

**HARVARD COLLEGE:
CLASS OF 1878;
SECRETARY'S
REPORT NO. IV, 1901**

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Harvard College: Class of 1878; Secretary's report No. IV, 1901 by Various

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REPORT NO. IV, 1901**

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HARVARD COLLEGE

CLASS OF 1878

SECRETARY'S REPORT

No. IV

1901

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE CLASS

CAMBRIDGE
The Riverside Press
1901

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15. 3. 38.

Class Committee.

NATHANIEL NILES THAYER, CHAIRMAN.
JULIAN AUGUSTUS MEAD.
ALFRED WORCESTER.

Class Secretary.

JOSEPH C. WHITNEY.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

To the Class of Seventy-eight :

THE fourth Class Report is herewith submitted to you. It has taken time to bring it into the present form ; and since the early replies came to circulars sent to members of the Class to secure the necessary *data* upon which to base this Report, delays have been frequent in the work that your Secretary has given to bring the communications sent to him into what he hopes to be their present fairly readable condition. He trusts that all classmates will find that the thoroughness of the work done will compensate them for any disappointment that they may have had that the Report did not follow the circulars more closely.

Nearly twenty years have passed since our graduates left the professional schools, a fair indication that all of us have fallen into a routine and mode of living which shows but trifling changes from year to year ; yet most classmates feel about others that, in the natural course of events, every one must have had an occurrence in his life, once in a while, that is beyond the every-day routine and ordinary mode of living, and that there must be innumerable items of interest to tell one another in the lives of each of us. Every one has had occurrences in his life within the past nine years that have been of the utmost interest to him. That such occurrences would interest his friends and classmates it is not unreasonable to suppose.

In asking each of you to write regarding himself, your Secretary has tried to get you all to give a glimpse of your individuality ; whether the result is a success you must judge for yourselves, though he is disposed to hold the opinion that the average autobiography cannot be considered a failure. The man who makes no reply to the circulars. Was he ever expected to ? The men who answer, " No change." Can you not guess their names from

the answer? And then, too, the following unnamed writers, who in most cases fail to show their individuality when writing for the records. Do they not show themselves in their suggestions and remarks that are now quoted, and cannot you all guess their names?

This first quotation dates back to about the time that Report III. was distributed:

"In spite of what my classmate says we must have the Report. Especially out here. Thermometer 6° below zero to-night, but I forgot all about it, got so warmed up by the details of the Report, though I did feel a draught occasionally (I guess it was when I saw the meagre dress of some of the boys' accounts of themselves)."

Again is a reference to recent circulars and the previous Report:

"I enclose the form filled up with all the facts there are. I request particularly that nothing else shall be printed regarding me. I enclose also the printed entry regarding me in the last Report. I object very much to the matter crossed out in red pencil, and wish that it should not appear again."

Another: "If you did not send your sheets so firmly creased, the writing on them would be more legible." I's not dotted, and T's not crossed.

Another: "Will you please eliminate from the account I sent you the other day the sentence about teaching the Sunday-school class of young ladies? That is a little too juvenile even for a Class Report." *He* would not protest much if his name was appended.

Another: "I have your circular of February 1st, addressed to the members of the Class of 1878, enclosing a copy of the publication concerning myself which appeared in the last Class Report. So long as the Secretary continues to assume the right to supplement my humble biography with comments and inferences of his own, it is evident that the less I say about myself the better."

Here the Secretary obtruded himself as he usually does in such cases:

"BOSTON, February 17, 1900.

"DEAR —. I am sorry that you take umbrage at my innocently intended words, 'but seems to have changed his mind again,' and 'as he has so far committed himself when answering inquiries as to write,' that I wrote some eight years ago. As I read them now I cannot see exactly where they seem to hit you in a sore spot. Of course, I acknowledge that every man has a right to change his mind under certain circumstances. I have heard Charles Francis Adams, former president of the Union Pacific Railroad, say 'that the one thing above all that he reserved the right to do was to change his mind,' and if you have so changed your mind, why should you take offence at it if I say so?

"For a man to condense his life story of seven years into three words, one of which is abbreviated, does almost seem like 'committing himself,' but I may have neglected to 'catch on' to brevity being 'the soul of wit;' besides, you seem to have overlooked my apology that I wrote April 22, 1892. Look back in Report III. for the rest. I enclose a cutting of a part. Also I enclose something that you wrote me about the year 1884. I hope to arrange for a dinner in June, and if you will come on and join us then, I guess that your classmates will forgive you for your brevity and me for my comments.

"Very truly yours,

"JOSEPH C. WHITNEY, *Secretary.*"

"*Mr. Joseph C. Whitney, Boston.*

"DEAR SIR, — Your letter of the 17th instant, with enclosures, is at hand. I can't say that your comments touched me on 'a sore spot;' for although I have changed my mind about a good many things since my youthful days, I can't recall having ever done so without what I believed to be good reasons. Only it seemed to me that your comments would ordinarily be taken to imply a criticism upon me for having exercised that right, which belongs to every man, to adapt his occupation to his circumstances; and it did not seem to me legitimate for the Secretary to make such a criticism a part of the permanent records of the Class. However, I can now see that my brevity (which, by the way, I beg you not to think intended for wit) may have been somewhat responsible for the result; and as it would not be fair

to find fault without giving you the means to present something more acceptable, I am sending by the same mail with this, a statement of all the facts relating to myself which seem in any way likely to be of value for your records.

"I am afraid I shall not be able to go to the dinner you are arranging. It is never easy for me to get away in June, and promises to be especially hard this year.

"With thanks for your suggestion, I am, etc."

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

Another: "If the statement is printed as it stands, you will confer a favor on me and on our classmates. I have no titles, offices, or degrees. I have written no books. I have had no sports or travels. Nothing happens to which I attach any importance except my dinner, which is invariably satisfactory. I believe that my personality interests others as little as it does myself, and with equally good reason. I think I have answered all your questions for *your* satisfaction, but you see there is nothing to print."

And yet another: "I enclose a memorandum which seems to me is about all I can say to bring myself up to date. I think that the trouble about all class records is just as you intimate, but I don't see how this can be cured, unless the system could be adopted of getting one classmate to write about such others as he may be near to and know of. I think it is simply hopeless to ask a man to write about himself for publication, and to expect to get anything very accurate outside of certain definite facts."

One more: "Fearing that some of the boys will not tell about themselves as they ought, I can say that Littauer is making a hard-working congressman, and has achieved a place on the Committee on Appropriations which gives him more power than the ordinary congressmen have. E. T. Chamberlain has been retained from the Cleveland administration because he is the best Commissioner of Navigation who has ever held that office. He has done a great part of the work on which the Ship Subsidy bill is based. Binney has learned so much about Indian treaties and claims made under them that he has been retained in the Department of Justice by a Republican administration. A. H.

Allen, the chief of the Bureau of Rolls and Library in the State Department, has edited and sent through the press some of the handsomest specimens of printing ever turned out of the government printing-office. He is no less successful with a chafing dish."

From such correspondence are the Class Reports collated, but the trouble with communications such as those first printed is that the writers are offended if their names are appended to them for publication.

Here, however, follow three letters that explain themselves, and from which it is unnecessary to withhold the signatures. The subject matter that they contain is already well known to most members of the Class, but original documents are always of value, so these are placed in our printed records.

NEW YORK, November 9, 1892.

MY DEAR WHITNEY, — The judgment of Brother Moore seems to be better than mine, and I am therefore elected to pay the \$50. A few weeks ago I met Moore at the University Club, and he stated that he proposed to put the \$50 into a loving cup to be given by him to the Class, and to be used next year at our reunion in Chicago. I understood from him that he was disposed to contribute whatever additional sum might be needed to purchase a beautiful cup. Under this plan, it would seem to be proper for me to send my check for the \$50 to him, rather than to you as we agreed last June. I have to-day sent a note to Moore asking whether I am to remit to him or to you. I assume that you as Secretary would consent to have the \$50 used in the way proposed by Moore. The Class would undoubtedly approve such action on your part. As soon as I get reply from Moore I will send the money as directed by him, and let you know what I have done.

If you are a Democrat, I congratulate you most heartily on the sweeping victory of your party. If you are a Republican, like myself, I will offer equally sincere sympathy, and only say in addition that I expect to continue in business in New York city.

Very sincerely yours,

GEO. M. PINNEY, JR.