary seclusion, from which, in a few years, they would emerge stronger than ever. Such at least has been the case at many representative institutions.

But the above supposition is relegated to the realms of the impossible when one discovers that a large portion of the educators referred to are themselves members of the fraternities, and in many cases actively associated with their progress. This list includes such men as President Eliot of Harvard, Dwight of Yale, Walker of the Boston Institute of Technology, Seelye of Amherst, White of Cornell, Dwight of the Columbia Law School, Gilman of Johns Hopkins University, Johnston of Tulane, and Northrop of the University of Minnesota. There is not a faculty of any size in the United States that does not contain society members, and few professorial chairs at the largest colleges are not filled by representatives of the leading fraternities. These "little societies" have supplied forty governors to most of the largest States of the Union; and had in the last administration the President of the United States and the majority of his Cabinet. On the Supreme Bench of the United States the fraternities are now represented by five of the associate justices. A summary, published in 1885, showed Alpha Delta Phi, Psi Upsilon, and Delta Kappa Epsilon to have furnished of United States senators and representatives 39, 25, and 36

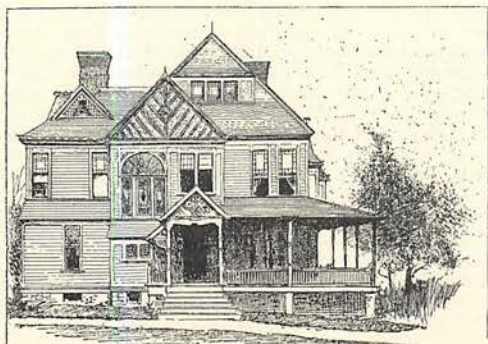
respectively; while in the last Congress 13 representatives and 2 senators were members of the last-named fraternity alone; and in the membership of these 3 fraternities are included 24 bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. In the class-room they are represented by Whitney and Marsh; in the pulpit, by R. S. Storrs and Phillips Brooks; in the paths of literature, by James Russell Lowell, George William Curtis, Donald G. Mitchell, Charles Dudley Warner, Edward Everett Hale, and E. C. Stedman; in recent public life, by Presidents Arthur and Garfield, by Wayne MacVeagh, Charles S. Fairchild, Robert T. Lincoln, John D. Long, William M. Evarts, Joseph R. Hawley, and William Walter Phelps. These gentlemen were not elected into the fraternities after graduation, but were active supporters of these organizations during their undergraduate days. Whatever, then, may be the shortcomings of college secret societies, it is to their credit that their exponents are men noted for ability and prominence in every useful sphere of life, as well as for mere culture and congeniality, while from end to end of the catalogued chapter-lists run in thick procession the starred names of the most brilliant and lamented of the young officers who fell in the battles of our civil war—in the blue and gray ranks alike. Judging the system by its deeds only, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the best societies have in reality been groups of picked men among the fortunate few, comparatively speaking, who are able to incur the expense of a college education.

In almost every college where the secret societies have flourished attempts have been made, some of them quite successful, to carry on local anti-secret societies; and there has existed for many years an anti-secret fraternity, with chapters placed in different colleges, which has been patterned very closely after the societies calling themselves secret, both as to means and ends. But in one case only, that of Delta Upsilon, have the anti-secret orders



DELTA PSI LODGE, WILLIAMS.





PSI UPSILON LODGE, HAMILTON.

been able to keep pace with their secret rivals, in either the quality of their membership, their activity in college affairs, or their increase in material resources. Even here this has been the result of assimilation to the secret fraternities, till now, so far as Delta Upsilon can effect it, the distinction between itself and the secret fraternities is simply that the latter exposes somewhat more private business than do they, and, as to the rest, terms "privacy" what they call "secrecy."

Mr. Warner has said:

Notwithstanding their formation is only in obedience to an ancient and universal love in human nature, they are attacked because they are secret. I suppose that some of them are guardians of the occult mysteries of Egypt and India, that they know what once was only known to augurs, flamens, and vestal virgins, and perhaps to the priests of Osiris; others keep some secret knowledge of the formation of the alphabet, or preserve the secret of nature preserved in the Rule of Three, and know why it was not the Rule of Four; while others, in midnight conclave, study the ratio of the cylinder to the inscribed sphere. It matters not. I have never yet met any one who knew these secrets, whatever they are, who thought there was any moral dynamite in them; never one who had shared them who did not acknowledge their wholesome influence in his college life. I mean, of course, the reputable societies; I am acquainted with no other.

The constitutions of many college fraternities are now open to the inspection of faculties; the most vigorous publish detailed accounts of their conventions and social gatherings; nearly all of the homesteads are on occasions opened for the reception of visitors; their rites, ceremonies, and even the appearance of their *sancta sanctorum*, are quite accurately apprehended by rival societies—in short, the old shibboleth of secrecy is a myth rather than a reality.

The shrewdest college presidents have long since discovered that to control undergraduate action with a firm though gentle hand they have only frankly to bespeak the aid and win the confidence and assistance of the fraternities represented at their institutions. It is thus

that we come to see and to realize the importance of such unique departures from the traditional, ever-antagonistic relations between the faculties and the students of large colleges as those lately put into operation at Amherst, Bowdoin, and other colleges; where all matters relating to the privileges and penalties of the students are adjusted to a code of laws which is administered, and from time to time amended, by a council of undergraduates, representing the fraternities, acting in concert with one or more members of the faculty. This simple and amicable relationship between those desiring to obtain knowledge and those desiring to impart it has already been attended with very gratifying results.

Illustrated by such cases as that of Amherst and Bowdoin, and reinforced by the healthy tone of the fraternity press, which has not failed to wage war on what is reprehensible or deficient in our college life, and has labored to inculcate in their members the obligations which they owe to their college and to the members of rival societies as well as of their own, the words of General Stewart L. Woodford, in speaking of the early days of the societies, seem amply justified, and to promise even larger and still more excellent fruit in the near future:

To no one cause more than to the fraternity movement has been due the altered conditions of college culture. . . . In matters of study and discipline each student is now largely guided by his personal predilections, by the advice of those whom he sees fit to consult, by the moral force of his chosen associates. These associations are now determined in many colleges by the Greek-letter societies or fraternities.



PHI NU THETA LODGE, WESLEYAN.





DELTA UPSILON LODGE, MADISON.

That they can use without abusing their privileges was very well expressed by President White, at the dedication of the new Psi Upsilon house at Cornell:

Both theory and experience show us that when a body of young men in a university like this are given a piece of property, a house, its surroundings, its reputation, which for the time being is their own, for which they are responsible, in which they take pride, they will treat it carefully, lovingly, because the honor of the society they love is bound up in it.

He added the following profound observations as the result of his long experience, both here and abroad:

One of the most unpleasant things in college life hitherto has been the fact that the students have considered themselves as practically something more than boys, and therefore not under tutors and governors; but something less than men, and therefore not amenable to the ordinary laws of society. Neither the dormitory nor the students' boarding-house is calculated to better this condition of things, for neither has any influence in developing the sense of manly responsibility in a student. But houses such as I am happy to say this society and its sister societies are to erect on these grounds seem to solve the problem in a far better way. They give excellent accommodations at reasonable prices; they can be arranged in such a manner and governed by such rules as to promote seclusion for study during working-hours; they afford opportunities for the alumni and older students to exercise a good influence upon the younger; they give those provisions for the maintenance of health which can hardly be expected in student barracks, or in the ordinary student boarding-house, and in the long run can be made more economical. But what I prize most of all in a house like this is its educating value; for such a house tends to take those who live in it out of the category of boys and to place them in the category of men. To use an old English phrase, it gives them "a stake in the country."

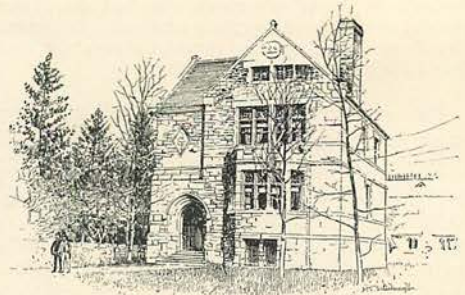
President Seelye of Amherst College, in an address on June 28, 1887, states, referring to the Greek-letter fraternities:

The aim of these societies is, I say, improvement in literary culture and in manly character, and this aim is reasonably justified by the results. It is not accidental that the foremost men in college, as a rule, belong to some of these societies. That each society should

seek for its membership the best scholars, the best writers and speakers, the best men of a class, shows well where its strength is thought to lie. A student entering one of these societies finds a healthy stimulus in the repute which his fraternity shall share from his successful work. The rivalry of individuals loses much of its narrowness, and almost all of its envy, when the prize which the individual seeks is valued chiefly for its benefit to the fellowship to which he belongs. Doubtless members of these societies often remain narrow-minded and laggard in the race, after all the influence of their society has been expended upon them, but the influence is a broadening and a quickening one notwithstanding. Under its power the self-conceit of a young man is more likely to give way to self-control than otherwise. . . .

To represent all the fraternities as standing on anything like the same high plane as to membership, progress in the past, and prospects for the future would be misleading. My thoughts have naturally turned to the standing, the equipment, the aspirations, or perhaps only the pretty dreams of those fraternities which deserve to be ranked as the leaders in the race — that some day all the colleges of the United States will be veritable and acknowledged student democracies; that the fraternity buildings, though smaller than the college halls, will equal the latter in durability and completeness of appointment; that all the large cities will have graduate clubs, where the college fraternity man can renew the old associations that he cherished when a student.

The leading fraternities are fond of affirming the difference in their standard qualifications for membership. Some venerate high scholarship; others pride themselves on the aristocracy of birth or wealth; still others recognize the claims of a heartier and more democratic spirit. This may be true; and yet in all of them there is enough good-fellowship to attract the cultured and enough culture to



PSI UPSILON LODGE, TRINITY.

improve the sociable. They illustrate a law of nature and a law of man, in the tendency of atoms with affinities to form into groups. Having outgrown weaknesses and prejudices, they may be expected to enjoy a career of prosperity.

*John Addison Porter.*