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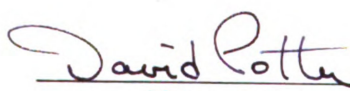
A Study of the Forensic
Activities at Michigan
State College from 1857-
1937.

presented by

Thomas Hughes

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A STUDY OF THE FORENSIC ACTIVITIES AT
MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE FROM
1857-1937

By
Thomas Hughes

A THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Michigan State College was the first school in the nation to teach agriculture as a science. It was also the first Land Grant College in the United States. These factors contribute to making the college distinctive in the field of Agricultural Science. The agricultural and scientific studies did not, however, preclude the cultural aspects of a student's education, for from the very first session of this agricultural college forensic endeavors were included. As the college grew, so did these forensic activities. It is the primary purpose of the following study to trace the growth and development of these forensic activities from 1857-1937 as the college matured and developed. To achieve this end the study has been divided into six chapters. Chapter one introduces the reader to the study and outlines its objectives, materials and organization. Chapter two deals with the development of a speech curriculum as it related to forensics. In so doing portions of the history of the college have been included, to give the reader an overall background of the pattern of development. Chapter three deals with the Literary Societies in relation to their contribution to forensic growth and maturity. Chapter four takes oratory and traces both its curricular and extra-curricular development. Chapter five does the same with the debating activities of the college. Chapter six summarizes the study, and draws the conclusion that the author feels is justified.

Separate chapters dealing with the Literary Societies and the Curriculum have been included because each played a separate, significant role in forensic development. In the chapter on debate and oratory there is pictured a full development of each with the Societies and Curriculum related in respect to their significance at different times. The study concludes with the organization of the Department of Speech in 1937. For after that year records of the forensic activities at Michigan State College are readily available.

Forensics has been generally defined by the constitution of Phi Kappa Delta, honorary debating fraternity, as original speaking. This definition would include oratory, debate, extempore speaking, and discussion. The major portion of this study will deal with debate and oratory primarily because extempore speaking developed in the later years as an outgrowth of oratory, and because discussion did not significantly enter the picture until after 1937. The very early discussions are dealt with at the conclusion of Chapter five as an outgrowth of the debating activities at Michigan State College.

The reader will discover many gaps in the study, gaps that have necessarily formed because material had either been destroyed or has not as yet been unearthed. The author has called attention to these particular places with the hope that in future research these gaps may well be filled. For most of the primary sources the author has gone to early student publications and faculty reports. Among these are: the College Speculum 1880-1894; the Michigan Agricultural College Record, 1896-1937; the Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture for the State of Michigan, 1861-1930; the Wolverine, 1901-1937; the Holocad,

1909-1926; and the Michigan State News, 1926-1937. Other primary sources have included the unpublished partial records of the Agricultural Lyceum, the Cinncinatus Lyceum, 1858-1859 and the unpublished records of the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity for the years 1878-1883. Further information has been procured through personal interviews with Dr. Madison Kuhn, Michigan State College Historian, and Professor Joseph D. Menchhofer, Assistant Professor of Speech. Recordings are available in the Audio-Visual Laboratory of the Speech Department of the interview held with Professor Menchhofer.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SPEECH CURRICULUM AT MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE

The early settlers of Michigan came from New York, New England, Pennsylvania and Ohio. They brought with them a strong belief in higher education, and it was this belief that shaped the State University, and brought forth such denominational schools as Hope, Hillsdale, Albion, and Olivet. It was also this belief that led to the demand for an Agricultural College.

Discussion in educational and agricultural papers and in addresses at agricultural and educational associations had so paved the way that the convention called in 1850 for the revision of the State Constitution, contained a number of influential friends of an Agricultural College. Among them were the Honorable Joseph R. Williams of St. Joseph, who afterwards became the first president of the College and the Honorable Hezekiah G. Wells of Kalamazoo, who afterwards was for eighteen years president of the Board of Agriculture.¹

In this convention on Monday, June 10, 1850, Samuel Clark offered the following resolution which was adopted: "Resolved, That the Committee on Education be instructed to inquire into the expediency of providing for the establishment of an Agricultural School and model farm connected therewith."² The following was adopted as a part of

¹ Report of the President, Michigan Agricultural College, 1890-91 (E. Lansing: Robert Smith Printing Co., State Printers and Binders, 1891), pp. 1-17.

² Ibid., p. 5.

the State Constitution. It is contained in Section 11, Article 13.

The legislature shall encourage the promotion of intellectual scientific and agricultural improvement, and shall, as soon as practicable, provide for the establishment of an Agricultural School.³

Following the adoption of the preceding article into the constitution, the friends of the college continued their efforts to see the school firmly established. Strong influences concentrated at the University of Michigan were brought to bear to make the Agricultural School a department of one of the other State schools, but these efforts failed.

Strong pressure groups were able to secure from the legislature of 1855, an act for the organization of the State Agricultural College, which was approved February 12th of that year. By this act the President and Executive Committee of the State Agricultural Society were authorized to purchase a location for the College and farm within ten miles of Lansing. The State Board of Education was instructed to erect buildings and provide for the open of the school, and an appropriation was made to begin the work.⁴

The committee of the State Agricultural Society met in Lansing on the 16th of June, 1855 to select the location. Plans were secured, contracts let, and building operations begun. On May 13, 1857 the buildings were formally dedicated. The first buildings consisted of a large brick structure known in later years as College Hall, a small boarding hall capable of housing about eighty students, and a small brick barn.⁵

³ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵ W. J. Beal, History of the Michigan Agricultural College (Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915), pp. 1 - 10.

When the doors of Michigan Agricultural College opened in 1857, there actually was no established curriculum at M.A.C. From the start, with regard to teaching students, the college blazed a new road for itself. The Laws and Constitution of Michigan were very general in their statement of the aims of the institution. The Constitution provided that: "The Legislature shall...provide for the establishment of an agricultural school...for instruction in agriculture and the natural sciences connected therewith."⁶ The Laws of Michigan provide as follows:

This institution shall combine physical with intellectual education and shall be a high seminary of learning in which the graduate of the common school can commence, pursue, and finish a course of study terminating in thorough theoretical and practical instruction in those sciences and arts which bear directly upon agriculture and kindred industrial pursuits.⁷

In his inaugural address, the Honorable Joseph R. Williams, the first president of the college, further outlined the general policy of the institution:

...to educate men in industrial pursuits in such a way as will fit them to pursue those callings profitably and at the same time take their place among the influential leaders in the affairs of the county, the state and the nation.⁸

An announcement concerning the Michigan Agricultural College was issued December 10, 1856 by Ira Mayhew, Secretary of the State Board of Education, under whose control the Agricultural College was placed:

Applicants for admission as pupils must have attained the age of fourteen years, and must have acquired a good primary education.

⁶ Revised Constitution of the State of Michigan, 1850, Article XIII, Section 11.

⁷ Beal, op. cit., p. 137.

⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

Every student will be required to devote a portion of each day to manual labor, for which he will be entitled to receive an equitable remuneration.⁹

When the college opened, with only six professors, all strangers to each other, and eighty boys fresh from the common school and of uneven educational standing, it is small wonder that no definite plan of studies was formulated. The Catalogue of 1857 only included a few general aims of the curriculum and the entrance requirements.

Instruction in Science will be thorough and practical... There will be ample instruction in the Natural Sciences... Courses in Mathematics will be comprehensive... Instruction in Ancient and Modern Languages is not included as an object of the institution... A thorough English education is deemed indispensable including Rhetoric, History, Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, Political Economy, the elements of the Constitutional Law, etc.

The terms prescribed to the first class of Students received were that they should pass a good examination in the branches embraced in a common school education, viz: Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Reading, Spelling, and Penmanship.

Numerous applications for admission have been made from other states. By reference to the law of organization, it will be perceived that the privileges of the Institution are not extended to citizens of other States.

The accommodations at present furnished by the State are limited, being for about eighty Students only.¹⁰

Tuition was free, and that fact coupled with the low entrance requirements brought to the college many students who had been denied entrance to other institutions.¹¹ The framers of the course of study in English

⁹ Transactions of the State Agricultural Society for 1857 (Lansing: J. C. Holmes, Inc., 1857), Vol. VIII, p. 285.

¹⁰ College Catalogue of Michigan Agricultural College (Lansing: Agricultural College, 1857), pp. 55-57.

¹¹ Beal, op. cit., p. 201.

particularly were forced to take this fact into consideration. Students were also required to labor on the College farm for three hours a day. They were paid a maximum rate of ten cents and a minimum rate of five cents an hour according to "age, fidelity and capacity."¹² Student labor was another consideration in the curriculum of the English and History Departments. Not so much outside work could be required as was customary during this period.¹³

Finally in 1861, with the above factors taken into careful consideration, the faculty presented a definite program for the four year course, and it was officially published in the College Catalogue of that year. The first course of instruction was divided into a five year program with two terms per year. The preparatory year included a study of High Arithmetic, Physical and Mathematical Geography, and English Grammar the first term, and Algebra, Natural Philosophy, and Rhetoric the second term. Included in the Freshman's years work were courses in Geometry, Meteorology, and History the first term, and Trigonometry and Surveying, Elementary Chemistry, English Literature, and Bookkeeping the second term. In the second year the student took Botany, Mineralogy, and Inductive Logic. The third year combined Drawing and Rural Engineering, Geology, Mental Philosophy, Astronomy, Zoology, and Moral Philosophy into a year's program. In the Senior year the student was offered Agricultural Chemistry, Entomology, Veterinary Medicine, Economy of

¹² College Catalogue...1857, p. 57.

¹³ Beal, op. cit., p. 121.

Domestic Animals, Agricultural and Geographical Botany, Technology, and Household Economy.¹⁴ The perscribed course of study included no electives, and a Bachelor of Science Degree was conferred at the completion of the course work. The curriculum was conservative in structure reflecting both the times and the nature of the institution itself. The student was closely governed in both his course work and his campus life. The latter is indicated by the more specific rules laid down by the Board of Education governing the student. These included chapel exercises every morning, and religious services every Sunday. Students were not allowed to "absent themselves from the vicinity, unless by permission." There was also a rule concerning liquor on the premises which specified, "No student may consume or have in his possession intoxicating beverages while on the campus of this institution." It was further noted that "the use of tobacco will be discouraged."¹⁵

The four courses in Literature and Rhetoric first offered in 1858 were actually the foundation for future Departments of English, Modern Languages and Speech. The first four courses were under the supervision of Robert D. Weeks, Professor of English Literature and Farm Economy.¹⁶ It should be noted here that the Junior and Senior classes were not required to take courses in Retoric, but were required to present both a Junior and Senior Exhibition which included original declamations and orations. In addition to this public performance, "the members of the

¹⁴ College Catalogue...1861, pp. 42-43.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1857, p. 58.

¹⁶ Beal, op. cit., p. 15.

Senior class delivered original declamations on the last Wednesday of each month, and the members of the Junior Class on the second Wednesday of each month."¹⁷ The first exhibition was presented on November 16, 1859, and included an elaborate program. An orchestra was brought from Lansing, and also a quartette was on hand. The program included five essays and four orations. The essays included: "Chemistry in its Practical Application", "Stems of Trees", "Mathematics", "Whiskey", and "Iron". The titles of the orations were: "Midas", "Sources of Error in the Investigation of Truth", "Anglo-Saxon Race", and "Patriotism".¹⁸

In the Preparatory and Sophomore courses similar work was done on the classroom level. Original declamations were an integral part of Rhetoric courses from the very first session. Also, included in the two Rhetoric courses was a study of the style of great speakers, and argumentative speeches, persuasive speeches, and speeches of conviction were analyzed. Further work included an original declamation by the students illustrating the various forms.¹⁹ Whately's text in Rhetoric was used in both of the Rhetoric courses from 1857 until 1876. It was supplemented with other works from time to time. Among these were Day's Rhetorical Praxis in 1872 and 1874; Bain's Rhetoric in 1872; and Hepburn's Rhetoric in 1875. However, Whately was the basic text, and his philosophy predominated during this period with the exception of his attitude toward style.

It would be well at this time to consider the philosophy behind Whately's Rhetoric since it played such an important part in the teaching

¹⁷ College Catalogue...1865, p. 24.

¹⁸ Program of the Michigan Agricultural College Exhibition, November 16, 1859.

¹⁹ Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture for the State of Michigan (Lansing: W. S. George, 1862), p. 38.

of rhetoric for the first twenty years of the college. Richard Whately's Elements of Rhetoric was published in 1828 in England. The first American edition was published in 1832 and a few years afterwards many college catalogues indicated its adoption. Amherst used it from 1839-1845; Harvard from 1834-1850; Pennsylvania 1834-1850; Yale 1841-1850. By 1850, however, these eastern universities had dropped it from their curriculum.²⁰ This in itself is an interesting fact for Michigan Agricultural College did not begin to use Whately until seven years after the above mentioned colleges in the east had abandoned it. It was used by Michigan Agricultural College until 1876, and was still used as a supplementary text until 1901. "Whately gave special emphasis to invention, and in this emphasis presented a faithful and able interpretation of Aristotle." There was also strong emphasis on logical proof. "Whately presented a strong protest against the popular elecutionary movement, not because he considered delivery unimportant, but because he felt that methods in vogue were more likely to do harm than good." He offered in its place his own concept of the natural method of delivery.²¹ With the growth of the elocutionary movement in the middle west, which was late at the Agricultural College, Whately was not replaced, but his chapter on style was merely omitted.²² This had been the practice in the eastern universities many years earlier. The

²⁰ Warren Guthrie, "The Development of Rhetorical Theory in America", Speech Monographs, 15:65, 1948.

²¹ Ibid., p. 65.

²² Annual Report of the Secretary...1875, p. 30.

philosophy of Rhetoric as interpreted by Dr. George T. Fairchild, head of the English Department at M.A.C. included "a study of conviction, persuasion and systematic direction in the selection, arrangement, and expression of matter relating to chosen topics."²³

In 1863 the faculty further standardized the amount of declamation work to be done in the early Rhetoric courses. "Declamations will be given every six weeks during the course, and Compositions (essays) every two weeks."²⁴ Such an amount of work in addition to the regular course requirements were felt by both student and teacher. The students were the first to voice objections to the amount of outside work required, but with the growth of the student body the faculty soon found that the required outside work was over burdening them as well.²⁵ The administration remained firm, however, in its belief that each graduating student should be able to express himself and his ideas before a group of people.²⁶ The spokesman was President T. C. Abbot, a scholar himself and a former professor of English. His insistence did much to keep the declamations and compositions a part of the English work until 1879.²⁷

The college of the 1860's and 1870's was young, poor, and small. The deficit was still a serious handicap, and the enrollment only totaled one hundred and seventy-three men. It is possibly for this reason that

23 College Catalogue...1863, p. 27.

24 Ibid., 1863, p. 11.

25 Annual Report of the Secretary...1867, p. 40.

26 Ibid., 1869, p. 22.

27 Beal, op. cit., p. 67.

women were admitted to the Agricultural College in 1870. No course was offered them other than agriculture at that time, but President Abbot urged the adoption of a course suited for the women.²⁸

The advent of the female species on the college campus brought no immediate changes in the English curriculum as might have been expected. The Junior Exhibition of 1869 presented the first curricular debate held at Michigan Agriculture College. Prior to this there had been debates in the Literary Societies, but not as part of the College curriculum.²⁹ The author has found no mention of actual debate training within the Rhetoric courses. The inclusion of a debate on the program of the Junior Exhibition, however, testifies to the fact that there must have been some formal training in debate within the framework of the Rhetoric courses. The work previously mentioned with regard to argumentative provided a rich background for the early debaters. The subject discussed by the two teams composed of two members each was: "Shall our young men attend Agricultural rather than Commercial Colleges?"³⁰ The debate was not judged, and although it was featured on the program there were several orations presented also.³¹ Although debates frequently appeared in the exhibitions from this point on, they were not an annual feature. In 1870 the topic debated was: "Should Women Vote?"³² In

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 65-73.

²⁹ Papers of the Excelsior Lyceum, 1858-59.

³⁰ Program of the Junior Exhibition, M.A.C., 1869.

³¹ Loc. Cit.

³² Ibid., 1870.

1872 two debates replaced the orations at the Exhibition; the subjects were: "Shall we revive the death penalty?" and "Does natural selection explain the existence of the species?"³³ There is every indication that these exhibitions were quite popular with the students and even people from Lansing. Professor Fairchild remarked, in his annual report, "The Junior Exhibition was held on August 28th, when seventeen orations each of six minutes length, were presented before a large and apparently interested audience."³⁴

Also, considered a job for the Professor of English was the preparation of the orators for the Commencement Exercises. This usually was known as the Senior Exhibition. The most highly effective orators were included in the Commencement activity. In 1870 ten orations were given at the exercises in addition to a main speaker.³⁵ In commenting on the exercises in general Professor Fairchild said in his report to the president, "The orations showed much care in composition and were well delivered."³⁶ However, in later years critics of the period are inclined to agree that the composition was usually much better than the delivery for at this time little emphasis was placed on presentation.³⁷

³³ Ibid., 1870.

³⁴ Report of the Secretary...1872, p. 12.

³⁵ Commencement Program, M.A.C., 1870.

³⁶ Report of the Secretary...1872, p. 10.

³⁷ Howard Edwards, Michigan Agricultural College Record, 7:1, November 12, 1901.

The year 1874 marked a change in the English-Speech curriculum. The Preparatory course had been removed a year earlier, and the time consuming work involved with the preparation of declamation required alteration in the distribution of the courses. Under the altered system the Freshmen were required two terms of Rhetoric, the Sophomores one term of English Literature, the Juniors one-half term of Rhetoric, and the Seniors thirteen weeks of Inductive Logic.³⁸ In describing the work of the Language and Literature section the College Catalogue states:

Instruction in this department is by means of textbooks, and lectures. It embraces history of English Language, History of English Literature; Rhetoric - argument, conviction, persuasion, fallacies in reasoning, style, and systematic direction in the selection, arrangement and expression of matter relating to chosen topics.³⁹

Again it should be pointed out that during this period more time was devoted to selection and arrangement of material than to presentation of such material.⁴⁰ Also, included in the readjustment of courses was the requirement that each student present a composition or declamation every other week throughout the course. On the second and last Wednesday of each month members of the senior and junior classes were required to deliver original declamations before the entire group of students.⁴¹

The enlargement of the performance program required more time on the part of the individual instructor than ever before, yet no new staff members were forthcoming. Professor Fairchild pointed out that the

³⁸ College Catalogue...1874, pp. 16-17.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁰ Edwards, op. cit., p. 2.

⁴¹ College Catalogue...1874, pp. 24-25.

rhetorical exercises of the two upper classes required the supervision in preparation and delivery of one hundred and forty-four orations. Fifteen of which were given for Commencement and nineteen were given for the Junior Exhibition. In his annual report to the president he remarks:

Most of the year, the Juniors have had class exercises once in two weeks taken up with essays, select readings or declamations and familiar lectures on oratory, gestures, and elocution in general. The amount of time and care involved in these exercises is appreciable by those only whose similar duties have taught them. Each monthly oration has been carefully revised, and then twice rehearsed to me before final delivery. Only the interest and advancement of the students is a real compensation for such work.⁴²

For public performances the professor required a written analysis of each oration, and at least four rehearsals to precede its delivery.⁴³ A complaint on the part of the instructor seems fully justified.

The reader will note that the work "elocution" is used in the report of the head of the Department of English. To the author's knowledge this is the first time that it was used in the reports of the Department of English. News of the elocutionary movement had reached the college, but the shift in emphasis at this time was negligible.

Although no change was forthcoming with regard to the exercises, another curriculum change was inaugurated only two years later. It would be wise to point out at this time that not only the English Department was undergoing a period of instability, but this same instability was reflected in the other departments of the college. Each

⁴² Report of the Secretary...1874, p. 31.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 31.

seemed to be groping for the "correct" curriculum to satisfy the needs of its diversified student body. The three term system was started in 1876, and the Freshmen were required to take one term of composition. The English Literature course was moved to the Senior year, and the Sophomores were offered no course in English. The Juniors under the new system were given a full term of Rhetoric.⁴⁴ As the exercises increased in number along with the enrollment, they continued to pose a problem to the English Department. Professor Fairchild's annual report complains that these exercises were being neglected. He mentions having handled over two hundred and forty orations for that year.⁴⁵

In 1880 Professor E. J. MacEwan became head of the English Department, and Librarian. Professor MacEwan was a student of the Elocutionary Movement, an author of three textbooks: Techniques of Drama; Essentials of Argumentation; and Essentials of the English Sentence.⁴⁶ His new ideas with regard to curriculum once more altered the course structure as well as the major textbook. The Freshmen were required to take two terms of Rhetoric, the Sophomores a course in English Language, and the Juniors one term of Rhetoric and one term of Literature. No course in English was offered to the Seniors.⁴⁷ Also, a Saturday laboratory for the Freshmen was installed for elocutionary drill and declamation. General exercises in posture, gestures, and vocal culture were included

⁴⁴ College Catalogue...1876, p. 20.

⁴⁵ Report of the Secretary...1877, p. 28.

⁴⁶ Beal, op. cit., p. 439.

⁴⁷ College Catalogue...1884, p. 32.

along with the preparation of three declamations.⁴⁸ The above statement would indicate that MacEwan leaned definitely toward the Elocutionist's approach. However, for the major text in Rhetoric he chose Henry Day's Rhetorical Praxis which emphasized naturalness of style.⁴⁹ This inconsistency is not explained, and to the author there seems to be only one explanation; that being that MacEwan did not use Day's section on Style. Day's overall philosophy can be summed up in the words of Professor Guthrie:

...To Day, then, the essence of effective rhetoric is purposive rhetoric--rhetoric directed at a specific end, and selecting its materials and manners to establish that end most efficiently. Persuasion in its broadest sense may still be the ultimate end of all rhetorical works, but that broadest end of 'response' is shown to be open to achievement in many ways: by explanation, by argument, by appeal to the passions, or by appeal to these impelling motives which guide most men in their daily behavior.⁵⁰

Following the adoption of the new text, MacEwan laid down the principles and purposes of the Rhetoric courses in two major points.

- 1)...to teach the fundamental principles of composition including both form and matter, with special reference to the collection and arrangement of details in description, narration and argument, so as to be most effective.
- 2)...to cultivate in the student such control of himself and of his mental resources that he may present to his class or a public audience with suitable tone and action what he may have to say whether memorized thought or extempore effort.⁵¹

It may be supposed that the text was only used to supplement MacEwan's own lectures, and used only in parts.

⁴⁸ Report of the Secretary...1883, p. 55.

⁴⁹ Guthrie, op. cit., 16:103, 1949.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 111.

⁵¹ Report of the Secretary...1886, p. 63.

At the same time that the shift of philosophy occurred within the English Department, the student paper called to the reader's attention the lack of elocutionary training at the Agricultural College. The editor suggested an extensive program of declamations during the freshman year as a means "of strengthening the memory and in giving them graceful appearance while speaking." He further suggested a full course in elocution be added to the college curriculum.⁵²

During this period the English Department was in some way relieved with regard to the Junior and Senior Exercises. With the establishment of the Department of History and Political Economy in 1881, half of the supervision of the preparation of speeches was placed in that department.⁵³ The course work itself remained in the Department of English. This division posed an additional conflict in philosophy. In the annual Departmental Report of 1883, Professor MacEwan pointed out that the history department stressed ideas to the student and not delivery, while the classes in Rhetoric placed the primary emphasis on delivery. The student, to say the least, probably felt somewhat confused. Whether this was one of the reasons leading to the persistent urging of a cut back in declamation work by Professor MacEwan, the author cannot say. However, with the change of presidents occurring in 1885 a change also occurred in the amount of declamation work to be done. The reasons suggested by MacEwan are quoted below:

⁵² G. C. Howe, Editor, The College Speculum 2:67, April 2, 1883. See Appendix A for editorial in full.

⁵³ Report of the Secretary...1883, p. 56.

The entire year the Seniors and Juniors met fortnightly for public speaking. The preparation of students for these exercises, including aid in choice of subject, analyzing, suggesting reading for facts, arguments, and illustrations, and the three rehearsals for the completed speech, involve more time and effort than the instruction of any class for the year.⁵⁴

Under the new system the Freshmen had weekly exercises in Elocution and presented two declamations for the first two terms. The third term was devoted entirely to essays. The Sophomores spent the first two terms writing essays and the last term only was spent in the preparation of declamations. The Junior class wrote two essays the first term, gave public orations the second, and presented two critical literary essays the third. The Seniors had a choice of either two essays or two debates the first term, two essays or two public orations the second term, and the third term was devoted to the preparation of public orations.⁵⁵ With regard to choice, the debates were much more popular with the senior men than were the essays.⁵⁶

Professor MacEwan resigned in 1889 after a disagreement with the Board of Agriculture, and he was replaced by Dr. Howard Edwards.⁵⁷ Dr. Edwards was a southerner from Virginia, and had received his L.L.D. from the University of Arkansas. His appointment brought an increased emphasis on Literature and a continuation of the battle to decrease the work in declamations and orations. In 1891 he achieved part of his goal with

⁵⁴ Loc. cit.

⁵⁵ College Catalogue...1884, p. 35.

⁵⁶ Report of the Secretary...1885, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 1889, p. 40.

a substantial cut in the oration work, and an increase in the required courses in literature.⁵⁸ Again in 1894 he suggested a decrease in the work in oratory, and in 1895 the number of senior orators at Commencement was reduced. This also marks the beginning of the decline of the Junior and Senior Exhibitions.⁵⁹

In 1896 the entire Commencement program was standardized with the following results. During the spring term, the faculty selected the speakers for Commencement Day. The main speaker was to be someone of national reputation. Also to be included were two members of the senior class, one from the Agricultural course and the other from the Mechanical course. The students were to be chosen on the basis of "proficiency along the lines of education emphasized by the work of the respective courses." Their ability to speak well was not to be considered. It was the opinion of the faculty committee that they could be trained after they were chosen. The two students were required to prepare and read papers, not to exceed fifteen minutes in length "treating some great agricultural or mechanical achievement of the year, or commemorating the life and work of some man to whom one or the other of the departments owes much." Also, included as a part of the Commencement Week ceremonies was a joint celebration of the college societies and fraternities. These exercises were to consist of orations, declamations, and/or a debate. Any two of these features would be a complete program, but all three could be included. The participants

⁵⁸ Ibid., 1891, pp. 43-46.

⁵⁹ Edwards, op. cit., p. 2.

were selected by the societies with the approval of the faculty. The best orator and debater were to receive gold medals valued at twenty-five dollars, and the best declaimer a silver medal valued at fifteen dollars. Three judges not connected with the college and selected by the faculty were to determine the winners.⁶⁰

The first Commencement Week celebration was a definite success. There were two declamations entitled "The Boat Race" and "The Diver". There were also three orations which were entitled "Our Politics", "Abolition of War", and "Universal Brotherhood". There is no indication how the competitors were selected. Also, there is no indication how the debaters were selected. The question, however, was Resolved: "That United States Senators should be elected by direct popular vote."⁶¹ By way of criticism the Record offered the following observation. "With one exception the contest was good. Four of the contestants had to be prompted. This should not be. The sooner young men are made to depend on themselves the better for them."⁶² There was no indication of the winners.

The oration work in class continued in 1896, but was spread out over the entire year, and the emphasis was returned to thought and composition without the stress on delivery.⁶³ The Michigan Oratorical

⁶⁰ Michigan Agricultural College Record (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 1:2, March 31, 1896.

⁶¹ Loc. cit.

⁶² Ibid., 1:1, August 18, 1896.

⁶³ Report of the Secretary...1896, p. 24.

Association provided the major outlet for the orators, and with the decline of the literary societies as a literary instrument, the Department of English assumed more and more the obligation of training and selecting the orators and the debaters as well.

During 1896-1900, progress was indeed opening new horizons for both the college and the student body. Electric lights were installed at the college and the street car line extended to the campus. President Snyder began his long term as president of the college. He was to serve the institution from 1896-1916. The vacation period was changed to the summer term and a complete course for women was added to the curriculum.⁶⁴ The background of the students was also rapidly broadening as the enrollment climbed. This fact is indicated by the following chart:

Occupation of Father	Male	Female	Total	
Farmer	92	21	113	
Civil Engineer	--	1	1	
Minister	3	--	3	
Lawyer	3	--	3	
Merchant	16	4	20	
Manufacturer	9	4	13	
Insurance	4	2	6	
Real Estate	6	2	8	
Physician	4	--	4	
Traveling man	6	--	6	
Railroading	5	--	5	
Laborer	8	--	8	
Clerk	8	2	10	
Deceased	16	9	25	
Miscellaneous	10	9	19	65

⁶⁴ Report of the President, 1897, p. 1.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

With regard to proposed occupations there was a definite trend away from agriculture.

Proposed Occupation	Male	Female	Total
Farming	45	--	45
Mechanical Engineering	53	--	53
Teaching	14	18	32
Electrical Engineering	4	--	4
Physician	4	--	4
Law	2	--	2
Not fully decided	70	36	106.

66

As the new century dawned the school was faced with many impending changes due both to the rapid technological advancements and the increase in the diversified enrollment. The Literary Societies were slowly becoming social institutions, and the literary activities formerly offered now passed into the hands of the Department of English. Certainly this change was not a rapid thing, and the result was not soon apparent. However, the students were slowly being forced to turn for literary activities to department sponsored programs. The Michigan Oratorical Association was in the hands of the faculty of the English Department, and with the organization of the Debate Club in 1901 debate became departmentalized also.

By 1902 the speech curriculum within the Department of English had been thoroughly established. Four leading courses were offered by the college at this time. They were: Agriculture, Forestry, Mechanical Engineering, and the Women's Course (as it was called).⁶⁷ In the

⁶⁶ Loc. cit.

⁶⁷ College Catalogue...1902, p. 104.

Agricultural four year program, majors were required to take three terms of Voice Culture as a Freshman; three terms of Composition and Rhetoric as a Sophomore; one term of Argumentation, one term of oration work, one term of debating as a Junior; and two terms of Oratory as a Senior. The Forestry majors were required the same amount of speech the first two years. In their third year they were offered one term of Logic and Argumentation and two terms of Voice Culture and Declamation. In the fourth year they were not required to take any speech at all. The Mechanical Engineering majors were required to take the least amount of speech work. They only had to have two terms of Diction in their Sophomore year. The women received the same courses as the Agriculture majors.⁶⁸ Thus, in all four of the major courses, and in three especially, the importance of speech training was realized.

The following chart indicates the number of students in speech courses for the year 1904.

Course	Fall Term	Winter Term	Spring Term
Voice Culture	180	155	91
Rhetoric	110	89	82
Oratory and Debate	51	59	37
Logic and Argumentation	53	61	Not Given
Orations	68	18	Not Given

The objectives of the work in Rhetoric and Voice Culture were made plain by Dr. Edwards when he said:

(with regard to Rhetoric)...with each new literary form, one or more models in that kind are presented for study and comparison, and the effort is made to criticize the students work on fixed principles deduced from the practice of the masters.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

⁶⁹ Report of the Secretary...1904, pp. 66-68.

The aim of the instruction in oral expression, or voice-culture, is to train the student to thorough self-control, and natural, effective enunciation, when facing an audience. The work begins in the fall term of the Freshman year with training in declamation and ends in the Junior and Senior years with public orations.⁷⁰

It is unfortunate that no textbook is listed for this particular period. The author was unable to secure a record of such. However, Dr. Edwards' overall philosophy stressed content more than the style or the delivery.⁷¹ However, his philosophy differed sharply with that of E. S. King who came to the college as an instructor in 1900. King felt that elocution was being ignored, and immediately attempted, with the approval of the head of the department, to restore the interest in elocution.⁷² Dr. Edwards points out in his report to the president for 1901 that, "Mr. King has emphasized the elocutionary work of the Department with good effect and has aroused considerable enthusiasm among the students for that much needed kind of training."⁷³ E. S. King further outlines his philosophy of public speaking in an article in the Record of June, 1901. Since King's philosophy was to be one of the dominant one for the next thirty years it would be well to examine this article closely.

The subject of public speaking was introduced into the courses of instruction given at this college only about two years ago. True, certain principles relating to the science of vocal expression had been taught year after year, but no attention had been given to the art side of the subject prior to that time. As now presented the subject is treated both as a science and as an art.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 69.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 67.

⁷² Ibid., 1901, p. 73.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 74.

Each year the demands made upon college young men and young women in matters pertaining to spoken English, especially with reference to those who to into public work, are becoming more stringent; and college authorities generally have come to realize that there is a difference between the ability one inherits for the expression of one's thoughts and ideas, and the ability one is able to acquire for their expression. Moreover, to accumulate knowledge under our present system of education, is generally regarded as being very much less difficult than it is to impart the knowledge after it has been accumulated; hence, no doubt, the special attention which is everywhere being given to the subject of public speaking.

...It ought to be plain from the foregoing remarks that the idea, in teaching public speaking at M.A.C. is, above all things else, to give the student something that will be of daily, practical use to him, for that is the real idea. No attempt is made to turn out orators; on the other hand an effort is made to produce, in the first place, good thinkers; and such clear, practical thinkers withal that they should be able to put their thoughts in good plain English.⁷⁴

In the above statements Professor King indicates that he does not follow with the elocutionary theory altogether, but would place more emphasis on ideas and content. The same year however, in commenting on the Michigan Oratorical League he stresses the importance of delivery, and the fact that voice training is being neglected in the training of orators.⁷⁵ King also stresses in the first article that the policy is not to attempt to turn out orators, yet in following paragraphs he notes:

The work with the Juniors and the Seniors is given over to Oratory, pure and simple. The principles and the exercises, which constituted the work of the previous two years, are now reviewed and made use of constantly. But an effort is made, in the last two years, to develop, as fully as possible, whatever of oratorical ability that the students may have. To this end some of the very best models of oratory are put before him, which he in turn commits thoroughly to memory. Then, as part of the regular classroom work, the student gives his models, paragraph by paragraph,

⁷⁴ E. S. King, M.A.C. Record, 6:6, June 18, 1901.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 7:1, October 8, 1901.

and a criticism of the work is made, in each case. At the end of the term he gives one of these models, complete, before the class, which he is able to do with the utmost freedom.

...The main purpose of this classroom drill and practice upon the score of models used, is not only to enable the student to acquire pronunciation and clear enunciation of English words; not only to put him in possession of the principles of vocal expression, in order not only to give him experience and skill in the art of public speaking, but also to develop in him individuality and a genuine manliness, without which the aims and objectives of an education are largely defeated.⁷⁶

To the author these paragraphs pose two contradictions. The first is shown in the fact that every effort is made in the last two years to train orators as much as is possible. The second is that the two upper classes are not allowed to develop their own ideas and work out original orations, but are forced to use models already selected by the instructor.

The year 1907 brought a new administration to the English Department in the form of Dr. Thomas C. Blaisdell who took charge after the resignation of Dr. Edwards to assume the Presidency of Rhode Island State College. When Dr. Blaisdell took charge of the department there were five full time staff members. These included Misses Bertha Wellman, Norma Gilchrist, and Bessie Paddock, Mr. George L. Stevens and Professor E. S. King. Professor King was full time in speech with assistance as was needed from the other English staff members. At this time there was added to the curriculum a course in Argumentation which dealt with the famous debates of "Lincoln, Douglas, Webster, Hayne, etc., inductively and deductively considered."⁷⁷ This new course was an elective

⁷⁶ King, op. cit., p. 6.

⁷⁷ College Catalogue...1906, p. 131.

for the women and the agriculture majors and required of the engineers.

Four new public speaking courses were added:

- a. Articulation and Pronunciation - Phonetics, use of the dictionary and use of the voice.
- b. Theory and Practice of Conversational and Public Speaking - Drill in principles and extempore speaking.
- c. Psychology of Gestural Expression - Exercises based upon standard orations, dramatic selections, common reading, etc.
- d. Advanced Public Speaking - How to write and deliver effective essays, orations, dissertations, etc. What to do when unexpectedly called upon to speak in public. How to conduct public meetings, Parliamentary practice.⁷⁸

The first three courses were required of all majors in Agriculture and the Women's Course. The fourth was an elective open to anyone.⁷⁹

In 1908 another responsibility was added to the already overburdened Department of English. French and German were added to the curriculum and the department was renamed the English and Modern Language Department.⁸⁰ The staff was increased to twelve, but the time allotted to the individual in the public speaking and English classes was definitely reduced. Also, that year Dr. Blaisdell realized that the men being trained in public speaking were actually receiving no practical experience before audiences other than the class. In his annual report he suggested to the president that:

In the matter of public speaking we feel that our young men are deprived of both incentive and opportunity to an unfortunate degree. Would it not be possible for an arrangement to be made by which students could make brief addresses before Farmer's Institutes,

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 131-132.

⁷⁹ Loc. cit.

⁸⁰ Report of the Secretary...1908, p. 100.

Granges, Farmer's Clubs, etc., making known to the agricultural interests matters of moment in the development of the science of agriculture, as well as matters of practical farm value along the line of engineering science? It seems to me that some work of this kind would be valuable both in giving the young men opportunity and training and also in making known to the world something of the real work of the college. Through the achievements of our students we are known to the world almost exclusively by our athletic teams. I would not for a moment decrease this avenue of interest, but I believe some such additional avenue as I suggest would be of no little value.⁸¹

Although the suggestion was considered, evidently no action worthy of note was taken for the matter is not discussed again. However, the report does emphasize the fact that Dr. Blaisdell was interested in the practical side of public speaking, and anxious to give his students an opportunity to speak before audiences outside of the classroom situation. With this idea in mind both Freshmen and Sophomore Oratory Contests were inaugurated, in addition to the Peace Oratory Contest and the State Oratory Contest. The State Board of Agriculture did agree to finance the Freshmen and Sophomore Contests, and they became a regular part of the curriculum for several years.⁸²

Contest oratory, however, had seen better days, and with a change in administration it was to disappear from the M.A.C. campus for a number of years. In 1913 following the resignation of Blaisdell, W. W. Johnson became head of the department. The speech staff now had three members: Assistant Professor King and Instructors C. B. Mitchell, debate coach, and C. C. Armstrong. In outlining the work done by the

⁸¹ Ibid., 1909, p. 86.

⁸² Ibid., 1912, p. 93.

public speaking section of the English Department, Johnson said:

In public speaking we ignore the old style 'oration', and we practically ignore all forms of the 'committed speech'. In the first term we give the student work in the preparation of various kinds of speeches, but teach him that in the actual world he will rarely, if ever, commit a speech to memory. We frequently require him to submit a careful plan and to confer with his instructor in regard to this plan. Occasionally we require him to write out a speech, but not to memorize it. The delivery which we encourage is natural and individual - free from artifice, and growing out of the student's personality and the subject which he is discussing.⁸³

The informal public speech was being emphasized under the new ideas brought by Professor Johnson. It is easy to see how these were in immediate conflict with those schools that still taught the formal, elocutionary oratory. The second term in public speaking was devoted to Argumentation, and additional courses were offered in parliamentary law, in dramatics, and special training for students who planned to enter extension work.⁸⁴ The conflicts between the formal and the informal type of speaking grew, and finally, in 1913, Johnson withdrew M.A.C. from the Michigan Oratorical League, and the only oratorical contest participated in by M.A.C. was the State Peace Oratorical Contest.⁸⁵ In his report of 1916 Johnson comments, "We have withdrawn from all so called oratorical contests."⁸⁶

As the college continued to grow in size, the speech section of the English Department followed a similar pattern. In 1922 six hundred

⁸³ Ibid., 1915, p. 127.

⁸⁴ Loc. cit.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 130.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1916, p. 179.

and ten students were enrolled in public speaking out of the two thousand students in the college.⁸⁷ The debate program was enlarged, and debate for women was inaugurated in 1923.⁸⁸ During this period the English staff judged many debates and speech contests in surrounding high schools. This did much to bring in talent for the debate teams.⁸⁹ It was in 1923 also that the first suggestion was made to the president that the Department of English and Modern Languages be separated from the Speech division or vice versa. It was Professor Johnson's own suggestion that the two be divided and that speech be made a separate department.⁹⁰ The suggestion was not to be considered seriously, however, for another fourteen years.

The years 1925-1930 brought many changes to the college as a whole, and several changes to the Department of English and Modern Languages. In 1925 the state legislature formally changed the name of the college from Michigan Agricultural College to Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Science. This was a necessary step following the addition of an Applied Science Division in 1921, and a Liberal Arts Division in 1924.⁹¹ President Butterfield in his Biennial Report to the Board of Agriculture pointed with pride to the rapid changes and advancements that were occurring at the college. The president pointed to the

⁸⁷ Ibid., 1922, p. 127.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1923, p. 122.

⁸⁹ Loc. cit.

⁹⁰ Loc. cit.

⁹¹ Report of the President, 1924, p. 17.

new stadium dedicated in 1924, the opening of the college hospital in the same year, and the opening of the Union Memorial Building in 1925.

The more strictly educational concerns of the College, such as attractive to its faculty scholars of the first rank, appointing, for the first time, a dean of the College, and adding many improvements to the teaching staff, represent some of the time and thought and energy expended. The quality of the men secured speaks for itself. The strengthening of several departments, and work for the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy, and the preparation of teachers in the Sciences and Arts, as well as in Vocational Agriculture and Home Economics have resulted.⁹²

He noted with pride the new program of Continuing Education and the new broadcasting station, WKAR, "Accessible to every farmer in the State," and the total enrollment for the year 1926-27 of well over twenty-five hundred.⁹³

These changes certainly affected the English Department, and the Speech Division especially. More students meant additional problems. The training of teachers was in part the responsibility of the Speech Division. All of these factors culminated in the complete reorganization of the Division of Speech. The speech courses were divided under a separate heading in the catalogue, and more courses were added. The staff was increased by two when Mr. Howard W. Blake and Mr. Joseph D. Menchhofer were added to the faculty. The end result of the course additions was the speech curriculum of 1930.⁹⁴

- 203a Elementary Public Speaking: An elementary course combining theory and practice. It is designed for technical students who pursue but one course in public speaking.
Prerequisite: English Composition.
Instructor: Mr. Menchhofer and Mr. Kochan.

92 Report of the President, 1927, p. 17.

93 Ibid., p. 9.

94 Report of the Secretary...1928, p. 68.

- 203d Parliamentary Law and Organization: Theory and practice of parliamentary procedure. Each section is limited to twenty students.
Prerequisites: Fundamentals of Speech or Elementary Public Speaking.
Instructor: Mr. King.
- 203m Debating: Intercollegiate debate training.
Prerequisites: Tryouts and selection by the debate coach.
Instructor: Mr. Menchhofer and Mr. Kochan.
- 215a Fundamentals of Speech: Courses 215a and 215b form the basis for all Liberal Arts work in Speech. In this course an intensive study is made of the principles underlying voice and body training. Special attention is given to the presentation of speeches and to individual problems.
Prerequisites: English Composition.
Instructor: Mr. Menchhofer and Mr. Kochan.
- 215b Fundamentals of Speech: A continuation of Course 215a. Special attention is given to speech composition and audience analysis.
- 215d Advanced Public Speaking: A course in speech psychology, advanced study of speech composition and platform techniques.
Prerequisites: 215a.
- 303e Advanced Dramatics: Limited to numbers of characters in the play or plays given. Those chosen take part in dramatic presentation, receiving class and individual instruction, including practice in make-up. Classes give public presentation of plays from time to time. The course may be taken more than once for credit, but credits earned shall not exceed nine.
Prerequisite: 203a.
Instructor: Mr. King.
- 303f Practical Public Speaking: A course designed for advanced agricultural students who expect to engage in Smith-Hughes or county agent work. Special emphasis is placed upon the preparation of speeches suitable for farmer's organizations.
Prerequisite: 203a.
Instructor: Mr. Menchhofer.
- 303g Argumentation: An intensive study of the principles of argumentation with practical work on the preparation of briefs and argumentative addresses. Special emphasis is placed on practical logic and persuasion.
Prerequisite: 215a or 203a.
Instructor: Mr. Menchhofer.

- 303h Literary Interpretation: Oral presentation of literature designed to develop ability in interpretation and appreciation of literature.
Prerequisite: 215a or 203a.
Instructor: Mr. King.
- 303j Costume Design, Scenery, and Lighting: A study of the theory of design, color, and light in their application to the stage; and the making of plans and stage-sketches of exterior and interior settings.
Instructor: Mr. King.
- 303n Dramatics: An elementary course in dramatics designed to develop the student's dramatic ability and prepare him to choose cast, and present plays.
Prerequisite: 215a or 203a.
Instructor: Mr. King.
- 309a Public Speaking: Same as Course 203a.
Prerequisite: English Composition.
- 403k Play-Directing: Designed for students who intend to produce plays. Under supervision the students are required to stage a play.
Prerequisite: Two terms of 303e.⁹⁵

As the reader can see the speech curriculum of 1930 was the broadest and most far reaching that had been developed to that point. A continued expansion of the above program followed for the next seven years. The staff continued to grow and in 1932 added Orman J. Drake and Cecil H. Nickle to the staff.⁹⁶ At that time there were over two hundred and ninety students per term in the speech division. This number grew within the next three years to embrace over three hundred and thirty per term.⁹⁷ In these later years the Department of English was referred to as the Department of English and Speech, and the broadening of the

⁹⁵ College Catalogue...1930, pp. 191-192.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 1932, p. 128.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 1935, p. 44.

debate program continued. Oratory was brought back into the program, and Michigan State rejoined the Michigan Oratorical League.⁹⁸ The State Extemporaneous Contest was founded by the Speech staff at Michigan State, and the contests were held on the campus of the college annually. The chapter of Pi Kappa Delta, honorary debate fraternity, which had been adopted in 1921 was flourishing.⁹⁹ In 1937 the administration approved the formation of a Department of Speech, and in the college catalogue of 1938-39 the Department of Speech published its first curriculum. Dr. Donald Hayworth became the head of the newly formed Department of Speech and Dramatics with Assistant Professors Menchhofer and Nickle, and Instructors McMonagle, Thompson, Fischer, Van Dusen and Buell. The curriculum included forty-one courses among which were courses in Public Speaking, Conversational Speaking, Voice Training, Oral Argument, Intercollegiate Debate, Advanced Public Speaking, Parliamentary Procedure, Diction, Speech Composition, Speeches of Courtesy, Speeches of Entertainment and Inspiration, Forms of Public Address, Introduction to Drama, Acting, Stage Scenery, Stage Lighting, Stage Make-Up, Play Direction and History of the Theatre, Radio Speaking, Announcing, Radio Dramatics, Introduction to Interpretation, Platform Interpretation, Advanced Interpretation, Voice Science and Normal and Abnormal Speech Development. Also, a clinic was open for the use of the students and the training of teachers. Additional courses included Psychology of Speech, Teaching of Speech, United States Dialects, Foreign Dialects, and seminars were

⁹⁸ Ibid., 1937, p. 122.

⁹⁹ Loc. cit.

offered in Rhetoric, Drama and Speech Correction.¹⁰⁰ Certainly such a program was a far "cry" from the one-half credit of Rhetoric offered in 1857. The speech curriculum had grown with the college, showing more strength after each reversal, more intensity after each new hardship. It had grown through many different educational philosophies and outlooks. With its development it brought a growth in extra-curricular speech activities, and provided a foundation for the further development of Forensics.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1938, pp. 209-212.

CHAPTER III

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

The organization of literary societies at the Agricultural College came early in the school's history, and played a decisive part in the Forensic activities for the first seventy-five years of the institution's existence. This early development can be accounted for in several ways. For one thing, the school was in an isolated area with no means of transportation to Lansing, and thereby the recreational facilities were almost non-existent for the first few years. Another contributing factor was that the curriculum offered no electives to the students, and his literary desires were not provided for adequately. The records show that the library in 1861 had one thousand two hundred volumes,¹ "consisting largely of reports of the U.S. Patent Office and the annals of congress. There were also a few weekly newspapers, American Agriculturist, the Michigan Farmer, Harper's Weekly and others sent gratuitously by the publishers."² For both social and literary reasons then, students saw a need for the existence of societies. The first of these is recorded as early as 1858, one year following the opening of the college.³

1 W. J. Beal, History of the Michigan Agricultural College (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915), p. 207.

2 Michigan State News (E. Lansing: State College), 19:1, September 24, 1926.

3 College Catalogue of the Michigan Agricultural College (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1858), p. 21.

The Excelsior Lyceum was officially founded on May 11th, 1858 with a membership of thirty-two persons.⁴ The total enrollment of the college at this time was around eighty. It would appear that over one-third of the student body felt the need for an organization of their own in order to pursue literary accomplishments. There is no record of their constitution, but from the minutes for the year 1858-59, there is shown that following a regular business meeting debating was the customary program. The organization required dues in order to purchase its own books for a personal library.⁵ Unfortunately there is no record of the volumes contained in this library. In the president's address for 1859, he gave evidence that the society was growing, and was on a firm foundation. He also mentioned the opposition to the growth of literary societies was strong. He did not however, indicate just what the opposition constituted.⁶

Also in 1859 the short-lived Agricultural Lyceum was formed. During the few months of its existence, joint meetings with the Excelsior Lyceum were held with literary programs of debates, essays, and poems. Music was also provided by the organizations, either from their own group or, occasionally from Lansing. The Agricultural Lyceum appears to have dealt more with poetry and essays than did the Excelsior Lyceum.⁷

⁴ Beal, op. cit., p. 205.

⁵ Papers of the Agricultural and Excelsior Lyceum, 1858-59.

⁶ Loc. cit.

⁷ Loc. cit.

Through the year 1858-59 a meeting was held weekly by the Excelsior Lyceum and at each meeting a debate was presented. The organization of the debates was more along the line of the Parliamentary type. The regular disputants were appointed a week in advance, usually two or three to a side. Constructive arguments were first presented by both sides and then any speaker from the floor could address the house on the question. A time limit was probably set on participation from the floor, but there is not a definite statement recorded as to how long these limits were. After discussion from the floor, the regular disputants closed the debate. Then the president summed up the arguments of both sides, and rendered a decision. This decision was either approved or disapproved by the House.⁸ The author found no recorded criteria by which the debates were judged.

Many diversified subjects were discussed by the debaters, and it is interesting to note that few of them concerned agricultural topics, yet all of the participants were students of agricultural science and at that time were from agricultural environments. Some of the questions for the years 1858-59 are listed below in order to give the reader an idea of the scope of the subjects:

Resolved: That Morse deserves more praise for inventing the telegraph than Fulton for inventing the Steam Engine.

That it would be better for the Mexican people to be annexed to the United States than to remain in their present condition.

That the world is not regressing in morals.

That increased facilities of intercourse with Europe would be beneficial to the United States.

⁸ Loc. cit.

That Napoleon the third was justifiable in the course he pursued to secure the throne of France.

That the press ought to be without legal restriction.

That it is expedient to form colonies of convicts.

That capital punishment ought to be abolished.

That the extension of slavery is a hinderance to the settlement of our western territories.

That no restriction should be placed upon the perfect freedom of the people.

That Free trade is the true policy of this nation.

That persuasion is better than force.

That a Republican form of government is not so well adapted to secure the peace and prosperity of a country as a constitutional monarchy.

That the pen is mightier than the sword.

That a man is justified in disobeying a law of his country which he feels to be morally wrong.⁹

The topics discussed dealt with both philosophical problems and problems of national and international importance. Many of the questions dealt with problems facing the United States at that time. Material for these subjects more than likely was at a premium, for the library, as previously mentioned, contained few newspapers and periodicals. The mail was delivered from Lansing only once a week. However, the debates were popular and regular weekly attendance was strong.¹⁰

⁹ Loc. cit.

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

In 1859 the Agricultural Lyceum disbanded and was reorganized as the Cincinnati Legislative Lyceum. This organization was composed of two houses, a senate and house of representatives which met at the same time in different rooms. The author found no constitution for this organization and no statement of objectives, but the programs consisted primarily of Parliamentary debating, and Legislative practices, which included committee work and framing of bills. It was the custom, within this organization, for all members, except the judges who were chosen from among the members, to take part in the discussions. Two leaders, or "chief disputants," as they were termed, were appointed each week by the society president, who indicated which side of the question each was to uphold. These leaders then proceeded to choose up sides from among the membership until each member had been assigned a place on one of the two "teams". The subjects for debate were also chosen a week in advance by a majority of the members.¹¹ This society continued to function actively through 1862, when the catalogue mentions another society called the Sons of Demeter, whose exercises seemed to consist primarily of discussions (debates), essays, and lectures. There is no record to show the formation date of the Sons of Demeter, and no expiration date for the Excelsior Lyceum. Though the records are not definite, there is an indication that the society merged with the Cincinnati Legislative Lyceum around 1860.¹²

11 Loc. cit.

12 Beal, op. cit., p. 205.

The following year, 1863, the catalogue refers to the society in the singular. Again there is the indication that a merger occurred between the two existing societies. From 1866-1907 the catalogue is very indefinite in its reference to the societies. The following statement is all that is given.

The students have organized several literary societies in the institution. The exercises consist principally of discussions (debates), essays and lectures.¹³

The names of the societies are not given. However, in 1873 the Philomathesian Society was established, but when it became inactive is not apparent.¹⁴ Also, the Excelsior Lyceum re-emerged in 1876, as a Freshmen society, but unfortunately was short lived.¹⁵ President Abbot reported in 1877 that "the literary societies are kept up with increasing interest."¹⁶

It is hard to indicate what factors caused the instability of the different societies. The lack of faculty supervision might account for it, or the fact that the organizations could not survive the long vacation. The enthusiasm was extremely high at times, but probably lacked leadership at other times. Nevertheless, the very existence, and continued reappearance of these societies seems to show that the student body had a strong desire for forensic activities that the curriculum

¹³ College Catalogue...1862, p. 13.

¹⁴ Beal, op. cit., p. 205.

¹⁵ Loc. cit.

¹⁶ Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture for the State of Michigan (Lansing: W. S. George and Co., State Printers, 1860), p. 31.

did not offer. It is also interesting to note that musical entertainment was usually incorporated along with the literary efforts.

Another type of Literary organization in the early 1870's was the secret National Greek Letter Society. The first at M.A.C. was the Iota Chapter of Delta Tau Delta, a national fraternity for men, established on the campus in 1872. The second was the Beta Chapter of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity in 1873.¹⁷ The basic difference between the two types, local and national, was that the nationals had secret ceremonies incorporated into their programs. The general purpose of the organizations were similar in nature. President Abbot reported the objectives as follows:

...to build up a refined social character, and irreproachable honesty in each member as well as thorough discipline in writing and speaking.¹⁸

The early records of Phi Delta Theta have been destroyed, but an indication of the efforts made by Delta Tau Delta are found in the programs of that fraternity. Early meetings consisted both of literary and social efforts. Secret Greek ceremonies were included in the programs, as well as taffy pulls and group singing. Warm sugar was a refreshment served often at these meetings.¹⁹ On the literary side of the activities, there were the usual debates on questions of national and international importance. Similar programs were presented for the

¹⁷ Beal, op. cit., p. 211.

¹⁸ Report of the Secretary...1877, p. 24.

¹⁹ The College Speculum (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1881), 1:1, August 1, 1881.

members every week through the 1870's. However, in the early 1880's a change took place in the nature of the programs presented by the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity. The debates were shortened to two men affairs, one man on the negative and one on the affirmative. The emphasis was placed more heavily on essays and orations. Significant in this development is that about the same time more individual recognition was being given the organizations that had their speakers on the program at Commencement. Further incentive was supplied to the fraternities to put forth their best orators, and the weekly meetings provided an excellent opportunity to train future Commencement orators, and Essayists.²⁰

A typical program included:

Society Song

Original Rhyme at Roll Call

Music by Orchestra

Should We Organize an Athletic Club?	Oration
A Sensational School of Philosophy	Essay
Can the Farmer Become a Politician?	Oration

Song

The Character of Brutus	Oration
The North Pole	Essay

Guitar Duet

Debate - Resolved: That a man should marry early in life.²¹

Also, at this time a change came about in the nature of the topics debated by the groups. More stress was placed on local topics of direct

²⁰ Papers of the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, 1880-1882.

²¹ Loc. cit.

concern to the students themselves. Some of the topics discussed for the year 1882 are listed below.

Resolved: That the long vacation should come in summer instead of winter.

That the farmer should favor free trade.

That the Agriculture College Student should not teach school winters.

That the modern dance is a vice.

That city life is preferable to country life.

That preiminnence comes by inspiration.

That prostitution is a greater evil than is intemperance.

That there should not be a military department established at this college.

That we should have co-education at M.A.C.²²

The above mentioned resolutions evidently were quite popular with the members of the fraternity for they are repeated quite regularly in the program planning. Both Phi Delta Theta and Delta Tau Delta continued actively participating in the literary exercises until the 1890's. In 1891, owing to "the poor choice of new members," Delta Tau Delta was discontinued,²³ and in 1898 Phi Delta Theta was also discontinued, owing to the judgement of the grand chapter that no chapter should be connected with a college not giving a classical education.²⁴ Greek letter fraternities were not to return to the campus until around 1920, and at that

²² Loc. cit.

²³ Beal, op. cit., p. 215.

²⁴ Loc. cit.

time they returned purely as social institutions.

The years 1876-1900 might well be named the period of the Societies. They were the only social organizations. The departmental clubs were late in coming to the campus, and did not play a significant role in campus activities until after the turn of the century. Also, the administration encouraged the growth of Literary Societies. The first of these to achieve recognition was the Union Literary Society formed in 1876.²⁵ This society was to dominate the picture from hence forth through to the decline of society importance, as the leader and engineer in literary developments and accomplishments at M.A.C. It was formed by the members of the classes of 1876, 1877, and 1878. For some years this organization held their meetings in classroom A in College Hall. They then secured the rooms under the west ward of Wells Hall until 1890 when their own building was dedicated. The society met every Saturday night for a literary program including a debate and/or oration and essays. Musical entertainment was also featured, and occasionally a dance or a social followed the literary endeavors.²⁶

The Union Literary Society set the pace for the following societies. They, in part, dictated the objectives and even the constitutions of the organizations that were to follow them. The Eclectic Society was the first of these, and it was founded in 1877. According to the constitution the purpose of the organization was the "perfection of literary

²⁵ Report of the Secretary...1876, pp. 78-79.

²⁶ M.A.C. Record (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 1:4, June 16, 1896.

culture in its members; musical and social development are not to be lost sight of."²⁷

Shortly following the organization of this, the fourth society on the campus, the organizations were allowed special living accommodations in the dormitories. Each society was allowed to maintain its own set of rooms in a wing of the dormitory. A program of Society self-management was established, but the steward of the dormitory retained the final authority. The development of this system did much to encourage students to join the societies, and also to promote the establishment of more organizations.²⁸ However, the four existing societies were jealous of their autonomy, and were not willing to share it with a new society. Therefore, other societies were not encouraged by the existing organizations.

In the month of July, 1882 the first joint meeting of the four societies was held in the rooms of the Union Literary Society. Each society brought its own orchestra, and each orchestra played several selections at the beginning of the program. The literary exercises consisted of an essay by a member of the Eclectics, a poem by a member of the Phiis (as they were called), a story by a member of the Deltas. After the exercises the "literary weights forgot their dignity in a general dance in the armory. This meeting was the first of its kind ever held at the college. It was a decided success, and reflects much credit upon its originators. May there be more to follow."²⁹ The above

²⁷ Ibid., 1:3, June 30, 1896.

²⁸ Beal, op. cit., p. 216.

²⁹ The College Speculum, 2:11, August 1, 1882.

commendation from the Speculum was evidently heeded for many similar literary and social gatherings were featured as the years passed.

During this particular period the debate activities appear to have declined somewhat on the part of the local societies with the national fraternities doing most of the debating as has been shown previously. This is not to indicate that debate was dropped from the programs altogether, but that the emphasis was shifted more in the direction of oratory. To emphasize this particular point, it is worthy of mention that several students attempted the formation of a debating society in the early 1880's, and it was in existence for a short time, but the pressure from the existing societies and lack of support from the members soon brought the organization to an end.³⁰ Not only does this indicate that such a shift of strength was in evidence, but also shows the power of the existing societies in maintaining their earlier mentioned dominance. Along with growth of oratory, the essay, declamation and poem were integral parts of the society program. Each society elected specific members as its essayist, poet, reader, and orator. These particularly were responsible individually for their particular office and its development. Original work in essays and poetry was encouraged, and along with the orations were sharply criticized by the members of the groups.

In 1884 the four societies took another step to further their intellectual accomplishments. Through careful combination and cooperation of the societies a lecture association was formed. The executive

³⁰ Beal, op. cit., p. 206.

committee consisted of four members, one elected from each society. It was their duty to secure a number of prominent and able speakers, each term, who would lecture upon subjects of science, literature, history, and other topics of interest to the students. The net proceeds were to be divided equally among the societies while each pledged itself to stand one-fourth of any losses incurred. "This enterprise is a noble one, and one which we have long felt the need of, and should receive the hearty support of every student, that its success may be assured and its permanency established!"³¹ This was the comment of the student paper following the establishment of the lecture bureau. The bureau was successful in bringing speakers from Lansing, Ann Arbor, neighboring colleges, and from the surrounding area. There is no indication that this was faculty sponsored, but there are mentions of recommendations made by the English Department with regard to the speakers selected.³² This organization continued to function for several years. Finally as the societies tended to lean more toward the social than toward the literary, the bureau was placed in the hands of a faculty dominated board with student representation.

As the college continued to grow, the increased enrollment brought a demand for new literary societies. No longer could the existing organizations find valid reasons for objecting to the formation of new groups and it was under such circumstances that in 1885 the Olympic Society was organized followed in 1888 by the Hesperian Society.

³¹ The College Speculum, 2:11, August 1, 1882.

³² Report of the Secretary, 1885, p. 111.

The Olympic Society was located on the fourth floor of Williams Hall, and its purpose as expressed in the constitution was "to improve the intellectual, moral, and social qualities of its members."³³ It also met on Saturday evenings, and its program consisted of "debates, speechmaking, essays, current events and declamations; together with vocal and instrumental music."³⁴ The Olympic Society was patterned after the existing organizations. It differed from the others in its use of Robert's Rules of Order as a guide for the parliamentary business session following the literary exercises.³⁵ It was not long after that Robert's Rules were adopted for use by the other societies.

The Hesperians followed the usual pattern laid down by the Union Literary Society, and they studied noted writers, as well as the usual declamations, essays, debates, and orations.³⁶

With over four hundred students on the campus, and only six societies the participation was noticeably limited. Most of the societies limited their membership to thirty-five, and some of them had even less. Therefore, only about half of the student body was being given a chance to participate. The descrimination against new societies was so strong that the college newspaper began an editorial campaign for a new society. In November of 1888, Ray S. Baker, Student Editor of the Speculum, wrote:

³³ M.A.C. Record...1:4, June 16, 1896.

³⁴ Loc. cit.

³⁵ Loc. cit.

³⁶ Loc. cit.

We need another society. A large portion of our students are non society men, and hence miss the valuable training which can be derived only from that kind of work...There is plenty of ability outside of the societies, but they are now so overflowing that they can take none of it...It seems to be the general opinion that were such a society founded it would receive the cordial welcome of the older societies.³⁷

The editor was evidently somewhat too optimistic for though there were several endeavors to organize new societies all seemed to fail mysteriously. Although the editor of the society dominated paper does not directly state, he does infer that once a statement of intent was filed by the charter members of the new society, those members were asked to join the old societies. Consequently the new organization died.³⁸

The societies continued to exercise pressure similar to this for the next four years. However, the number of women on the campus had been increasing each year, and in 1891 they organized a society of their own, the Feronians. The men's societies could do little here in the way of objections, but they refused to recognize the existence of the new women's society until two years later.³⁹

The Feronians had many of the same literary objectives in their constitution, but their emphasis lay heavily on essays, declamations, and poems with oratory and debate coming last.⁴⁰ The women did attend the debates of the other societies, but were for some years hesitant to venture on a debating program of their own. The women met

³⁷ The College Speculum, 8:58, November, 10, 1888.

³⁸ Ibid., 6:3, October 1, 1886. The editor and staff of the Speculum were all society men, and elected by the societies.

³⁹ M.A.C. Record, 1:4, June 16, 1896.

⁴⁰ Loc. cit.

mostly in the rooms of the other societies for several years on Friday afternoons. Upon completion of the Women's Building, they were assigned rooms for their permanent use.⁴¹

The opening finally being made through pressures from the newspaper, administration, and the student body, the old forces yielded and new societies were formed. The Columbians organized in 1892, and in 1898 the Themians, another woman's group also was organized. The Columbians met in the basement of Well's Hall for a few years, but were finally given the rooms formally occupied by Delta Tau Delta. Both the Themians and the Columbians adopted similar constitutions to the existing societies.⁴²

Still the growth of new organizations was slow, for to combat the new influx of societies, the old guard altered its rules to allow more members in its organization. Phi Delta Theta had lost its national charter and wishing to maintain itself as a society reorganized in 1898 as a local organization under the name of the Phi Delta Society.⁴³

As previously mentioned oratory appeared to be replacing debate as the major activity of the societies in the 1880's. The organization of the Michigan Agricultural Oratorical Association by the societies was further evidence of the gains being made by oratory.

Throughout the later part of the 1880's and the 1890's the arguments for both sides were tossed back and forth via student publications.

⁴¹ Loc. cit.

⁴² Beal, op. cit., pp. 207-209.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 211.

Both camps appeared strong. Evidence of the controversy is found most concretely in an article in the Speculum by E. A. Burnett, of the Eclectic Society, entitled "The Advantage of Debate in a Literary Society." Since it summarizes the attitudes of many of the students, parts of it are quoted below.

...Varied as are the forms of literary work in a society, each having its proper instructive program, we cannot consider each of equal value. For the greatest individual improvement we look to the debate. It cultivates all of the mental faculties. It trains the observing, the discriminating, the constructing, and the reasoning powers: bringing them into action so as to develop them most symmetrically.

The practice of debate encourages and develops self-confidence ...The continued practice of speaking before an audience enables one to concentrate his thoughts and to present them in a systematic manner...No discipline or education gives a broader or more correct idea of any subject...As a constant use of any faculty stimulates its growth, so through practice are the powers of perception and discrimination developed and matured. By practice one learns to see and meet various tricks so common in debate, and to detect the schemes of oratory intended to entrap and to convince the unwary listener. Through the study and concentrated action of the mind and one idea, or one series of ideas, collecting in one point the rays of thought as they search and penetrate each arguments, carefully reasoning out and weighing each conclusion, man's judgment as made more reliable and his reasoning powers are strengthened and brought under control.

The process of debate is an intelligent contest for superiority. The arguments presented by the opponents are placed side by side for comparison, and the effort required in preparing and presenting the discussion, the natural strife for leadership, cultivates and strengthens thought. Mind copes with mind, and each is benefited. Equals in age or in ability, people seldom meet in debate, but each is able to teach the other.⁴⁴

The champions of oratory also presented winning arguments, and they had a growing organization, the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical

⁴⁴ The College Speculum, 6:1-3, October 1, 1886.

Association, to support their contention. The debaters attempted to organize a society purely for the purpose of debating in 1899, but it turned out to be another literary society devoting its primary interests to oratory. This was the Adelpic Society formed on February 11, 1899.⁴⁵ The dissention within the societies led to the formation of a separate organization known as the Debating Club and open to all students. With the advent of this organization in 1901, debating for the most part was removed from the societies and transferred to this club. The Debating Club was non-society and met on a different evening.⁴⁶ It had many society members and fostered inter-society debating which is discussed at length in Chapter V of this study.

With the turn of the century new societies sprang into being with great rapidity. Among these the most prominent ones were: the Sororian, 1902; the Eunomian, 1903; the Ero Alphan, 1904; the Aurorean, 1905; the Forensic Society, 1907; the Dorian, 1908; the Ionian, 1909; the Athenaeum, 1909; the Phylean, 1910; the Sesame, 1911 and the Trimoir, 1913.⁴⁷ Many of these new societies did not participate in the Oratorical League at all. Others confined their literary activities to declamations and poetry. Still others only made a pretense of any literary activities at all. For the most part these organizations by 1920 were purely social in nature although their constitutions mentioned literary activities. Even the older societies were finding it difficult to

⁴⁵ M.A.C. Record, 4:1, February 21, 1899.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 10:4, December 13, 1904.

⁴⁷ The Wolverine (E. Lansing: Agriculture College, 1915), pp. 117-143.

to maintain membership with literary endeavors as the major attraction.

The era itself contributed a great deal to the decline of literary accomplishments within the organizations. The nation was in the throes of the roaring twenties. Moreover, the invention and development of the automobile made travel easier and recreational facilities more readily obtainable. No longer was the Agricultural College isolated from the entertainment offered in Lansing, and in the surrounding areas. On campus visiting lecturers, dramatic productions, and departmental clubs provided further entertainment. All of these factors contributed to the decline and fall of the literary society.

By 1922 the Women's Societies had joined with National Social Sororities or had become local Social Sororities.⁴⁸ In 1930 the Men's Societies all changed their names officially to Fraternities,⁴⁹ and in 1934 the Union Literary Society, the first to come and the last to go, faded from the scene.⁵⁰ By this time the literary activities of the societies had been either taken over by the Debating Club or incorporated into the extra-curricular activities of the English Department.

The literary societies served both the student and the school. To the student especially in the early years they provided an outlet for literary endeavors, as well as an opportunity for the development of the "social graces." To the school the societies provided a proving ground

⁴⁸ Ibid., 1920, pp. 118-135.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1930, p. 218.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 1934, pp. 193-194.

for debate, oratory, parliamentary procedure and public speaking, and polished the student's command of language. Perhaps even more important to the student and to the school, they provided the groundwork for the present day forensic activities.

CHAPTER IV

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR ORATORY AT MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Oratory at Michigan Agricultural College has played a dominant role in the development of Forensic activities. It was the first of these activities to emerge in the classroom, and followed close on the heels of debate in the early literary societies. For a number of years, oratory played the most significant part in the literary societies, and toward the turn of the century a definite war was waged between debate and oratory for supremacy. Finally oratory was destined to disappear from the scene for a number of years following the turn of the century, not to re-emerge as an extra-curricular activity until as late as 1928. At that time it was once more to share the scene with debate, if not as an equal at least as a strong contender. In the course of this chapter the author will attempt to trace the different developments in extra-curricular oratory with an overlapping into the curricular work done in that field. In order to present the overall picture of the development of oratory, it would be well to review the earlier curricular activities mentioned in detail in Chapter II of this study.

The Juniors and Seniors were required to present exhibitions which consisted of original declamations and orations. The first of these was presented in 1859 and included four original orations. Commencement orators were selected and trained by the English Department as

well.¹ Of this early curricular work in oratory very little information has been found by the author. It is recorded, however, that the major emphasis was placed on composition and content rather than on delivery.² This one sided emphasis was to continue until 1901, when Professor E. S. King in reviewing the history of curricular oratory at M.A.C. pointed out:

Too little attention is undoubtedly given to the matter of correspondence between thought on one hand and the expression of thought on the other hand. This will appear self-evident when it is pointed out that not one man in fifty has anything like an adequate vocal appreciation of his own thoughts and sentiments although he may be abundantly able to set them down on paper.³

Professor King was to stress in his work with orators more delivery than content.

During this early period, 1859-1887, the literary societies were also to have a part in contributing to the work done in oratory. It is true that the first societies of the 1860's did not lean in the direction of oratory, but with the advent of the National Greek Societies, there was a definite place found within their programs for the oration.⁴ The typical program of the Delta Tau Delta Society in the late 1870's usually included at least two orations and often times more. Some of these included titles such as the following: "Should the Insane be Punished?", "Joan of Arc", "Gentlemen Farmers", "The Model Student",

¹ See Chapter II, pp. 12-13.

² Loc. cit.

³ Michigan Agricultural College Record (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 7:1, May 27, 1901

⁴ Minutes and Programs of Delta Tau Delta, 1879-1883.

"Washington: A Man of the People", and "Wounded."⁵ However, it was not long after the organization of strong local societies that oratory was included in their weekly agendas also. The Union Literary Society formed in 1876 included orations in a statement of their purposes in their constitution.⁶ The Eclectic Society, 1877 and the Olympic Society, 1888 followed suit.⁷ In fact there is a noted decline in debating in these societies with preference being given to oratory.⁸

In the Fall of 1887 the Union Literary, Eclectic and Olympic Societies combined their efforts in the field of oratory to form the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association which was to have partial control of the oratorical events for the next twenty years.⁹ This association was organized with its primary objective to prepare for an inter-collegiate oratorical association of the state which was then in the process of being formed. The second objective of the Association was to sponsor a local oratory contest for the member societies. The exact date of the founding of the Association was not recorded, nor was the first contest.¹⁰ Dr. Beal states, however, that the first contest was held in the year of formation, 1887.¹¹ The printed program of the

5 Loc. cit.

6 W. J. Beal, History of the Michigan Agricultural College (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915), p. 209.

7 Loc. cit.

8 See Chapter III, pp. 52-55.

9 Beal, op. cit., p. 209.

10 Loc. cit.

11 Loc. cit.

Association in 1900 mentions that the program of that year was the eleventh which would have made the first local contest held in 1889.¹² Finding no record in the Speculum of a contest in 1837 or 1888, the author assumes therefore, that the first local oratory contest was held in the spring of 1889.

The first objective of the Association was not so quickly or so easily accomplished, for the Michigan Oratorical League was not formed until 1898.¹³

However, the local association applied itself diligently to bring about the state league. In 1887 a plan was presented to combine the field-day activities with the Oratory contest. With regard to this idea the Speculum comments, "Though no satisfactory reason was set forth, the idea seems to have been unfavorable entertained."¹⁴ Dr. Beal comments that such an idea was "considered impractical."¹⁵ He does not further explain his statement. Nevertheless the society dominated Speculum continued to apply its editorial efforts in behalf of the proposed League. In one issue the editor, a member of the Eclectic Society wrote:

The matter of a State Inter-Collegiate Oratorical Association has often been discussed by the Speculum. A year ago it was talked of in connection with an athletic association. The latter has materialized and the colleges of Michigan are no longer behind the times, but have a good organization for field sports. Why then should Michigan be behind her sister states in organizing for oratorical contests? The Agricultural College has always been much in favor

¹² Programs of the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association, 1899-1904.

¹³ M.A.C. Record, 5:2-3, April 10, 1900.

¹⁴ The College Speculum (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1881), 9:71, November 10, 1889.

¹⁵ Beal, op. cit., p. 209.

of such an association by forming an oratorical association of its own which is flourishing. Is this matter to become a dead letter? Several years ago some of our Michigan colleges had an oratorical association, in which Kalamazoo College took the prizes, but after a few contests it died out and has never been revived. (M.A.C. was not a member.) Even the Territory of Dakota, small in her number of colleges, has a thriving oratorical association. Must Michigan colleges be behind all the rest?¹⁶

Similar attacks against the lethargy of Michigan colleges followed year after year. Numerous plans were offered by the local association, but evidently were rejected by the administration or other officials. However, the local association flourished. In 1890 the Hesperian Society was admitted followed in 1895 by the Columbians, and in 1898 by the Feronians.¹⁷ The local contests usually had a large attendance, and the societies eagerly vied for the first and second place gold medals.¹⁸ The contest of 1896 is representative of the typical contest. Dr. P. J. Boone of Ypsilanti, Professor R. C. Ford of Albion, and Professor T. C. Trueblood of Ann Arbor were the judges of composition. The gentlemen were not present at the contest, but the orations were mailed to them well in advance, so that ratings could be received in time to announce awards the night of the contest. A minister and two supreme court judges were present at the contest to judge with regard to delivery. Both composition and delivery received equal ratings, and the highest number of points after adding both criteria decided the winner. Five orations were entered, and first place went to "South and the Negro" and

¹⁶ The College Speculum, 8:10, August 10, 1888.

¹⁷ Beal, op. cit., p. 209.

¹⁸ M.A.C. Record, 1:1, December 8, 1896.

second place was awarded to "Individualism in Society."¹⁹ At this particular contest there arose a difficulty in deciding the winner. Under the system of scoring used by the society it was possible for an orator with high marks in delivery and low marks in composition to win first place or vice versa. Although many alterations were suggested by staff members and the newspaper, the situation was not resolved.²⁰ Later when the Oratorical League of the State was formed the same difficulty was encountered. It was not resolved until the authorities agreed on using the same judges for both composition and delivery.²¹ That remedied the situation.

Finally in June of 1897, Professor Ingraham of Michigan Normal College and Professor Webb of Albion College issued an invitation to the schools of Michigan to meet for the purpose of drawing up a detailed constitution for the proposed State Oratorical Association.²² The convention was held at Hillsdale with Professor Webb of Albion; President Mosher, Professor Gurney and Mr. McLaughlin of Hillsdale; Professor Nykerk of Hope; Professor Williams of Kalamazoo; Professor Edwards of Michigan Agricultural College; Professor Ingraham of Michigan Normal; and Mr. W. N. Swift of Olivet in attendance.²³ The organization drew

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

²⁰ The College Speculum, 9:71-72, November 10, 1889.

²¹ M.A.C. Record, 11:2, May 29, 1896.

²² Ibid., 5:2-3, April 10, 1900.

²³ Loc. cit.

up an official constitution and named their organization the Michigan Oratorical League. Seven schools were admitted as members, and provision adopted that other schools might enter with a two-thirds vote of the membership. The object of the organization as stated in the Constitution "shall be to elevate the standard of oratory by holding annual contests." The contests were to be held at member schools rotating from year to year, and the judges were to be six in number. Three were to consider the written oration concerning themselves with construction and composition. The other three judges were to hear the orations and judge on delivery. The oration was not to exceed eighteen hundred words in length, and twenty-five printed copies had to be sent to the secretary of the League. These copies were to be distributed to member schools and the judges. Seven copies went to member schools, three to judges and two were kept on file.²⁴ That accounts for twelve of the copies, but there is no explanation about what happened to the other thirteen.

The selection of the participant for the state contest remained in the hands of the local institution. At Michigan Agricultural College, the selection of the local orator was first placed in the hands of the English Department. A plan was devised by Dr. Edwards whereby all students were eligible to try out during Chapel, one orator each morning during the winter term. Then by popular student vote three would be elected, and then the English Department would pick the best one.²⁵

²⁴ Loc. cit. See Appendix B for detailed Michigan Oratorical League Constitution.

²⁵ Ibid., 3:1, October 19, 1897.

This scheme guaranteed that all the students would hear the orations since all students were required to attend the Chapel Exercises. However, when the preliminary contest was scheduled to be held, only the orators who had participated in the Inter-Society Association's contest reported. Therefore, it was quickly decided that the annual contest of the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association would serve as the testing ground, and the winner of that would be the college delegate to the state contest.²⁶

The first contest of the Michigan Oratorical League was held at Hillsdale College on May 6th of 1898. Seven orators participated before a small audience, and music was presented between orations by the Hillsdale College Glee Club.²⁷ The following orations were presented.

Hillsdale College	The Fall of Mahomet
Hope College	China and the Powers
Kalamazoo College	America's Contribution to Civilization
Michigan Agricultural College	Self and Other Men
Michigan Normal College	Declaration of Independence
Olivet College	The Rationale of Reform
Albion College	John Jay - A Political Hero. ²⁸

Albion College won first place, and it is to be noted at this time that orations dealing with famous figures of history were particular favorites with the judges until at least 1914. In future contests this is particularly noticeable, and rapidly the majority of the orations leaned in that direction. In this first contest Michigan Agricultural College was ranked very low in both composition and delivery.²⁹

²⁶ Ibid., 3:1, February 15, 1898.

²⁷ Ibid., 3:1, May 10, 1898.

²⁸ Loc. cit. Frank V. Warren represented the Michigan Agricultural College.

²⁹ Loc. cit.

The organization of the Michigan Oratorical League had immediate effects at M.A.C. Dr. Edwards remarked: "The Michigan Oratorical League has provided an excellent stimulus for the societies. A marked improvement has been noted in the oratory work done within the individual societies."³⁰ Also, the Lecture Bureau realized the importance of the Oratorical League, and scheduled a speaker on "The Evolution of Oratory" for the week preceeding the local oratory contest. Thomas L. Bradford discussed his subject before a large and enthusiastic audience.³¹ In a report of the event the Record stated:

...he commended the tendency away from mere voice culture and superficial accomplishments and toward the psychological development. The function of oratory he said is to convey truth, beauty and goodness to the hearers. Culture should be such that the mind and body will readily respond to the soul's impulse.³²

The following week the Tenth Annual Oratorical Contest was held with the five member societies participating. The orations included: "Evils of Imperialism", "Universal Disarmament", "A Municipal Problem", "Destiny of a Nation", "Need of the Hour".³³ "A Municipal Problem" won first place and in the spring represented M.A.C. at the second annual league contest held at Hope College.³⁴

³⁰ Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture for the State of Michigan (Lansing: W. S. George and Co., State Printers, 1880), p. 213.

³¹ M.A.C. Record, 4:1, February 14, 1899.

³² Loc. cit.

³³ Ibid., 4:1, February 21, 1899.

³⁴ Ibid., 4:1, May 9, 1899. F. R. Crone represented the M.A.C. at the League contest.

The Record published following the contest gave no indication of the winners, but an editorial in the same issue reveals that M.A.C. did not place in the winners circle.

We must simply gird up our loins, and with steadfast resolutions begin work for the next contest, undismayed by the fact that the trend of our college work is not toward philosophizing. We are men of action, and we train ourselves, even in our talk, toward that which is plain, direct, possibly even blunt; our ideal in thought and expression is the luminous, not the dazzling. And yet our hour will come some day, nor will we need to give up our ideal; it needs only patience and persistence, and a more earnest pursuit of that ideal, and the sober judgment concerning effective speech must finally be with us.³⁵

The following year however M.A.C. still did not place and top honors went to Kalamazoo College with "Patriotism's Messiah"; Michigan Normal with "Martin Luther"; and Olivet College with "Hero of Hungary."³⁶ The reader will note that all three of these orations dealt with famous men and their deeds.

In 1901 the oratory training was to be given to Professor E. S. King, who, the reader will recall used an elocutionary approach in his teaching. In commenting on the local oratory contest, the Record remarks that "the orations throughout, both in thought and delivery, showed a marked advance over much that has preceded, and for this much credit is due Mr. E. S. King."³⁷ The two winners had orations entitled "Paul" and "Joan of Arc."³⁸ Following an interview with Professor King the

³⁵ Loc. cit.

³⁶ Ibid., 5:1, May 8, 1900.

³⁷ Ibid., 6:2, February 26, 1901.

³⁸ Loc. cit.

Record commented more fully on the contest.

In choosing a subject for such an occasion it should never be forgotten that an oration must allow larger opportunity for dignity of phrase and imagery and must always appeal to the will of the hearers through great cogency of reasoning and power of emotion. It must never degenerate into a mere characterization or a biography, and while preserving a lofty range of thought and expression must never become an hysterical straining after effect.

In regard to delivery two criticisms might be offered. Our boys should strive after a greater volume of voice. No matter what the tone or pitch of the voice there should be sufficient volume to fill the audience room. It might be well to try speaking against the beating of a snare drum or other opposing noises, so as to get the proper propulsive force and volume of sound. This does not mean that the speaker is to strain and rant. On the contrary, the less apparent the effort the better; but it does mean such actual work that the muscles of the lungs will recognize the strain by a feeling of weariness. The natural conversational inflections and accents should not be overaccentuated so as to attract attention to themselves. Especially is this true of the sharp, quick rise and fall on some word near the end of the clause.³⁹

The above article gives an excellent indication just what the primary concerns were in training an orator in the early years of the new century. Certainly this training may have had some effect for in the 1901 State event, M.A.C. won third place with the oration entitled "Paul".⁴⁰ This was the first time that the college had placed in the winners bracket, and the enthusiasm ran high throughout the student body. In commenting on the contest Professor King wrote:

...And no doubt one of the very best things that can be said about the contest, is, that judging it as a whole the work done this year was superior to that done a year ago. The participants in this year's contest were, for the most part, not only happier in the

³⁹ Loc. cit.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 7:1, May 27, 1901. George D. White represented M.A.C. at the Michigan Oratorical League. See Appendix C.

choice of subject than were they of other years, but also somewhat more painstaking in the treatment of the subject chosen. Besides, the delivery was uniformly better in the contest of the present year than it has been heretofore.⁴¹

However, King went on to criticize the fact that often speakers who had little or no oratorical ability were sent to participate in the contest. He found fault in the manner in which the orators were chosen, and suggested that often speakers were chosen for their popularity or influence among the student body. He said:

The choice should be made absolutely upon oratorical qualifications. It is futile to undertake to develop a man or woman into an orator, who is devoid of any natural oratorical ability. We had speakers in our recent contest who could not acquire any adequate notion of oratory in a lifetime.⁴²

In closing his article, King suggested that a preliminary contest be held with the League divided into sections, and each school sending their best two orators to participate. The preliminary contest would be devoted to constructive criticism and work toward the development of overall standards in oratory.⁴³ The author has found no record whether or not the idea was placed formally before the League. However, no affirmative action was taken on the suggestion.

For the next three years the Agricultural College continued to participate actively in the State Oratorical League. During that time its record somewhat improved. During the period from 1900-1904 M.A.C. won the highest rank and one second rank, on thought and composition.

⁴¹ Ibid., 7:1, May 27, 1901.

⁴² Loc. cit.

⁴³ Loc. cit.

Once the orator tied with Olivet for second place in the final series. The two remaining years the college ranked in third place. The lowest rank in the four year period was fifth. The average ranking for the four years showed Olivet first and M.A.C. second in the series of nine colleges.⁴⁴ Such a detailed account was published in the Record due to a confusing report published by H. R. Pattengill, editor of the Lansing Moderator-Times. In his review of the Michigan Normal - M.A.C. debate Pattengill had made a series of errors with regard to the relative rankings of the two teams over a period of years. Dr. Edwards was incensed at the account and a letter to Pattengill and to the Record giving a detailed account of M.A.C.'s debate and oratory prowess appeared in the Record. Dr. Edwards further discussed the serious handicaps that faced both the orators and debaters in inter-collegiate contests. He dealt at length with the "Subconscious prejudice of judges,"⁴⁵ with regard to the Agricultural College. To reflect the opinion of the chief administrator in the Department of English, sections of his letter are quoted below:

All of this, too, [the past accomplishments of the M.A.C. orators] has been achieved in the face of an inherent prejudice. It will be noticed that our best grades have been obtained on thought and composition where the name of the college does not appear on the manuscript, and the paper is identified by its title alone. The presumption in the minds of the judges (subconsciously, of course) has uniformly been against the Agricultural College. To put it in other words, wherever there has been room for doubt, the benefit of that doubt has gone to our rivals... Said recently, the president of

⁴⁴ Ibid., 9:2, May 10, 1904. See Appendices D and E.

⁴⁵ Loc. cit.

one of our most flourishing state colleges, after walking through our twenty-thousand volume library: 'Why, what do you do with books? I did not know that an Agricultural College had any use for books!'

...With the foregoing showing [M.A.C.'s past accomplishments in oratory], why should a judge think it inherently impossible that the grasp of thought, the intensity of passion, the fertility and aptness of expression and the dignity and power of delivery attained by an Agricultural School student should rival those of students of other colleges; or why should he fear that public opinion would condemn him if he should not always give to our rivals the benefit of the doubt?⁴⁶

This article is important because it reflects the attitude of the head of the English Department. Soon after its publication Dr. Edwards began to press the Oratorical League for a reorganization of the judging rules.

In April of 1906 the Oratorical League held a special meeting in Lansing regarding the judging rules. Representatives from Adrian, Albion, Hillsdale, Hope, Kalamazoo, M.A.C. and Olivet were present.⁴⁷ It was suggested by Dr. Edwards that for future contests the Northern Oratorical League's judging standards be adopted. This suggestion evidently met with favorable regard for the changes were made at that meeting. The number of judges was reduced to five, and they were required to be present at the contest. The copies of the orations were submitted to the judges two weeks in advance of the contest, but markings with regard to composition and thought were not to be made until the night of the contest.⁴⁸ Evidently this clause was inserted to assure direct correlation between highest marks in thought and composition and delivery.

⁴⁶ Loc. cit.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 11:2, May 29, 1906.

⁴⁸ Loc. cit.

The score cards were marked once on thought and composition and once on delivery, both on the basis of a hundred per cent. The judges were also asked to keep a summary of criticism for each orator which was to be handed to the secretary at the conclusion of the contest in addition to the rankings. Also, included in the instructions to the judges was the statement that "Hesitation in delivery should seriously reduce the grading of a contestant, and a complete failure of memory should debar the contestant from competition."⁴⁹ Memorization was still considered an invaluable criteria for judging an orator. Further changes included a recommendation that a standing list of judges be agreed upon by the members of the League from which the President of the League could draw without further authority.⁵⁰ Hitherto, the President after selecting the judges had to have the written approval of each member school before each judge was acceptable. The conference included a list of distinguished men whom each member school considered acceptable. Among these were included lawyers from Chicago, Detroit, and Ann Arbor; supreme court justices of the State of Michigan; and faculty members of the University of Michigan. In making additional suggestions, the conference recommended that only the top three winners be reported to the local papers.⁵¹ Prior to this time, a full chart had been published with a ranking for each speaker from each school. Evidently the schools at the bottom of the scale did not appreciate the publication of their inadequacies. The

⁴⁹ Loc. cit.

⁵⁰ Loc. cit.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

conference recommendations were approved by all the members of the League, and adopted into the procedure.

The next two years saw a growth in oratorical activities at the college. Freshmen and Sophomore Oratory Contests were added under the direct supervision of the Department of English.⁵² The Peace Oratory Contest was also innaugurated. It consisted of a local contest to pick the best orator on a topic chosen by the State Peace Oratorical Board. Then the winner of the local contest participated in the State contest held in Detroit. The winner of the State contest entered in regional eliminations.⁵³ Unfortunately Michigan Agricultural College did not survive the State contest at any time during this period. Further centralization of the oratorical activities within the English Department occurred at this time. The Societies that had originally been in charge of arrangements for the local contest had become more dependent on the faculty to make the formal arrangements. Finally in 1908 the English Department took over the direct supervision of the local activities.⁵⁴

Additional expansion of the state activities included the sending of a woman orator to the League contest in 1909.⁵⁵ Since the innauguration of the League, a Woman's Oratory Division had been held, but prior

⁵² See Chapter II, pp. 30-31.

⁵³ The Holocad (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 2:23, May 12, 1910.

⁵⁴ Report of the Secretary...1908, p. 132.

⁵⁵ The Holocad, 1:7-8, March 10, 1909.

to this time M.A.C. had not participated.⁵⁶ Miss Shirley Gardiner represented the college at Kalamazoo with an oration entitled "A Champion of the American Idea," dealing with "The powerful and irresistible forces that are sweeping us as a people onward and upward to a better life."⁵⁷ In further comments the Holocad said, "M.A.C. certainly has reason to be proud of her representatives at the State Oratorical contest. They represent the best, not only of her literary work, but of her college life as well."⁵⁸ The orators that year did not place in the upper brackets.

Following the State contest there was talk within the societies of completely abandoning oratory as a competitive part of their program, and disbanding the Oratorical Association.⁵⁹ By this time less than half of the societies were members of the Association, and more than half of the member societies were not participating in the contest. Further, the seeming inability of the local orators to bring home the victory laurels left the Association without much enthusiasm toward the end of the 1908 school year.⁶⁰ One society voiced the opinion that an Agricultural College should not try to keep pace with the "classical colleges."⁶¹

⁵⁶ Loc. cit.

⁵⁷ Loc. cit.

⁵⁸ Loc. cit.

⁵⁹ Holocad, 1:1, May 12, 1909.

⁶⁰ Loc. cit.

⁶¹ Loc. cit.

In response to this pronounced attitude the Holocad published a series of editorials during the last of the spring term dealing with the prospects of M.A.C. with regard to oratory. One was entitled "Can We Win In Oratory?" It concluded:

But M.A.C. can succeed. We have not heitherto succeeded because we have taken a false attitude. Men have casually said: 'We can't!' They have said: 'It isn't our line!' They even said, 'It's a shame to be beaten, but we don't care!' That attitude will fail anywhere. Our success will depend upon our attitude. We can succeed, if as men as an institution, we will pay the price. That price lies in careful planning, in study persistence, through struggle in the faithful patient expenditure of good red blood on the part of the strong men who call this college their Alma Mater.⁶²

In the following Fall the articles continued in a similar vein, but evidently with little effect. For prior to the local contest of 1910, the English Department made it quite plain that unless more interest was forthcoming the Oratorical Association would be disbanded and M.A.C. would withdraw from all oratorical contests. It further suggested that the college withdraw its invitation to be host to the League for that spring, unless the local contest showed signs of improved interest and participation.⁶³ In January of 1910 the local contest was held with less than six orators participating.⁶⁴ In announcing the forthcoming event the Record made a valiant plea for support for the contest.

On Friday night, the annual oratorical association contest, of the college takes place. Although unfortunate, in a way, in not having a large number of contestants entered, yet we think that no

⁶² Loc. cit.

⁶³ M.A.C. Record, 14:1, January 19, 1910.

⁶⁴ Loc. cit.

better program has ever been gotten up, for the contest. It contains some of our most representative students and promises to be unusually close and interesting.

We should entertain the State Oratorical League at the contest to be held at M.A.C. this spring, and so would like to see sufficient interest manifested to warrant our going ahead with the preparations for that contest. If we have liberal support in the local contest, showing to us that the student body is with us in our efforts to place M.A.C. at the head of our Michigan colleges in oratory as well as in football, debate, etc., then we know that we shall not fail in the larger undertaking of making preparations for the larger contest.

In numbers there is inspiration, and we hope that the students, faculty, and friends will take this opportunity to hear a good entertainment, not only to show appreciation to the orators for their work in getting up the program, but also to have it a financial success and a fixed social event of the college year.⁶⁵

Either the interest and support of the student body increased or the English Department was already committed, for the League Contest was held at the Agricultural College. Seven hundred visitors came to the campus from the eight member schools to support their orators. For the first time the pavillion of the Agricultural Building was used as an auditorium for the ladies' contest in the afternoon and the men's contest in the evening. The pavillion was decorated in green and white bunting with pennants from the different schools.⁶⁶ Five girls entered orations, and they included:

The Freedom of the Individual
Light of the Orient
Joshua R. Giddings
Our Part in World Peace
Americanism

Ypsilanti
Albion
Alma
Hillsdale
Kalamazoo ⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Loc. cit.

⁶⁶ Holocad, 2:6, March 10, 1910.

⁶⁷ Loc. cit.

Hillsdale won first place and Kalamazoo won second.⁶⁸ M.A.C. did not enter a woman orator. In the evening nearly seventeen hundred people gathered for the men's contest, "and there was no doubt about their calling. One might have imagined they were all orators."⁶⁹ Nine orations were given and they included:

The Newer Justice	Michigan Agricultural College
Our National Mission	Michigan Normal
Our Heritage from Slavery	Olivet
Worldwide Peace	Adrian
The New Ideal	Albion
Beacon Light of Men	Alma
Evolution of Higher Patriotism	Hillsdale
Columbia Triumphant	Hope
The Sovereignty of Law	Kalamazoo ⁷⁰

In this contest Albion won first and Hillsdale won second.⁷¹ From all reports the entire affair was a huge success, and M.A.C. was congratulated highly for its part as host.

Although the State Contest proved successful with M.A.C. as host it did not end the problems of the college with regard to oratory. It did, however, quiet the dissenters for a year's span, and in the contest of 1911 M.A.C. placed second to Albion in the State finals.⁷² It would appear that the college student body had renewed its old interest in oratory, yet in the local contest of 1912 only three men entered and

⁶⁸ Loc. cit.

⁶⁹ Loc. cit.

⁷⁰ Loc. cit. K. D. Van Wagener represented M.A.C. in the League contest. See Appendix F.

⁷¹ Loc. cit.

⁷² Ibid., 3:9, March 13, 1911.

no women.⁷³ This factor coupled with the sparse attendance caused the following editorial to appear in the Holocad under the banner "Is Oratory Dead?"

Seriously, we are wondering whether or not it means anything to the faculty and fifteen hundred students of this institution to know that the twenty-fourth annual Oratorical Contest was supported by about five percent of their number. Does it mean anything that when the representative who is to represent this college in the state contest was being chosen there were two dances, and that several literary societies held their usual meetings.

This condition can be accredited to several causes. First, the date of the contest was not fixed until two weeks previous. Second, this contest is no longer under the auspices of the literary societies. Third, oratory is dead at M.A.C....If oratory is dead, let's give it a decent burial. If something is wrong with the system of conducting these contests, then let's investigate that and act.⁷⁴

One week later an answer to the editorial written by a student was published on the front page of the Holocad.

The editorial columns of the Holocad heartily preached the funeral sermon; the department concerned was instrumental in administering the burial ritual, and it was left for us the students to utter in unison our mourning cry: 'Miss Oratory of M.A.C. has quietly passed away.' Shall we sanction this decision from slumberland? Emphatically no! Let us show once and forever that we, students, have among us individuals of a higher caliber than the average box car comedy and Bijou bunch. Individuals, though few in number, yet strong in spirit to perpetuate the forensic art at this institution.⁷⁵

The following month the M.A.C. orator at the State contest ranked sixth out of eight contestants!⁷⁶

⁷³ Ibid., 4:11, February 3, 1912.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 4:6, February 13, 1912.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 4:1, February 20, 1912.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 4:15, March 30, 1912.

The final death blow to oratory was struck with the resignation of Dr. Blaisdell and the entrance of W.W. Johnson as English Department Head. As was discussed in Chapter II, Johnson's attitude with regard to oratory was diametrically opposed to the practicing philosophy of other schools in the League.⁷⁷ Therefore, this fact coupled with the overall lack of interest on the part of the student body and the literary societies caused M.A.C. to officially withdraw from the Michigan Oratorical League in the spring of 1913.⁷⁸ By 1916 M.A.C. had withdrawn from the State Peace Oratorical Contest as well,⁷⁹ and this marked the beginning of an eleven year period in which M.A.C. did not participate in any inter-collegiate oratorical contests, and all of the forensic emphasis was placed on debate. Oratory work within the classroom continued however, stressing extempore and natural delivery, with very few written speeches, and no memorized ones.⁸⁰

Pi Kappa Delta probably had a great deal to do with bringing oratory back to the campus of Michigan State College as an important forensic activity. M.S.C. joined the honorary forensic fraternity in 1921. Oratory was included as a contest in the national convention of 1923,⁸¹ and

⁷⁷ See Chapter II, p. 31.

⁷⁸ College Catalogue (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1857-1937), 1914, p. 52.

⁷⁹ See Chapter II, p. 31.

⁸⁰ Report of the Secretary...1915, p. 127.

⁸¹ E. R. Nichols, "A Historical Sketch of Inter-Collegiate Debating: II," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 22:601, December, 1936.

the Provinces swiftly incorporated it into their provincial tournaments. Michigan State College was the host to the Provincial Tournament in 1927, and both Coach Blake and Wise felt that the host school should have participants in all the events.⁸² Therefore a local contest was announced to find the championship orator on the M.S.C. campus. A first prize of thirty dollars was offered along with a second prize of fifteen dollars. The oration was not to exceed two thousand words and could deal with any subject the orator might choose. Blake commented that "the oration will be judged on both content and delivery, and the winner will compete against other Pi Kappa Delta orators during the district convention."⁸³ He also mentioned the possibilities of the reestablishment of the Michigan State College Oratorical Association.⁸⁴ This however, did not develop. Only a few orators turned out for the local contest, and evidently the idea was considered a failure for it was not continued. Michigan State College did enter an orator in the men's division of the district contest which was won by Hope College.⁸⁵ The following year the college continued in its efforts to firmly reestablish oratory on the campus. An orator was sent to the National Pi Kappa Delta convention in 1928,⁸⁶ and in 1929 M.S.C. was readmitted to the Michigan Oratorical

⁸² Michigan State News (E. Lansing: State College), 19:1, March 11, 1927.

⁸³ Loc. cit.

⁸⁴ Loc. cit.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 10:1, April 8, 1927.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 20:1, April 10, 1928.

League and participated in the state contest.⁸⁷ Also, changes had occurred in the Michigan Oratorical League during the absence of M.S.C. Under the new system there was a district contest held first, and the three winners advanced into the state contest. Included in M.S.C.'s district were Alma, Calvin, Central, Hope and Kalamazoo.⁸⁸

In 1930 State entered a national oratorical contest on the constitution. Winners from the local contest advanced into a State contest, then into a regional and finally a national with five thousand dollars in prizes as the ultimate goal.⁸⁹ Orators from the State College, however, did not place in the first contest.

By 1931 oratory was once again a full fledged forensic activity. M.S.C. was participating in the Michigan Oratorical League, the State Peace Oratory Contest, and the oratory contest sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta.

Oratory was not to supplant debate, but from then on was to remain always in the shadow of debate, as a secondary activity, and to share this place with a newer contest. This contest had been dubbed "informal oratory" by Dr. Johnson in 1913, and was to be known in the 1920's as Extempore speaking. Certainly by either name this type of speaking was not new to the speech classroom. It was, however, new to the contest field. Pi Kappa Delta made it an official contest on their national

⁸⁷ Ibid., 22:1, December 3, 1929.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 24:3, October 13, 1931.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 22:1, February 18, 1931.

program in 1923,⁹⁰ and a section was included in the Provencial held on this campus in 1927.⁹¹ It was still at that time considered by many, including Ormand Drake of the speech staff at M.S.C., as a more informal type of oratory. Drake is given full credit for bringing Extemporaneous Speaking as a contest to the state of Michigan. The Michigan State News, and the College Catalogue refer to Extempore speaking as "very new and only introduced here at State two years ago, by Ormand Drake."⁹² It was accepted as a State contest in 1929, and Drake remained chairman of the event until he left the college in 1935.⁹³ The contest was conducted along the following lines.

Two subjects were announced well in advance of the contest. The entries prepared on those two subjects and then shortly before the contest drew from a hat two topics dealing with one of the subjects they had prepared on. The contestant could pick either topic, and deliver a seven minute speech on that topic. The contest was divided into a men's and women's division. The contest won immediate popularity within the state.⁹⁴ Therefore, the return of oratory to the campus of M.S.C. was overshadowed by the development of this new contest which was known as extempore speaking.

90 Nichols, op. cit., p. 601.

91 Michigan State News, 19:1, April 15, 1927.

92 Ibid., 24:1, December 4, 1931.

93 Ibid., 28:1, October 25, 1935.

94 Loc. cit.

Oratory was found early at the Michigan Agricultural College both in curricular and extra-curricular work. It flourished for some years waging a successful battle for supremacy over debate. The early 1900's showed a decline of interest on the part of the students, and a conflict of philosophy on the administrative level. These two factors contributed to the disappearance of oratorical activities from the campus for eleven years. In 1927 two types of oratory were in evidence at M.S.C. The first was the old style oration, and the second was known as Extempore speaking. Both continued to flourish through 1937.

CHAPTER V

AN EXAMINATION OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR DEBATE AT MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Extra-curricular debate was an early development on the campus of the Michigan Agricultural College. Like oratory, it suffered several set backs in its development. At one time it waged an unsuccessful war for superiority with oratory, and at another time it was to decline in popularity due to a lack of student and faculty interest. However, unlike oratory, debate existed in one form or another from 1858 to 1937, and long before 1937 it had become the leading forensic endeavor on campus. In this chapter the author will attempt to trace the development of extra-curricular debate at Michigan Agricultural College. Certain overlappings into curricular debate will necessarily occur due to the fact that the two were so very closely tied together. In order to gain an overall picture it would be wise to review some of the early debating activities within the curricular program as well as the Literary Societies.

The first Literary Society at Michigan Agricultural College, the Excelsior Lyceum, officially introduced debate to the campus.¹ Following its business meeting the customary program included debating as the main activity. With the establishment of other societies debating activities within the different organizations grew. The subjects discussed were varied and timely.² The debating done within the societies consisted

¹ See Chapter III, pp. 39-41.

² Loc. cit.

of two types. In one type two or three members were assigned to one side of a question while an equal number took the opposite side. Two constructive speeches were presented by each side, and each side was allowed at least two rebuttals. The time limits for both constructive and rebuttal speeches varied with the time allowed for the program. The second type of debating was called parliamentary debating or legislative debating. In this the entire gathering was divided into two sides, and every person had an opportunity to speak following the main argument by the regularly appointed debaters. Time limits were set with due regard to the length of the planned program. In the first type the president of the House sat as judge as well as the entire membership. A decision by the president could be overruled by the membership. In the second type a panel of judges appointed by the president from the membership rendered the decision.³

Curricular debate came to M.A.C. in 1869 when it appeared on the Junior Exhibition of that year. The first team was composed of two members on each side, and they debated the question: "Shall our young men attend Agricultural rather than Commercial Colleges?"⁴ From then on debates were often included in the exercises of the Juniors and Seniors. When the programs for the Commencement exercises were standardized in 1896, debate was included as an activity for these programs along with oratory and declamations.⁵

³ Ibid., p. 42.

⁴ Programs of the Michigan Agricultural College Exhibition, November 16, 1869.

⁵ M.A.C. Record (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 1:2, March 31, 1896.

With the advent of the secret National Greek Societies on the campus, debate was pushed forward more rapidly. Local topics were debated often, and also topics of personal interest to the members.⁶

The last of the 1880's brought an increased interest in oratory and a decline of interest in debate, within the societies. Debate did not disappear from the regular programs altogether, but there was a definite emphasis in the direction of oratory.⁷ However, debating was to be strongly revived both on the student and faculty levels during the last of the 1890's. In 1898 Professor A. B. Noble of the English faculty wrote a lengthy article for the Record in which he gave a brief history of inter-collegiate debating, and pointed to the formation of inter-collegiate contests between Michigan State Normal and Albion.⁸ He further emphasized the importance of debate to the college student.

Its give and take, its thrust and parry, make it more exhilarating to the participants and more interesting to an audience than the oratorical contest, and that has endured for many years. But a much stronger claim to a continued existence is in its disciplinary value. As compared with the oration, it requires a fresher, more vital, more practical subject. The real oration, it is true, deals only with vital topics; but the average contest orations shun such a topic, lest perchance some judge should hold an opposite opinion. But debate cannot flourish on dead questions; it must have something fresh and living, something practical.⁹

Professor Noble continued to compare the oration in relation to debate,

⁶ See Chapter III, p. 46.

⁷ Ibid., 49-50.

⁸ A. B. Noble, M.A.C. Record, 2:5, March 16, 1897.

⁹ Loc. cit. See Appendix G for complete article by Professor Noble.

and predicted that such contests were on the move toward great popularity. The societies at this time, however, had a great deal of dissension within their ranks. Half of the membership wanted to keep debate within the society activities, but make oratory the leading activity. The other half felt that debating should be withdrawn from the society activities directly and that a new club be formed with debating as its major purpose.¹⁰ Practical reasons for such a club were clearly stated by a student, S. B. Hartman, in an article published in the Record. He pointed to the fact that the average society program could not possibly provide for more than two or three debates per term and still fulfill its other objectives. Furthermore, only the best debaters had an opportunity to participate.¹¹ Other objections to society debating included:

...(the) tendency for society debates to become deficient in character, or quality. They are often hurridily prepared, perhaps upon short notice, the writer excusing his slothfulness with, 'It's only for our fellows.' This 'at Home' feeling, while it may be a benefit to the timid, is often the hobby-horse of insufficient preparation and careless delivery.

Furthermore, the inspiration of a mixed audience is wanting, the judges may be prejudiced, and the intelligent supervision and criticism of a superior nature is noticeably absent.¹²

As a solution the author of the article urged the formation of an inter-society debating club.

In the Fall of 1901, under the auspices of both the faculty and the

10 M.A.C. Record, 7:1-2, November 12, 1901.

11 Loc. cit.

12 Ibid., p. 1.

societies, a new organization was formed,¹³ and society and non-society students alike were urged to join.

The Debating Club, as the new organization was called, actually had several purposes. The first was to strengthen debating activities at the college. The second was to form an inter-society debating league, and the third was to encourage non-society students to participate in literary activities.¹⁴ Dr. Beal records that the first meeting of the new club found "College Hall too small for the crowd."¹⁵ The Record published a series of articles shortly following the formation of the Debating Club which dealt with drawbacks to successful debating at M.A.C. Among the drawbacks the author, W. K. Wonders, pointed out that lack of time to prepare was one of the most serious. He said:

...Not lack of time in which to commit his speech to memory or lack of time to attend the meetings but lack of time to gather facts to be used as arguments. At M.A.C. time is in the greatest demand. The student has few idle moments. His class work occupies, on an average, eight hours a day. During the evening he has his lessons for the following day to prepare. Besides attending classes and getting his lessons he is generally a member of two or three clubs and one or two societies.¹⁶

Wonders further mentioned the limited knowledge on the part of the average student, and the inadequacies of the library.¹⁷ In the following

¹³ W. J. Beal, History of the Michigan Agricultural College (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915), p. 207.

¹⁴ Loc. cit.

¹⁵ Loc. cit.

¹⁶ M.A.C. Record, 7:1-2, November 12, 1901.

¹⁷ Loc. cit.

article he suggested ways to make debating more popular through better organization within the Debate Club and advance notice of all the topics which were to be discussed during the year.¹⁸

The Debating Club was to achieve most of its objectives immediately. The year of its formation debating activities were increased and many non-society students were brought into the club.¹⁹ Also, that first year the Michigan Normal College at Ypsilanti, Michigan issued a challenge to the Debating Club for an exchange of debates between the two schools.²⁰ The club felt, however, that a program of inter-society debating should be first begun before inter-collegiate activities were attempted. The club continued to meet once a week for the school year with a debate at each meeting. At each meeting plans were further discussed for inter-society debating in the Fall of 1902. Some of the questions debated at these first meetings included:

Resolved: That Darwin did more than Agassiz for the promotion of natural science.²¹

That the luxurious prodigality of the rich in their private life is advantageous to society.²²

That a preparatory year should be added to the Agricultural course.²³

¹⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁹ Ibid., 7:1, November 26, 1901.

²⁰ Ibid., 7:3, November 19, 1901.

²¹ Ibid., 7:3, January 7, 1902.

²² Ibid., 7:1, January 14, 1902.

²³ Ibid., 7:1, January 21, 1902.

That the Nicaraguan route is the more suitable for an Isthmian canal.²⁴

That M.A.C. should take part in inter-collegiate debating.²⁵

That the jury system has outlived its usefulness.²⁶

It is interesting to note that in debating the question regarding the participation of M.A.C. in inter-collegiate debating the negative won all four times that the question was presented. The author has not been able to derive the criteria upon which a decision was based. Nor was any information available as to who did the judging. Following the establishment of inter-society debating in 1902 a faculty member or a professional man from Lansing was brought in to judge the debate and also present a criticism.²⁷ Women were not as yet participating in the club, but the Record does comment that "several of the young ladies attended, and added interest to the session by their presence."²⁸

The year 1902 marked the establishment of two important events in the history of debate at M.A.C. In the Winter of 1902 an organized program of inter-society debating was started, and in the Spring of 1902 the first inter-collegiate debate was held between M.A.C. and Michigan Normal. Plans had been underway for a year to begin the inter-society

²⁴ Ibid., 7:3, January 28, 1902.

²⁵ Ibid., 7:2, February 11, 1902.

²⁶ Ibid., 7:1, February 18, 1902.

²⁷ Ibid., 7:1, April 20, 1902.

²⁸ Loc. cit.

competition, but it was not until January of 1902 that the club could agree on the rules for the proposed competition. Finally the following set of rules was adopted:

In the previous years there has been considerable difficulty in determining the correct standards for judges of debates to use in determining excellence in debating. The rules given below and adopted this year for inter-society debating are meant to clear up this difficulty. The position of a judge of debate is not enviable to say the least. It often happens that the decisions made by the judges of inter-collegiate debate seem utterly wrong to the audience and the dissatisfaction has much justification.

Article I

Each debater shall be allowed an opening speech of ten minutes and a rebuttal speech of five minutes. An affirmative debater shall make the first of the opening speeches, and the sides shall then speak alternately through the opening speeches. The last opening speech of the negative shall be followed by the first negative speech in rebuttal.

Article II

For each debate one judge shall be appointed by each society or team interested, and one by the inter-society debating committee. Before appointment, each proposed judge shall be announced to the societies interested for acceptance or rejection.

Article III

Each judge shall decide in his own mind as to what constitutes good debating, and shall present his ballot in an envelope to the usher; the usher shall then take the ballots to the chairman who shall with the help of the ushers, reckon up the result and announce it to the audience.

Article IV

Each judge shall write on his card which side of the question in his opinion wins. He shall also place opposite each debater's name a grade showing the relative degree of success with which the individual debater irrespective of sides has acquitted himself as a debater.

The debaters shall then be ranked one, two, three, etc., by the chairman and ushers, the debater having the highest grade being ranked one, the next highest two, etc. The total number of ranks shall be added and the debater whose grand total is lowest shall be declared first, the next second, etc. In case of a tie that debater of the two tied who had the highest total percentage shall be declared first of the two. The first three debaters thus determined shall constitute the winning team for the next debate.

Article V

In the following debate the side taken by the winning team shall be, if possible, the losing one in the previous debate.²⁹

If the author of these rules hoped to establish a criteria for judging debate they certainly failed. The above articles merely set down the rules for inter-society debating, and did not deal specifically with judges standards as was implied. For several years editorials had been written complaining of the fact that the members of the societies were placing more emphasis on individual society work than joint efforts. Therefore, the article was interjected into the Rules that split the teams following each debate. The two debaters receiving the highest rank in one contest composed the team for the next. Therefore, members of different societies served on teams together. In that way competition of individuals was emphasized and not competition of the individual societies. The winners of these inter-society debates were to compose the team for inter-collegiate debates with Ypsilanti.³⁰

As plans were made for the spring debate with Michigan Normal, the faculty felt that the students should not be responsible for all the arrangements, and so the English Department was placed in charge.³¹ From that time forward a staff member of that department not only took charge of the inter-collegiate contests, but supervised the entire debate program as well. The comments of the Record would indicate that the students

²⁹ Ibid., 8:4, December 16, 1902.

³⁰ Loc. cit.

³¹ Ibid., 7:1, April 20, 1902.

were in favor of such a move because it guaranteed a faculty member at all meetings to serve as critic.³²

On April 23, 1902 at 8:00 p. m. the first inter-collegiate debate for M.A.C. was held with President Snyder presiding. The question debated was "Resolved: That it should be the policy of our government to hold the Phillippines as a permanent part of the territory of the United States." Admission was charged at twenty-five cents per person, and the Hall was packed with visitors and students of M.A.C. M.A.C. defended the negative and lost a three to nothing decision.³³

In the late spring following the debate Dr. Edwards organized a debating class. The members received no academic credit, but the class was filled to capacity.³⁴ Around the same time a course in argumentation was officially added to the curriculum of the English Department.³⁵

Not discouraged by the initial defeat, the debaters at M.A.C. continued to work for the following year's contest. In the spring of 1903 the three man team from M.A.C. visited Michigan Normal for a return match. This time M.A.C. had the affirmative on the question "Resolved: That government ownership and operation of the railroads is desirable in the United States." The Agricultural College lost this time by a split decision, two to one.³⁶

³² Loc. cit.

³³ Ibid., 7:1, April 29, 1902.

³⁴ Ibid., 7:1, May 13, 1902.

³⁵ See Chapter II, pp. 24-25.

³⁶ M.A.C. Record, 8:1, March 10, 1903.

In 1904 M.A.C. won its first inter-collegiate debate, a unanimous decision on the question "Resolved: That the limitations placed on the suffrage in the State of Mississippi, by the promulgated law in 1890, and in effect January 1, 1892 are legally and morally justified."³⁷

The winning of this debate was a much discussed event on the college campus. The local paper presented it as a sign of future forensic triumphs for the Agricultural College.³⁸ In recording the debate H. R. Pattengill, editor of the Lansing Moderator-Times, made a mistake with regard to the record of the college in the past contests. This error prompted a letter from Dr. Edwards of the English Department who was in charge of debate during this period. In his letter Dr. Edwards forcefully reviewed the record of M.A.C. in both debate and oratory showing that the Agricultural College had accomplished a great deal in debate activities. He said:

...In the last issue of your paper, in a note concerning the M.A.C.-Normal debate, you stated erroneously that the Normal had won in the three preceeding contests. As a matter of fact there have been only three contests between the two colleges. In the first, the Normal won by a unanimous decision, of the judges. In the second the contest was very close indeed, and the judges' decision was two-one in their favor. Men like Professor Barbour of that school told me they would not have been at all surprised had the decision come to us. In the third and last contest the decision was unanimously in our favor. To put it tersely, in the three contests nine judges' votes have been cast. Of the nine the Normal has received five and the M.A.C. four. I think you will agree with me this puts a very different face on the matter of relative standing of the two colleges in debate. May I ask that you will make adequate correction in your next issue?

³⁷ Ibid., 9:1, April 26, 1904.

³⁸ Loc. cit.

This probably seems, and possible, is, a small matter, and yet from our point of view it is not at all a small matter. Two phases of education are here involved. The one is old and deeply rooted, in the affections of the people. The other, the newer has had many prejudices to overcome, and is still on trial. While then, we recognize that each form of education has its especial adaptation all incidental evidence tending to show the effectiveness of our form as regards general culture, intelligent interest in the common welfare, and moral development, are especially precious. Such evidence is in part found in the record of this college in those inter-collegiate oratorical and debating contests.³⁹

Quite definitely debate had taken hold at the college both on the student and faculty levels. In his annual report to the president for that year, Dr. Edwards pointed out the educational values of the inter-collegiate debating.

In my opinion such facts (the winning of the Normal debate) are strong and convincing evidence, not merely of the efficient work of the English Department, but more especially of the value of the training given by our system of education, enabling the student to acquit himself as a man, not only in the matter of earning a livelihood, but also in all the relation of life. Here, in the realm distinctly appropriated by the literary college we find him facing his competitors as an equal among equals; and with the equipment that the Agricultural College gives, winning from them not only respect but also victory.⁴⁰

The work of the Debating Club continued to expand and include new members. In planning its program for 1905, the club set down a basic policy to follow in its meetings.

The policy of the club throughout the year will be to bring into the debates the discussion of serious and important public questions of a nature that will require some previous study on the part of the speakers, thus presenting to all the members new ideas and valuable information.⁴¹

³⁹ Ibid., 9:2, May 10, 1904.

⁴⁰ Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture for the State of Michigan (Lansing: W. S. George, 1904), p. 69.

⁴¹ Ibid., 11:2, October 3, 1905.

New questions were debated at each meeting, and all members were given a chance to both participate in the debates and in the question period which followed. In January of each year several questions were submitted to Ypsilanti for the annual contest. Following the selection of the topic, preliminary contests were held to determine the team. In 1905 the question was "Resolved: That Labor Unions are beneficial to the interests of the United States." M.A.C. lost to the Michigan Normal that year,⁴² but was victorious the following two years.⁴³ For the 1906 contest the Michigan Normal chartered a train to come to East Lansing. They brought with them five hundred students for the debate, and a large audience watched the two teams argue the question "Resolved: That Railroad rates in the United States should be fixed by a national commission."⁴⁴

In the Fall of 1907 something new was introduced into the opening meeting of the Debating Club. Two faculty members were brought together to debate the question "Resolved: That the Russian people are not fit for a constitutional government."⁴⁵ The members thoroughly enjoyed the presentation of "the heated arguments by the two faculty members."⁴⁶

⁴² Ibid., 10:1, January 3, 1905.

⁴³ The Wolverine (E. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1907), pp. 101-102.

⁴⁴ M.A.C. Record, 11:3, May 22, 1906.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 13:1, October 15, 1907.

⁴⁶ Loc. cit.

The annual contest was planned again for the spring of 1908, and in it M.A.C. once more emerged victorious. In the seven contests that had been held M.A.C. had won three and lost four.⁴⁷ In the spring of 1909 the students promised to even the score, but an unexpected development almost stopped the inter-collegiate activity that had gained so much popularity. The faculty of the English Department, who had taken over the supervision of collegiate debate stated that it "could no longer assume the responsibility for the project."⁴⁸ They did however, plan to continue supervision of the Debating Club. No reason was given for this sudden decision, but the students rallied together and voted to continue the project without the assistance of the English Department.

The Record commented:

...The Ypsi-M.A.C. debate is quite an undertaking, but if there is enough spirit and enthusiasm among the students to come out for the preliminary debates, there is not any reason why they cannot be just as good, and a team picked just as victorious as any other year has ever produced.⁴⁹

Evidently this proved true for M.A.C. was successful in defeating Michigan Normal in the annual fracas.⁵⁰ The faculty did not completely abandon the project for it still remained in close contact with the Debating Club, and instructors from various departments were often on hand to give talks on the questions. One interesting announcement of

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13:1, May 26, 1908.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 14:2, October 20, 1908.

⁴⁹ Loc. cit.

⁵⁰ The Holocad (E. Lansing: Agricultural College), 1:15, May 25, 1909.

an instructor's planned appearance was made in the Record.

Instructor Leffler has read everything in the college library and the state library for the debate with Ypsi, and he has consented to give a talk and answer questions.⁵¹

In 1908 a standardized debating ballot was presented to the Debating Club by the Michigan Normal for its approval. M.A.C. sanctioned the new form that for the first time set up a definite standard for the judges to use in rendering a decision, and it was put into practice for the contest of 1909. On this ballot team work counted for twenty per cent, rebuttal for thirty per cent, personality for ten per cent, individual constructive argument for thirty per cent, and delivery for ten per cent.⁵² With this new ballot in use M.A.C. emerged victorious for the third consecutive year in the contest.⁵³ In his annual report the head of the English Department mentioned that although the annual contest was under the management of the debate society the English Department had contributed much to its successful conclusion.⁵⁴

During this period at M.A.C. nearly all of the students participated in debating in one capacity or another. The majority of course, served as spectators at the annual contests, but a representative from every division of the college actually took part in the debating. The preliminary contests were lengthy affairs for the number of students

⁵¹ M.A.C. Record, 14:2, December 8, 1902.

⁵² Ibid., 14:2, December 15, 1908.

⁵³ The Holocad, 1:15, May 25, 1909.

⁵⁴ Report of the Secretary...1909, p. 86.

desiring to participate was great. In 1908 the three man team was composed entirely of Agricultural students,⁵⁵ but in 1909 one member was from Agriculture, and another from Engineering, and the third from the Forestry division.⁵⁶

As the societies declined in literary importance a rivalry among departments started to grow. The students from each department wanted to see members of their division represented on the debating team. The competition for a place on the team proved keen during this period.

Another outgrowth during this early part of the 1900's was the emergence of the debate coach. True, prior to this time the head of the English Department had supervised the activities of the Debating Society, but this was strictly a voluntary affair. The Debating Class that had been organized was also outside the requirements of his teaching load. However, in 1909 a man was placed in charge of debate as part of his regular teaching load, and at M.A.C. he actually became known as the debate coach. The first man to serve officially in this capacity was Mr. A. E. Fish.⁵⁷ Professor E. R. Nichols in his discussion of inter-collegiate debating points out that the years 1900 to 1912 saw the coming of the coach into the debate field.⁵⁸ M.A.C. was not far behind other schools in following this trend.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 1908, p. 32.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 1909, p. 86.

⁵⁷ Loc. cit.

⁵⁸ E. R. Nichols, "A Historical Sketch of Inter-collegiate Debating: II", Quarterly Journal of Speech, 22:593-594, December, 1936.

Nichols further points out that with the coming of the debate coach there was an improvement in the overall debate preparation.⁵⁹ This held true at M.A.C. for Fish emphasized the careful preparation of materials and the importance of research. He did, however, insist on the careful memorization of the constructive speeches far in advance of the debate.⁶⁰ As Nichols notes the constructive speeches were often so completely unrelated that no actual debate existed. He further comments that the rebuttals in some cases were prepared in advance.⁶¹ Fish did remedy the situation at M.A.C. with regard to prepared rebuttals and allowed them to be extempore. He did however continue for several years to require prepared and memorized constructive speeches.⁶²

The years 1910 to 1911 brought several additions in debating activities to the campus of the Agricultural College. In the Fall of 1910 the Debating Club voted to present a pin or ensignia to the members of the final debate team as a reward to their endeavors.⁶³ The following year a separate ensignia was designed for all the members of the organization.⁶⁴ Also, the Debate Club added parliamentary drills and mock trials to their programs in addition to the regular debates.⁶⁵

59 Loc. cit.

60 Report of the Secretary...1910, p. 102.

61 Nichols, op. cit., pp. 593-594.

62 Report of the Secretary...1912, p. 96.

63 The Holocad, 3:4, October 10, 1910.

64 The Wolverine, 1911, p. 104.

65 The Holocad, 3:44, January 30, 1911.

Furthermore, special efforts were made on the part of the executive council to bring the ladies to the meetings as listeners. According to the newspaper this was to inspire the members to greater efforts.⁶⁶

Another innovation in early 1911 was the presentation of a full faculty debate under the sponsorship of the Debating Club. True, faculty members had participated in debates before the club, but these had proved to be informal affairs. Now the club planned a full dress affair not only to inspire interest in debate on the part of the student body, but also to provide funds for the treasury of the organization. At this time the Reciprocity question was one of the most discussed problems of the day. Therefore, the club chose the question "Resolved: That the Reciprocity Agreement between Canada and the United States should be adopted by Congress." Defending the affirmative side were Professors W. O. Hedrick and E. H. Ryder of the History and Economics Department, and Professor W. H. French of the Agricultural Education Division. Supporting the negative side of the question were President J. L. Snyder, Dean R. S. Swain, and the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, A. M. Brown. The meeting hall was packed with students and townspeople alike. The governor of the state presided as chairman, and at the conclusion of the debate the audience was supposed to render a decision. However, the governor decided evidently on his own that the audience should not vote, and dismissed the group after calling the debate a definite tie.⁶⁷ The idea was a success, and

⁶⁶ Loc. cit.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 3:809, February 20, 1911.

attempts were made to repeat the affair in 1912, but the participants were not eager to comply, and the matter was dropped.

For several years there had been talk of increasing the scope of inter-collegiate debating at the college. Finally in 1911 a debate exchange was arranged with Alma College. The first of this series was held in the spring of 1911 on the question "Resolved: That the Federal Government should retain ownership and control of all coal lands now in its possession or hereafter acquired."⁶⁸ M.A.C. defeated Alma on this question, but lost to Michigan Normal later in the spring.⁶⁹ The following year a Triangular League was formed with M.A.C., Michigan Normal, and Alma as the participants. This plan of debating was, according to Dr. Nichols, evolved in 1906 by Chicago, Northwestern, and Michigan universities.⁷⁰ It required each college to put two teams into competition, one on each side of the question. The debates were held on the same evenings at the different colleges. The first year M.A.C. sent a negative team to Alma; Alma sent a negative team to Michigan Normal; and Michigan Normal sent a negative team to M.A.C. A winner of the Triangular League was announced only if one school won both its affirmative and negative debates.⁷¹ The formation of two teams of the Agricultural College caused considerable debate. The arguments were summed up in an article in the Wolverine.

⁶⁸ Report of the Secretary...1911, pp. 100-101.

⁶⁹ Loc. cit.

⁷⁰ Nichols, op. cit., pp. 592-593.

⁷¹ The Holocad, 3:1, May 11, 1911.

Last year when the second team was formed and the debate with Alma arranged, the question of its advisability was regarded with considerable skepticism. The principal objection which was offered, was of course, that we did not have sufficient material here from which to develop two teams with a caliber capable of running any chance of winning, against such colleges as Alma and Ypsi. The results proved the error of this idea, and this year's work started out with no such handicaps.⁷²

Already evident in this article was the emphasis on winning, an emphasis which was to accompany the growth of debating. In the first Triangular League contest Alma won both of her debates, and M.A.C. won over Michigan Normal.⁷³

Since 1903 the participation of the Societies in the preliminary debates had been rapidly diminishing. More and more of the debaters were non-society members. In the Fall of 1912 only one-third of the societies sent representatives to the planning session of the Debating Club. Dr. Johnson, head of the English Department, was anxious to encourage society debating, and he suggested a separate contest for the inter-society debaters. A question was proposed, and plan was made.⁷⁴ Each interested society was to organize one debating team. This team would meet another society, and the winner would advance to meet the winner of another series. From this elimination contest one team would emerge the winner. Still interest lagged, and it was not until Dr. Johnson offered to donate a loving cup as a rotating trophy if the majority of the societies would participate that the interest was somewhat increased. For the next three years this program of inter-society

⁷² The Wolverine, 1912, p. 133.

⁷³ Report of the Secretary... 1912, p. 90.

⁷⁴ The Holocad, 5:2, November 18, 1912.

debating was carried on.⁷⁵ However, after the first year, the interest declined, and finally in the third year the program merely died when none of the societies furnished a debating team for the competition.

While society debating was dying, inter-collegiate debating, originating in the Debate Club, continued to grow and prosper. Preliminary plans were laid in 1913 for a Triangular League composed of M.A.C., Iowa State College and the University of Minnesota.⁷⁶ The first contest was scheduled to take place in the spring of 1914 with the three affirmative teams remaining at home while the three negative teams traveled to the different member schools.

Within the Debating Club, in preparation for the increased activities a new system of team selection was inaugurated which was to remain in existence through 1937. This new system worked on a basis of tryouts. Each interested member prepared a seven minute constructive speech on the chosen question, and then gave a three minute rebuttal speech to the previous speaker's constructive.⁷⁷ By this method the coach selected what he believed to be the eight best debaters, and used them for the teams. Three members were chosen for the affirmative team and three for the negative team with an alternate on each side. The eight debaters selected by this method in 1913 prepared for the Triangular debate with Alma and Michigan Normal. In outlining the objectives of the club, the president said:

⁷⁵ Ibid., 5:3, November 25, 1912.

⁷⁶ Report of the Secretary...1913, p. 134.

⁷⁷ The Holocad, 5:11, February 3, 1913.

...to place this college in the highest position that any college can obtain in the line of debating. If more active and enthusiastic cooperation of students of this college could be had there is no doubt that the laurels now so strongly striven for by us, would easily be ours.⁷⁸

It is true that at this time the number of participants in the Debating Club had declined somewhat, but still over twenty men tried out for the team in 1913, and in the following years the numbers remained between twenty-five and thirty-five. Excitement was great in the spring of 1913 for the faculty authorized the continuation of the Ypsi-Alma-M.A.C. Triangular Debate, and further granted permission for the establishment of the M.A.C.-Iowa State-University of Minnesota Triangular League for 1914.⁷⁹ Further gold medals were to be presented to each member of the team as a recognition of his efforts. The faculty specified however, that these activities would be under the direct supervision of the English Department. H. P. Henry was hired as debate coach.⁸⁰ In commenting on these recognitions the Record pointed out:

The fact that M.A.C. received challenges for debates with such institutions as Minnesota and Iowa is a very pleasing compliment to our record as a college and as a producer of worthy debate teams. Although heretofore debating has not been officially recognized by the faculty and the debaters have been little honored, it is evident that the knowledge of their work has traveled far and produced some little impression among the larger colleges...A watch word is in order. 'Trim Minnesota and Iowa or bust.'⁸¹

78 Ibid., 5:7, February 24, 1913.

79 Ibid., 5:6, May 26, 1913.

80 The Wolverine, 1914, p. 138.

81 The Holocad, 5:6, May 26, 1913.

The proposed out of state contest aroused considerable interest, and Dr. Johnson in his annual report to the president commented:

...While in the past the success of our debating teams has been fairly good, the great majority of our most promising speakers have failed to work for a place on the teams, and the general student interest in these intellectual contests in the past year has been very small. Other land-grant colleges, the most progressive in the United States, have developed debating to a high degree of excellence. They are using it to interest students in studying carefully important questions of the day and to train them in vigorous practical power to write and to speak. Such men are needed not only in our general national life, but to carry forward the very principles for which the land-grant colleges stand...All of these considerations should help materially to arouse our students to the fact that debating is not a mere departmental matter, but an important activity of the college as a whole. Already many students who showed no interest in this years' debate have said that they will work to win a place on one of our tristate teams.⁸²

The Fall of 1913 brought sixty members to the first meetings of the Debating Club, the tryouts were scheduled, and plans were made for the selection of sixteen men to participate in the two League debates that were being planned. Within the club a new topic was debated each week, and attendance continued strong. For the first time the members of the Short Course class participated in the Debate Club, and a debate was presented by Short Course men on "Resolved: That it is a poor business policy for the general farmer to grow fruit trees."⁸³ Although the Short Course men did not participate in inter-collegiate debating, places on the program were given them within the Debate Club. As big plans were being made for the Tri-State debate the University of Minnesota sent word that she must withdraw from the competition. Although it was

⁸² Report of the Secretary...1913, pp. 92-93.

⁸³ The Holocad, 6:7, February 16, 1914.

too late to continue the Tri-State affair with another school dual debates were held with Iowa State and Purdue University on the questions "Resolved: That the state should establish a schedule of minimum wages for unskilled labor, constitutionally conceded," and "Resolved: That the states should enact laws for the Compulsory insurance of working-men against injury and death in the course of employment, constitutionally conceded." In the debate with Iowa State, M.A.C. lost both debates, but with Purdue the Agricultural College won one and lost one.⁸⁴

In 1915 the Tri-State Triangular League was officially formed with M.A.C., Iowa State College, and Purdue University as the active members. In the first contest M.A.C. won one and lost one of their debates, but the audience was large, and the whole affair was considered a success.⁸⁵ C. B. Mitchell had taken charge of the debating the year before, and proved very popular with the debate squad. In commenting on the year's activity he said: "The growth of interest in this wholesome, thoroughly instructive college activity is one of the most encouraging signs of the times."⁸⁶ The Triangular League with Alma and Michigan Normal was evidently dropped at this time since there is no further mention of its existence from this time forward.

The Tri-State League became the most important debating activity for the next few years. The questions debated from 1915 to 1918 included:

⁸⁴ Report of the Secretary...1915, p. 130.

⁸⁵ The Wolverine, 1915, p. 202.

⁸⁶ Report of the Secretary...1915, p. 129.

Resolved: That the Federal Government should augment the Navy more rapidly than at present.⁸⁷

That there be vested in the Federal Government the exclusive right to manufacture and sell arms and munitions of war.⁸⁸

That the Government should provide by federal enactment for the compulsory arbitration of all labor disputes involving public utilities.⁸⁹

That the Federal Government should take immediate steps to acquire and operate the coal mines as a permanent policy.⁹⁰

In 1915 and 1916 M.A.C. lost all their debates, but in 1917 and 1918 the Agricultural College won the Triangular League.⁹¹ In 1917 a program of exchange debates for Freshmen was inaugurated with Hillsdale, Albion, and Kalamazoo participating.⁹² In 1919 both the Tri-State League and the freshman debate program was cancelled due to the war.⁹³

During this period to further make debating a student activity, the faculty authorized the appointment of a debate manager. This manager was selected by the Debating Club, and he had charge of finance, accommodations, and travel for the team "in the field." Only a senior was eligible for the appointment, but a Junior was appointed as his assistant, so that he might have a year to train before assuming full

87 The Wolverine, 1915, p. 202.

88 Ibid., 1916, p. 204.

89 The Holocad, 9:1, April 19, 1917.

90 The Wolverine, 1918, p. 266.

91 Report of the Secretary...1918, p. 110.

92 The Wolverine, 1917, p. 254.

93 Report of the Secretary...1919, p. 121.

responsibilities.⁹⁴ In 1920 debating activities were reopened on the inter-collegiate level. M.A.C. won all of her debates, and in his report to the president C. B. Mitchell pointed out:

It is a high honor to the men named above to have represented their alma mater in debate. It has been my experience, not only at M.A.C., but in the two other institutions in which I have taught, that students who represent their college in debate will later be found to be among the most able and most influential of its graduates. Many a student has said that in preparing for an inter-collegiate debate he has received training in investigation, in analysis, and in vigorous thinking which has meant more to him than any other regular course which he has taken during his college career. He receives, likewise, the discipline which comes from actual oral presentation of his argument before judges and in the presence of wary and skillful opponents. Such discipline is frequently found to be invaluable as preparation for life.⁹⁵

Mitchell had large plans for the debate program, and in that same year he broadened the activities to include debate with Michigan Normal and Kalamazoo.⁹⁶ There was some discussion in the school paper whether or not additional competition should be engaged.

The Aggie debaters have everything to lose and so it is a question whether or not we should attempt to schedule debates with Albion and Michigan and take a greater chance of losing or not. Every progressive Aggie undoubtedly feels that we are good enough to attempt such tasks and would be heartily in favor of scheduling debates with these larger teams.⁹⁷

However, Mitchell was a diligent worker, and plans were laid for this additional enlargement of the program. In paying a tribute to his work the Holocad said of Coach Mitchell:

⁹⁴ The Holocad, 12:1, November 18, 1919.

⁹⁵ Report of the Secretary...1920, p. 97.

⁹⁶ The Holocad, 12:1, March 9, 1920.

⁹⁷ Lec. cit.

Mr. Mitchell certainly deserves a great deal of credit for his work. He probably is and has been throughout the winter, one of the hardest worked men in the college. Besides meeting each team several times a week in sessions that usually lasted until midnight, he has taken up the rural sociology work which claims the remainder of the time, besides his classes.⁹⁸

Mitchell did not, however, remain for another year at M.A.C. He was replaced by P. R. Brees, and for the first time in four years the debaters lost both of their debates in the Tri-State contest on the question "Resolved: That the United States should adopt the cabinet parliamentary system of government."⁹⁹ Although this was a blow to M.A.C., and the forensic activities were placed on page four of the paper instead of the customary front page, the year brought two new innovations to debating activities. First, M.A.C. was granted a chapter of Pi Kappa Delta, national honorary debate fraternity, and second, M.A.C. participated in their first non-decision inter-collegiate debate, with the Utah Agricultural College.

Pi Kappa Delta was the third forensic honorary to be formed in the United States, and according to Professor Nichols came about in answer to a demand for an honor organization for small colleges. It was organized in 1912 under the direction of John A. Shields of Ottawa University, Edgar A. Vaughn of Kansas State College, and Professor E. R. Nichols, then of Rippon College. The first national convention was held in 1916, and contests were incorporated into the convention programs in 1918.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Ibid., 12:1, March 2, 1920.

⁹⁹ Report of the Secretary...1921, pp. 121-122.

¹⁰⁰ E. R. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 599-602.

M.A.C. participated for the first time in a national convention in 1928.¹⁰¹ Although the charter was granted M.A.C. in 1921-1922, it was 1927 before the college actively participated in the contests of the organization. The author can find no reason to explain this delay on the part of M.A.C.

Early in Winter term of 1921, an announcement was received from the Utah Agricultural College requesting an opportunity to debate M.A.C. while in the Middle West. This debate was to be at no expense to M.A.C. for the Utah College was traveling on an appropriation from their college. M.A.C. readily accepted, and began to prepare a two man team on the subject "Resolved: That the United States should adopt the cabinet Parliamentary system of government."¹⁰² M.A.C. had never participated before in an inter-collegiate debate with only a two man team, and this was not the only new addition to be included. The Utah team also introduced to the college the idea of a non-decision debate with the audience given an opportunity to ask questions of the debaters regarding the subject following the debate. Also, the audience was allowed to designate the individual speaker from which he desired an answer. This type of debating was already in practice at the University of Wisconsin, Illinois, Chicago, Iowa, Minnesota, and Northwestern University.¹⁰³

In commenting on this new type of debating Coach Brees said:

Although their idea is new it is consistent with the highest type of debating. I am thoroughly convinced that the plan is right,

¹⁰¹ Michigan State News (E. Lansing: State College), 20:1, April 10, 1928.

¹⁰² The Holycad, 13:5, April 19, 1921.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 13:1, April 12, 1921.

and if the audience will do their part and make their questions fast and snappy there is no reason why this should not be one of the best debates ever heard here.¹⁰⁴

The debate with the Utah Aggies was evidently a definite success, for the crowd was large, and the Holocad commented:

The student body is practically unanimously pleased with it as evidenced by the splendid attention and response to the call for questions at the end of the debate. Enough questions were asked to keep the speakers busy for two hours answering them.¹⁰⁵

The appearance of the Utah Aggies did more than introduce a new form of debate. It also inspired the M.A.C. debaters to plan on a debating trip to the west. The money for such a tour could not be found in an appropriation, so in the early fall of 1921 the Dramatics Club agreed to share the profits of its fall production with the Debating Club.¹⁰⁶ The new coach Mr. A. Milne found this agreeable, and upon writing to the several colleges involved, found that many of them were willing to pay as much as fifty dollars plus food and accommodations for M.A.C. to come to their school.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, a complete two week tour was arranged for April. In the meantime, the Tri-State affair was to continue, and M.A.C. was host to Colorado State College on their tour of the Middle West.¹⁰⁸ In the debate with Colorado the one man judge was used for the first time on the M.A.C. campus in inter-collegiate competition.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 13:1, April 19, 1921.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 13:1, April 29, 1921.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 14:1, November 18, 1921.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 14:1, February 3, 1922.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 14:1, April 7, 1922.

¹⁰⁹ Loc. cit.

This was done according to Coach Milne because the three men panels so often disagreed with each other, and he felt it better to "have one capable judge, known to be honest and unbiased."¹¹⁰ In this debate M.A.C. lost to Colorado, but with the prospects of a spectacular trip, the spirits of the debaters were not dampened.

Since the trip of 1921 was the first of its kind at Michigan Agricultural College, the author feels that the account of that trip should be quoted extensively.

At 6:30 Wednesday morning a tired, sleepy, hungry quintette of travelers alighted in Lansing from the Chicago train and leaned against a friendly mailbox to wait for a College car. One came along in the course of the usual, and the wayfarers wearily climbed aboard. One of the sailors of the good ship Holocad hailed them but found them totally unable to talk and it was only after they had put in two days and a night of alternate sleeping and eating that he was able to extract an account of their wanderings.

Coach Milne with the negative debate team left Lansing Wednesday morning April 5, on a train made up of two box cars and a coach bound for Kalamazoo. On arriving they were taken to the home of one of the English Professors where they had supper in company with the coach of the opposing team.¹¹¹

After defeating Kalamazoo, the debaters took a train for Illinois. Monmouth College was the next stop for a non-decision forum debate. In a report by the Monmouth College paper:

Both teams were very well developed and well balanced, and the constructive speeches were good. The debate as a whole, while there was no decision as to the winner, was a very successful one, and it is more than probable that the 'open forum - no decision' plan will be adopted more extensively hereafter.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Loc. cit.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 14:1, April 28, 1922.

¹¹² Loc. cit.

Ames, Iowa was the next stop, and according to the report of the team:

The weakest team of the tour was met at Ames, and a remarkable lack of courtesy in the matter of meeting trains, lodging and entertainment was a feature of the visit. The decision is still in the air, but a report is expected soon.¹¹³

While in Ames they were involved in a sand storm and a cyclone. Following this they went sightseeing along the Platte River, and defeated Colorado A. & M. after visiting the Anaconda Copper Mine and Estes National Park, they were defeated by Montana Wesleyan. Although they received no decision at Brookings, South Dakota, they were defeated by Gustavus-Adolphus because "one judge had never heard a debate." Their last debate was a non-decision one at Farr College in North Dakota.¹¹⁴

The next morning they started home via St. Paul and Chicago, arriving tired but triumphant. Every debate where a single expert judge was used was won by the Aggies...The name of M.A.C. has spread through the West once more, and Coach Milne and his men are respected and honored wherever they have been.¹¹⁵

In his annual report to the president, Dr. Johnson praised the efforts of the debating teams highly. He commented:

It would be hard to exaggerate the solid benefit which our boys derived from this trip. To meet, night after night, often after tiresome and tedious travel, strong, spirited, and well-coached opponents and to discuss with each other and with their coach new phases of the debate question and of the tactics of presentation brought out in hotly contested debate -- these are matters of great moment in the making of a debater and in the moulding of character as well. Of the debates in which a decision was rendered our team won twice as many debates as it lost...Our boys acquitted themselves as debaters and as men. They won gallantly and lost gallantly.

113 Loc. cit.

114 Loc. cit.

115 Loc. cit.

They left on the minds of those who heard them a most favorable impression of our forensic activities, our debaters, and the institution which sent them forth.¹¹⁶

Further Dr. Johnson pointed out with pleasure the financial support that the Board of Agriculture had given to forensic activities. Instead of dividing the blanket tax as the English Department had requested, the Board Decided to give an annual grant of funds to the English Department for Forensic activities.¹¹⁷ This grant was placed in charge of the debate coach who used it as he saw fit. He could draw checks on it as he desired, and the Board only required an accounting at the end of the year. The appropriation was quite generous, and in 1933, after a successful year of debating, a thousand dollars was still left in the fund.¹¹⁸ With that a Forensic Loan Fund was established which is still in existence today.¹¹⁹

The school year 1922-1923 brought a women's debating squad to the campus of the Agricultural College. For years, women had been attending the meetings of the Debate Club, and they had attempted debate in the declining days of the Literary Societies, but now Mr. Milne organized the women for inter-collegiate forensic work.¹²⁰ In the spring they engaged in two debates with Wester Michigan College, winning one and losing one.¹²¹ Also, M.A.C. had an additional honor awarded them for the

¹¹⁶ Report of the Secretary...1922, pp. 128-129.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 129.

¹¹⁸ Personal Interview with Professor Joseph D. Menchhofer.

¹¹⁹ Loc. cit.

¹²⁰ The Wolverine, 1923, p. 330.

¹²¹ Loc. cit.

second time in 1923. H.W. Wilson publishing company again chose M.A.C. to appear in their Debater's Annual, which compiled representative debates from schools throughout the country.¹²² In addition to this the Agricultural College won the Tri-State contest, and took an extensive tour through Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Maine the M.A.C. team participated in a "twenty-four hour" debate, on the subject "Resolved: That invasion of the Ruhr is justifiable." Neither team knew what the question was to be until twenty-four hours before the debate. "The college library was kept open all night and the men labored and dug for material most of the twenty-four hours."¹²³

The following year's activities were indeed as varied and extensive as the year before. D. E. Eckerman was hired as debate coach, and the men made a trip to the West Coast debating teams in California and Washington. On this trip they debated the advisability of the United States joining the World Court. Going to the Coast they lost all of their debates, but coming back the teams reorganized their cases and won all of the debates.¹²⁴

In 1925-1926 a portion of the student activity fee was set aside to finance the debating activities, and the money was handled in the same manner as previously.¹²⁵ More and more the debaters were encouraged

¹²² The Holocad, 15:1, February 27, 1923. Note: The first appearance was in 1922, but it was given very little publicity.

¹²³ Ibid., 15:1, May 1, 1923.

¹²⁴ Report of the Secretary...1924, p. 125.

¹²⁵ The Holocad, 18:1, September 18, 1925.

to employ the extempore style of speaking in their delivery. To further this end the coach encourage the teams to use the open forum parliamentary type of debate. In this type of debate a member of the M.A.C. team was teamed with a debater from another school, and they had only a short time to organize material and prepare a line of strategy. Following the debate, the teams were questioned by the audience. The lack of time in preparation and the audience questioning gave ample practice in extempore delivery.¹²⁶

In 1925 the first International Debate for M.S.C. was scheduled. Cambridge University sent a team to tour the mid-west, and they were heartily welcomed at the Agricultural College. The debate was held in Lansing at the Central Methodist Temple House, and the auditorium was filled to capacity. The Englishmen requested fifteen-minutes for constructive speeches with one rebuttal on each side for seven minutes. The question was "Resolved: That Democracy is a failure."¹²⁷ Dr. Edwin W. Bishop was chairman and in introducing the speakers from England he said:

Three hundred years ago England quarreled with America and received a warm welcome. One hundred and fifty years ago in the Revolutionary War, England quarreled again and again received a warm welcome. Now one hundred and fifty years more have passed and America's welcome tonight is just as warm and hearty as it always was.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Report of the Secretary...1925, pp. 111-112.

¹²⁷ The Holocad, 18:1, November 13, 1925.

¹²⁸ Loc. cit.

The Englishmen were very amusing, and the audience seemed to enjoy their informal style of delivery. Although they had requested an audience decision, the chairman dismissed the crowd without polling them.¹²⁹

The debate activities continued for the next few years under the direction of H.W. Blake and W.H. Wise. Wise was replaced by J. D. Menchhofer in 1928. The men and women had separate coaches, and their programs were arranged separately. In 1927 M.S.C. participated in its first inter-collegiate debating tournament at the Pi Kappa Delta Provincial Tournament held in East Lansing.¹³⁰ After that the college continued to participate in both the Provincial and National tournaments, but these were the only debate tournaments in which the school was engaged. Other activities included a continuation of the Tri-State debates, with Marquette replacing Iowa State; an annual tour for the men and the women; and debates with schools within the state of Michigan, and with visiting colleges from other parts of the country.¹³¹ The questions debated for the years 1926 to 1931 included:

Resolved: That the Volstead Act should be amended to permit the sale of light wine and beer.¹³²

That the United States Government should cease to protect with armed forces private investments in foreign countries.¹³³

¹²⁹ Loc. cit.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 19:1, April 15, 1927.

¹³¹ The Wolverine, 1926, p. 354.

¹³² Michigan State News, 19:1, November 19, 1926.

¹³³ Ibid., 20:1, November 4, 1927.

That the United States should cease to intervene by armed force in the government of Latin American nations.¹³⁴

That the policy of public ownership and development of hydro-electric power resources is beneficial to the people of the United States.¹³⁵

That Congress enact legislation providing for centralized control of industry.¹³⁶

That the property tax in Michigan for state and local revenues be substantially replaced by other forms of revenue.¹³⁷

During this period Professor Menchhofer scheduled many of the debates before farm organizations while Professor Blake scheduled the women to debate before high schools and women's clubs. In outlining his policy with regard to varsity debate Professor Menchhofer said:

The aim of Varsity Debate is to make debating an educational activity rather than a matter of winning decisions and to learn the principles of argumentation in order to present a subject being discussed before the general public.¹³⁸

In the early 1930's all of the debates with the exception of those held at Pi Kappa Delta meetings were non-decision. However, when the first Michigan Debate League Tournament was held Michigan State did send representatives.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ Ibid., 20:1, January 17, 1928

¹³⁵ The Wolverine, 1929, p. 338.

¹³⁶ Michigan State News, 24:1, November 10, 1931.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 23:1, October 7, 1930.

¹³⁸ The Wolverine, 1932, pp. 212-213.

¹³⁹ Michigan State News, 24:1, November 10, 1931.

In 1931 Ormand J. Drake came to State as women's debate coach, and soon organized the Extempore Speaking contest, which the reader will remember was discussed as an outgrowth of oratory.¹⁴⁰ In 1934 the "shift of opinion" ballot made its appearance at Michigan State. With the use of this ballot the audience was given an opportunity to express its opinion before the debate started, by indicating whether it believed in the affirmative or negative of the proposition, or whether they were undecided. Then after the argument had been concluded, the people were asked to indicate whether they had changed their respective minds any.¹⁴¹ In commenting on the effectiveness of this type of judging, Professor Menchhofer said:

In most cases, there was decided shift in one direction or the other, indicating either that the people had been greatly influenced or that they had forgotten how they had voted in the first place,¹⁴² or that they liked the looks of one team better than the other.¹⁴³

In 1937 the activities of the debating squad were numerous. They included a trip to the Provincial or National Pi Kappa Delta Conventions; debates before various civic and agricultural groups, both with schools from Michigan and other states; participation in the Michigan Debate League; and radio debates every Monday afternoon over WKAR.¹⁴³ Tryouts were still held for positions on the team, and the respective coaches

¹⁴⁰ See Chapter IV, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴¹ The Wolverine, 1934, p. 192.

¹⁴² Loc. cit.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 1935, pp. 114-116.

selected as many squad members as he felt were needed.¹⁴⁴ Toward the end of 1937 discussion was beginning to enter the debate picture. Often before audiences a ten minute speech would be given on each side of a question, and then the audience would ask questions. Sometimes only one side of a question was presented or an impartial speech, and the audience was asked to question the group.¹⁴⁵ These early beginnings in discussion were to grow in later years to make discussion another of the major forensic activities.

Debate at Michigan State College started but a year later than oratory, and for many years the two developed side by side. For a time, 1887 to 1901, oratory overshadowed debate, but by 1902 debate had replaced oratory as the major forensic activity of the college. Begun as a highly competitive activity where winning was the end result, debate experienced a reversal in philosophy in the 1930's with little emphasis on winning. Similarly, it passed through a period of memorized and written speeches and emerged in the 1920's with an extempore type of delivery. In 1937 there was no doubt about the position of curricular and extra-curricular debate. It was the major forensic activity at Michigan State College.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 1937, pp. 90-93.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Although in 1857 the primary purpose of the newly formed Michigan Agricultural College was to teach agricultural science, from the first year forensics were a part of both the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the college. Forensics from 1857-1937 were primarily concentrated in two activities. These were debate and oratory. Both served as the major activities of the Literary Societies and the extra-curricular work of the English Department. The first debating at the college was found in the programs of the Literary Society in 1858, and it became a curricular activity in 1869 when included on the program of the Junior Exhibition. Oratory originated on the campus through the first curriculum of 1857, and the Literary Societies adopted it as an activity in 1876.

Debate remained one of the featured activities of the Literary Societies until 1901 when the Debating Club was organized and under faculty supervision conducted the extra-curricular debates of the college. From the turn of the century debate grew in size and popularity on the campus. The activities increased from inter-society debates to an inter-collegiate debate with Michigan Normal in 1902. The next step was the formation of a Tri-State Debating League in 1915. Extensive debating trips to the East and West became an annual part of the debating program in 1922.

From 1901 to 1930 the emphasis in debate was on winning, but in 1930 a shift of emphasis pointed the activity more in the direction of educating audiences on a particular topic, with a non-decision debate. However, the college continued to participate in the decision debate. contests sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta, honorary national debate fraternity, and the Michigan Debate League.

Although oratory originated in the curriculum, the Literary Societies were quick to incorporate it into their respective programs. It was through the efforts of the societies that the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association was formed to sponsor local inter-society oratory in 1887. Also, the societies urged the formation of the Michigan Oratorical League which began to function in 1898. With the decline of interest on the part of the societies from 1906 to 1912 the activities once more returned to the faculty for supervision. However, the faculty was not able to maintain the lagging interest. This fact coupled with a change of philosophy by the English Department was responsible for an abandonment of the oratorical contest for eleven years beginning in 1913. When oratory returned to the campus, it returned as a secondary activity to debate, and shared its place with extempore speaking. But along with debate, oratory continued to flourish through 1937.

As the extra-curricular activities developed so did a speech curriculum. The interest in oratory and debate on the part of the student body and the faculty necessitated the development and enlargement of a speech program within the curriculum. This began with an offering of only half credit in rhetoric in 1857 and grew by 1937 to a full Speech Department offering forty-one courses.

The forensic activities at Michigan Agricultural College grew with the college. At first they provided the students with the only entertainment available. Later the reputation of the college was spread through the activities of its debaters and orators, throughout the state and from coast to coast, and the student's competitive urge was satisfied in ways other than athletics. Placing high in the winner's bracket was very important to the students in forensics. Students wanted to win more debates and oratorical contests, and this desire coupled with faculty cooperation helped to develop a speech curriculum.

Thus, by 1937 Michigan State College had a full-fledged and an extensive extra-curricular program in Forensics.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Editorial appearing in the College Speculum, Vol. II, No. 3 (April 2, 1883), pp. 6-7.

That natural power of speech which enables one to freely and distinctly utter his thoughts is surely a beneficent gift. But, to the majority, this is an acquirement rather than an inheritance. Many persons are capable of thinking profoundly and of reasoning logically, yet lack the power of presenting those ideas in an intelligible manner. Look through this college and see if it is not true of its students. Are they as proficient public speakers as they ought to be or might reasonably expect to be with an average amount of training? The especial provence of this college is to teach the scientific studies and their applications, yet in addition to this it proposes to teach the student those branches which cultivate his taste and enable him to give expression to his knowledge and opinions. The present course in English composition is a good one. The required critical essays give an insight to the peculiarities of the different authors besides making one acquainted with English literature, but that part of the rhetorical work which is intended to aid in giving expression to thoughts is not thorough enough. The freshman's declamations do not receive the proper amount of preparation, which is due to lack of interest, in turn due to his not knowing the importance of this kind of instruction. This need of better training is seen daily in the classroom where the student either follows the text or blunders in the recitation. It would not be so with an increased vocabulary of words so that their language might

be energetic, for one may write ever so well, yet, if in the delivery, his time is given to position and gesture he will fail in expression. During the first year a large amount of this time set aside for rhetorical should be given to declamation with the idea in view of strengthening the memory and in giving them this graceful appearance while speaking.

The argument that farmers do not require this kind of education is as false on the face of it as it is contemptible to advance it. It is important that the coming farmer should be educated and that, too, over a large range of topics, but it is equally important that he should be able to impart those principles as effectually as possible. No other class of people are in such want of it, and to meet this almost universal need The Speculum proposes that a thorough course of elocution be added to the college curriculum.

APPENDIX B

Constitution of the Michigan Oratorical League published in the Michigan Agricultural College Record, Vol. V, No. 30, April 10, 1900, pp. 2-3.

Article I Name

- Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Michigan Oratorical League. The membership shall consist of the following colleges: Albion College, Hillsdale College, Hope College, Michigan Normal College, Kalamazoo College, Michigan Agricultural College, and Olivet College. Other colleges may be admitted by two thirds vote cast at any annual convention.

Article II Object

- Section 1. The object of this league shall be to elevate the standard of oratory by holding annual contests.
- Section 2. Only bona fide students of the several colleges carrying at least two-thirds of the regular amount of work at the time of the league contest and not having received any academic degree, shall be admitted as competitors.
- Section 3. The annual contests of the league shall be held the first Friday of May of each year, at the colleges in the following order: Albion, Hillsdale, Hope, Kalamazoo, Agricultural College, Normal, Olivet.
- Section 4. Orators shall appear on the program in rotation; the orator representing the institution where the contest is held appearing first.

Article III Officers

- Section 1. The officers of this league shall consist of a president, secretary, treasurer, and a vice president from each college not represented by another officer. These officers shall constitute the executive committee of the league. The offices of this league shall be held by rotation, and the treasurer shall be chosen from the college where the league contest shall be held.

Article IV Duties of Officers

- Section 1. It shall be the duty of the president to preside at all meetings and he shall call a special session at the written request of not less than four colleges, giving at least thirty days notice of such meetings to each college. It shall further be his duty, three months before the annual contest, to nominate judges for said contest and to submit their names to each college of the league.

- Section 2. The secretary shall perform the duties usual to that office and such other duties as the league shall require.
- Section 3. The treasurer shall keep the accounts of the league, pay all bills audited and allowed by the executive committee, and dispose of all funds subject to the order of the league. He shall be required to deposit with the president a bond of three hundred (300) dollars.
- Section 4. The duties of the executive committee shall be as follows:
 (1) To audit the accounts of the treasurer.
 (2) To make all necessary arrangements for the contests, and transact other business not herein provided for.
- Section 5. The secretary of the league, at least three weeks before the contest shall forward a copy of each oration to each of the judges on thought and composition. These judges shall read and grade such orations and shall send their respective markings, sealed to the secretary of the league who shall preserve them thus sealed until the conclusion of the contest. But neither the author of any oration nor the institution represented shall be known to the judge.

Article V Judges

- Section 1. No resident of the city in which any college is located, no relative of any contestant, no alumnus of any college participating, no person who holds or has held any official connection with any of the contesting colleges, shall sit as judge in a contest.
- Section 2. Any judge shall be removed upon the protest of any college within fifteen days after the list of nominations is received. Such protest shall be made in writing.
- Section 3. The judges selected shall be six, three of whom shall judge the orations on thought and composition; the other judges shall attend the contest and judge on delivery. One alternate shall be selected, who shall act as judge provided any regular judge fails to appear. The grades shall be made without consultation on the scale of 100.
- Section 4. At the close of the contest the president and secretary shall take the grades of all the judges for each contestant. The orations shall be ranked 1, 2, 3, etc., the orator having the highest grade shall be ranked one, the orator with next highest two, etc. If, however, any oration shall receive a majority of first ranks, it shall be declared first, irrespective of its total rank, and the remaining orations shall be ranked second, third, etc., according to their grand totals, as heretofore provided for.

Article VI Contestants and Orations

- Section 1. In the contests of this league no oration shall contain more than 1800 words, and it shall be the duty of the secretary

to construe this article strictly and to return any oration exceeding the above limit to the secretary of the college from which such oration was sent.

Section 2. Any outline, synopsis, or explanation attached to an oration shall be considered and counted as a part thereof.

Section 3. The several contestants shall send twenty-five printed copies of their oration to the secretary so that they shall reach him at least four weeks before the contest. One copy shall be kept on file by the secretary; one copy shall be sent to each of the judges on thought and composition as directed in Article IV, Section 5, of this constitution. The remaining copies shall at the same time be distributed by the secretary of the league so that each college of the league may receive a copy of all the league orations.

Section 4. The orations for the league shall be printed by the colleges of which their authors are representatives, according to the following uniform standards: They shall be set in brevier type, the body of each page being four (4) inches wide and six inches long, with a margin of 1 1/2 inches in width. Fifteen copies shall contain the name and college of the author, and ten copies shall appear without the name or college of the author.

Section 5. Twenty-four (24) pound folio writing paper shall be used in printing the orations.

Article VII The Annual Convention

Section 1. The annual convention shall meet at 1:00 in the afternoon of the day on which the contest is held, and shall meet from time to time till its business shall be completed.

Section 2. Each college of the league shall be entitled to one vote in the annual convention.

Section 3. No delegate shall be entitled to a seat in the convention whose credentials shall not have been signed by the president of his college.

Article VIII

Section 1. Any college in this league failing to take part in any annual contest without furnishing a satisfactory excuse shall be excluded from the league.

Article IX

Section 1. The names of the orators engaged in the contest and copies of their oration, also the names and markings of the judges shall be kept on record by the secretary.

Article X Expenses

- Section 1. The league shall pay all necessary expenses connected with the contest, and all necessary expenses of judges, the president and secretary, and the vice-president when acting as president.
- Section 2. Such an admittance fee to the Oratorical contest shall be charged as the treasurer of the league shall deem proper.
- Section 3. As a testimonial of success in contests of this league there shall be awarded to the person receiving first honors a gold medal of such value as the executive committee shall determine.
- Section 4. The college where the contest is held shall be responsible for twenty-five per cent of any net loss in conducting the contest, and shall be allowed twenty-five per cent of the net profits resulting from the contest. If there are not enough funds in the treasury of the association to pay the remaining seventy-five per cent of the loss above mentioned, the other colleges shall be assessed equally a sum sufficient to meet the deficit.
- Section 5. All arrangements for contests of the league shall be left to the college where the contest is held.

Article XI

- Section 1. This constitution may be amended at any annual meeting of the league by a two-thirds vote.
- Section 2. The parliamentary authority shall be Robert's Rules of Order.
- Section 3. This constitution shall go into effect as soon as it shall have been ratified by five of the colleges named.

By-Laws

- Article 1. The executive committee shall have power to levy a tax upon each college to meet a temporary deficit; such tax shall not exceed ten (10) dollars.
- Article 2. The archives for the permanent preservation of the constitution, by-laws, books, papers, etc. of the Michigan Oratorical League shall be at Michigan Agricultural College and under the supervision of the professor of English at the Michigan Agricultural College.

APPENDIX C

Oration delivered by George D. White to the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association in 1901. Also, this oration won third place at the Michigan Oratorical League's Contest in the spring of that same year.

"PAUL"

The morn of the first century dawned on a critical period in the world's history. The Greek had taught man to think and to reason, and his mission fulfilled, had disappeared from the scene of action. The Roman had become master of the known world. From Rome emanated all law. The government was an absolute despotism. Labor was servile and degraded. Society was given over to superstition, licentiousness, and self-indulgence. Without any public education, pure religion, or union of families; corrupted by the impurity of the stage; and hardened by the cruelties of the arena; the world presented a picture unparalleled for moral degradation and abject misery. This was the condition of that ancient world; the period in history that witnessed the birth of one of the world's distinguished sons, Paul of Tarsus.

The man to whom we would look as a fit instrument to redeem society from its fallen condition, and to lead it from that darkness which shades and mystifies the visions of men, would be one of Herculean mould. But Saul was mean in stature; a Jew, the object of scorn to the Gentiles; a Christian Jew, detested by the Jews themselves.

Why was this seemingly insignificant man presented to the people of that age? Because, they needed the lesson, that not by bodily force

nor by human law, could man be raised to a higher plane of living, but only through a loving obedience of the laws of Him who rules the destinies of men. Already, the world had for its model of human character the founder of christianity, Christ, the Nazarine. Christ, however, was not as other men are. He was, from the beginning, perfect. It was, therefore, left for christianity to show what it could make of imperfect humanity. This was the mission of Saul. But the Nazarine left as his representatives, the original apostles, and they were examples of imperfect human nature. Were it not for the great christian movement, begun by the Master, these unlettered fishermen would have lived almost unknown and died in the obscurity of their homes in Galilee. But, the name of Saul of Tarsus would have lived on in some character, had christianity never come into existence. In christianity, he found the opportunity of showing to the world his strength of character, power of reason, and intensity of action in all their beauty and true value as forces acting on the lives of men.

Saul of Tarsus, God's great missionary, a man who devoted his whole life to the pursuit of truth, if for a time erroneous convictions plunged him into sin, how grandly, by what a life of noble heroism and self-sacrifice did he atone for that sin.

On the way to Damascus, Saul, the hater and persecutor of christianity, the destroyer of christian homes, is suddenly transformed into Paul, the apostle of God. So Saul enters Damascus, but not as the proud Pharisee riding through its streets with the pomp of an inquisitor. Led by the hand, a weary, helpless traveller; blind, bewildered, with waning strength, the purpose and plan of his life shattered by one blow, he is

guided to the house of Judas. Here he receives his sight; his mission is announced; he goes forth again to work for the cause of his Maker, but goes with a changed purpose. Recognizing in the cross of the Nazarine, the symbol of redemption for Gentile as well as for Jew, he lights the beacon fires of the gospel throughout the known world, and, finally planting that redeeming cross deep in European soil, paves the way for the westward march of christian civilization.

Prior to Paul's time, thought and religion had but slight connection. To the Hebrew, life was a theatre of action. To reason he attached little importance. The Greek cared little for righteousness in life; thought and reason were his clothing. Paul came and translated new life into terms of Greek thought. He taught men to harmonize their life with their thinking.

Paul's epistles, written when in the midst of outward activities, are among the mighty intellectual influences of the world. In his writings, Paul rises to a greater height than any other evangelist. Some may have approached him in certain respects: Livingston in his attempt to conquer the heathen world; St. Bernard in his impressive preaching; Whitefield in his fervent love for human souls; but, few of these have added a single new idea to the world's supply of knowledge. Paul not only surpassed them in their own special lines, but gave to mankind, a new world of thought. From Paul's letters have been chosen the watchwords of progress in nearly every reform christianity has experienced. It was Paul's words, spoken by the mighty voice of Luther, that awoke Europe from her slumber of centuries and caused her to pass onward, from generation to generation, the flaming torch of truth. Again, was Paul's

message proclaimed when the Wesleys rekindled the almost extinguished fire of christianity in old England. Later on it was Paul's words used by the prophets, Horace Bushnell, and Henry Ward Beecher, that imbued in the hearts of the American people a desire for a religion free from formalism and empirical rule.

Great in thought, Paul was great in his influence over men; Jew, Greek and Roman, rabbi, magistrate and philosopher. A prisoner on a ship, which was rolled and tossed by the tempestuous sea, Paul wielded such a mighty influence over the crew that he became practically their captain. In prison at Philippi, with doors burst open the keepers stunned; Paul persuaded the prisoners to remain in their cells. Before Agrippa, over him pending the sentence of death, Paul pleaded his cause so effectively that the great king was forced to answer him, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian."

But, great as Paul was, his was not the greatness of the Master; nor should we compare him with the Nazarine. Christ was the fountain of life; Paul the channel which carried the life-giving fluid to the furthestmost portions of the earth. Paul's greatest quality was his untiring activity. Associated with this activity was his burning enthusiasm and intense energy, his conquering spirit and missionary heroism, which urged him forward to the fulfillment of his life's work, victoriously meeting all difficulties, cheerfully bearing all sufferings however hard they bore down on his weakened frame. Did ever a man live as this man? Men there have been, who gave their lives, their all, for freedom's cause, and for the cause of fallen humanity; but they become insignificant, mere drops in the stream of history, when we compare

what they suffered and what they accomplished with the sufferings borne and works achieved by Paul.

Did Paul suffer? Before answering, let us look on him as he journeys over the burning plains and freezing mountain passes of Asia Minor, enduring the drenching rain, the glaring heat, the severe bodily fatigue, the storms of blinding dust. See him stoned at Lystra, dragged out of the city and left by the wayside, bleeding, mangled, all but dead. See him among the Athenians, considered unworthy of persecution, and regarded with cold disdain. See him standing with bare and bending back receiving, five times, that often fatal, "forty stripes save one." Behold him as he visits Jerusalem for the last time, his own people in his home land, and is thrust mangled from her gates.

Did he meet with disappointments? The history of his life affords the answer. Consider his disappointments in his own people, in the instability of the pagans, in the churches he had established. Consider his disappointments in his own spiritual hopes, the establishment of a kingdom of God on earth.

But with all these sufferings, with all these disappointments, there are still the persecutions of his last days in imperial Rome. He had looked eagerly forward to the day of his admittance to Rome, there to remove the veil, which had for centuries shrouded her in hellish night. He enters Rome, and, by the same road, along which scores of Roman generals had passed in triumph to its capital, seated on chariots of victory, and greeted by the plaudits of a rejoicing people. But no chariot of victory carries Paul; he treads the hardened road with sore and bleeding feet. No plaudits greet him; a few humble friends form all his escort.

With body weak and worn, locks of silver gray, and face furrowed with lines of care and age, he is led to the prison; there to lie for two long, dreary years. He is tried and acquitted but the end is not yet! Again is Paul seized and cast into a gloomy dungeon. There, as the gates are clanged after him, he sits down alone - a doomed man. One by one his friends desert him until only the true and faithful Luke remains. He is brought to trial before the tyrant, Nero, and even Luke forsakes him. No witness testifies in his favor; no counsel pleads his cause; "He treads the wine-press alone."

Paul before Nero! What a contrast! The one, all powerful apparently invincible; and the other the picture of weakness, but a weakness that shook the world! One, an emperor, clothed in purple, sitting in the chair of honor, with power of life and death; the other, a hated, despised, fettered, and ragged Jew! But the end! The all powerful Nero is forced to fly from his palace to save his miserable life; his last hope gone, a slave assists him to thrust a dagger in his won throat. Paul is condemned and led through the city gates to execution. But down through the centuries, for all time, will ring that cry of triumph, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Who that looked on the execution of that poor, outcast Jew would have dreamed that his apparent failure could finally accomplish such grand results? Not even Paul understood his infinite success. No thought entered his mind that, nineteen centuries later, his life would be the inspiration of a Livingston, a Carey, or a Butler. Paul is not dead. He lives today with a life a thousand times more full than that

which throbbed in his breast while on earth. In ten thousand churches every Sabbath, and in a thousand times ten thousand homes every day, his lips still teach the glorious gospel of truth. Wherever there are human souls, searching for the priceless treasures of true manhood and womanhood, or climbing the difficult heights of self-denial; there is welcomed the man whose life was so pure, whose devotion to Christ was so entire, whose pursuit of a single purpose was so unceasing - Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

APPENDIX D

Oration delivered by Miss Clare Dean of the Themian Society to the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association in the spring of 1902, winning second place.

"JOHN HUSS"

In the dark hours before the dawn of day, let us enter the Bohemian chapel of Bethlehem - and keep the long night watch with a righteous soul, that, strong in the consciousness of godliness, is wrestling at the altar in behalf of a fallen people, and against the beliefs and morals, in which he has lived and been educated and which enwrap the world. The red glow of the eastern sun bursts from the grey clouds of early morning and throws its beams over sleeping Europe. Gradually they creep up and break through the rainbow-windows of the chapel, revealing at the altar, the kneeling figure of "A small, pale man of mean attire," in agonizing, but silent prayer. With difficulty the sunbeams make him understand that the world is arousing and that it is time for action. With bowed head and clasped hands, John Huss slowly rises and passes like a ghost down the aisle, out into the world, and we, one by one, with reverent faces, follow.

We found him here, bowed before the problems of the state and church of Bohemia. Being at the head of the theological University of Prague and pastor of a church, how could he destroy the hatred of the Germans for his Bohemian fellow-creatures? How could the corruption of state and church be wiped out?

Independent study of the needs of his flock brought John Huss in contact with the religious writings of Wycliffe, who had spent the last years of his life trying to cleanse the church. At first, ignoring them, then investigating deeper and deeper, he found such truths of pure life that he placed them before his people. In church and out-of-door talks multitudes crowd eagerly about him to hear the new doctrine which cries out against the corruption of the world.

Is this heresy, which must be avenged by fire? Is this the crime of crimes, to urge men to cease looking for signs of Christ's presence and seek him in his enduring word? Is it any wonder that the clergy looked on his teachings with disfavor, that they appealed to Rome to excommunicate him and to put the interdict on all places which should harbor him? Was there not need then for a prayer so long, so absorbing that morning came before its close?

Powerless we watch the clergy carry volume after volume of Wycliffe's books to the public bonfire, they hiss and crack for vengeance. Would not this dampen the fever of John Huss? With a louder cry against injustice and corruption, he leads on in the race, beckoning his adherents to follow. They start, they falter, they halt, they turn back, and he is alone. Alone, against the wrath of Rome; alone, against the fear of his disciples. Again they excommunicate him, and, this time, summon him to the council of Constance, which is being called to allay the trouble of Christendom.

The long-wished-for opportunity has come, to appear before his accusers and prove that their charges of heresy are false, and that he is struggling only to cleanse the church. Here, too, could he not publicly

confess his loyalty to Christ? And was there not a personal imperial guarantee of safety from Emperor Sigismund himself? But for that prophetic mind, which interpreted the burning of Wycliffe's books as a fore warning of the result of his mission, this would have been an hour of triumph. That picture - the terrible, destruction wrought by those leaping, hissing, circling tongues of fire holding for a moment those pages - the secret of his courage, in their firey embrace, then relaxing to seize others, while those already charred fall back to earth divided into ashes and smoke.

Sad with the gloom of a fearful mission to be fulfilled, he with his companions, passed from Prague, leaving its vine-covered walls, its shade, its mourners, for there were not a few who wept.

They neared ancient Constance, whose beauty was reflected in the clear, crystal lake at the foot of the mountain. Suddenly the little band of travelers scattered right and left! A whirr, and mounted messengers sped past. The Emperor's badge fluttered in the breeze behind them. At the gate the crowd constantly increased.

Oh, it was grand! This the first universal council, of the Latinized world seemed not like a Christian council, but a European Congress. People from all classes and all stations in life constantly arrived, bringing with them all the pomp and brilliancy they could gather together.

But was it alone the glitter and show that attracted? No. Among the earliest to arrive was a small band of men, dusty and weary from a long journey on foot. They picked their way among the trains and spectators, jostling no one and indifferent to the scenes about them. The

hushed whispers of the crowd told us that the man in the lead was the heretic, who was causing the disturbance in Bohemia.

No sooner had he come within the pope's jurisdiction, than the imperial authority was disregarded and John Huss was cast into prison. After a few words of wrath that his commands had been disregarded, and his promise broken, the Emperor was persuaded that Huss should remain a prisoner. Chained hand and foot, he remained for one long year, pining in the foul air of a dungeon. What hope remained? Only the council. Guards led the pale staggering man from his cell to the Cathedral. At the portico they were commanded to halt until the opening mass was said. The ponderous doors were swung wide open, a flood of sunlight poured from the windows and dome, disclosing a sight so grand, so sublime that they bowed themselves in accordance with the scene. Like the sigh of the wind through barren trees, like one great swath of golden grain before the reaper's sickle, that vast assemblage fell upon their knees. Then all was silent. From the high altar, far away, amidst a golden halo of reflected light, rose the murmuring chant, a prayer for the Christian church, for the Empire and the council. Would not such an assembly be just?

At its close the finger of scorn was pointed at the kneeling heretic. In his fervent prayer he had not heard the assembly rise. With one wild cry that majestic throng turned into a roaring, seething mob. They dragged him, in his chains, before the altar. As the upraised hand of the Emperor commanded silence, the crowd fell back. The arch bishop read the charges of heresy, as shown from the prisoner's writings. Should he recant, denounce Wycliffe, and preach no more, he might return to his

home; but should he continue in his obstinacy, the council was bound by a sacred duty to the church to punish him by fire. Calmly and humbly came the answer - "Every statement which can be proved false by citations from the scriptures, I will joyfully recant." At this there rose such a clamor from the mob that nothing could calm them. At each attempt to deny the false charges and to explain his doctrine, the shouts rose louder and louder. At last the mob thrust him out as they had dragged him in, and threw him again into the dungeon, bolting the doors behind him.

Another trial was given him. Again the charges were read. Fired with wrath, Emperor Sigismund advanced, and, in an agitated voice, said - "Whoever will be so obstinate in his malice is not worthy of safe-conduct, and any single charge, even, which you have not denied, is sufficient cause for a sentence of death." A thousand fold harder to bear was the verdict coming from the one in whom he had placed his earthly trust.

A partial eclipse of the sun foreboded the results of the close of the day. In the full dress of a priest, with the sacrament cup in his hand, they took him to the high altar.

Would John Huss recant or must he die for his convictions? Could not the prayers of the Bohemians return their countryman? Would not the prisoner's loyalty to his Master in such temptations save him? Too late. The church had taught the world that the mortal crime of heresy must be avenged by fire.

"Kneel and receive sentence. On this day, June seventh, fourteen hundred fifteen, John Huss will be burned at the stake."

The cup is snatched from his hand. "Accursed Judas. We take away this cup in which the blood of Christ is offered for the redemption of souls."

"I trust I shall drink it this day in the kingdom of Heaven."

With a curse on each the priestly garments were torn from his body. Was that a blush on the Emperor's averted face, when he delivered the doomed heretic to the executioners?

Farewell to the grand old Cathedral within whose walls justice was thought to be done to all Christendom. How the little bridges trembled beneath our weight! Out into a meadow we passed. Many hands laid the platform, drove the stake and brought the wood which an old woman piled about the prisoner. All is ready. Once, only once, with swimming eyes a priest urged him to recant. "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me. Into thy hands I commend my spirit. I die for thy gospel. Willingly I sign my testimony with my blood." And the multitude cried - "What has the saint done that he should come to this?"

The executioner applied the torch from below. The firey smoke crept upward. Oh!, let us take one more look into his face before it is too late. Let us behold how a martyr can die.

"With looks commercing with the skies
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes
There, held in holy passion still
Forget thyself to marble, till
With sad, leaden, downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast."

One dream - his childhood home among the grand old border mountains. Mother, Father, the youthful thoughts of a useful life the lonely Bohemian flock; and now one short prayer - "Father, forgive them. Lord Jesus, have mercy. Lord Jesus, have --." Oh! look no more!

Is it a blast from the mountain that chills our very bones, and seems to freeze our blood? Oh, be quick! Gather up those ashes! Hurl them into the Lake, and away!

Where a more faithful son of God, where a nobler soul, where a truer martyr, where a more convincing sign of Christ's presence in his enduring word? But for him who would have carried the torch of light, which kindled the flame of love and justice, from Wycliffe to Luther?

APPENDIX E

Oration delivered by Miss Bessie Berrics to the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association in the spring of 1904, winning third place.

"Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms"

For hundred of years, yes, as long as men have existed, they have entertained some ideas of religion; and just so long have these varying conceptions of religion set enmity between man and man, between tribe and tribe, between nation and nation. At times so great has become the divergence of opinion and so positive the confidence of each antagonist in his own infallibility, that, as a result the most atrocious crimes of which men have ever been guilty have been committed, and committed in the name of religion.

But there have been other times when it seemed possible by some conciliation to avert the fierce conflicts with their reckless bloodshed. At such times the ablest men of the country have come together to decide what might be done to right the wrongs and to satisfy the people. Such were the conditions that existed throughout Rome and Germany in 1520 and 1521.

The many abuses of the church had grown so general and so oppressive that they were fast becoming unbearable. There had been put into the hands of certain officials at this time the authority to sell indulgences, by the power of which men believed themselves to be absolved from their sins, provided they were sufficiently repentant and forsook their evil ways. The true meaning and power of the indulgences were little understood

by the lower classes, who could not even read them, but they soon were led to believe that the mysterious paper removed the terrors of Hell, as a punishment for foul deeds past or prospective, just so soon as their money clinked in the greasy wallet of the pardoner fresh from Rome. In the time of a moral decline, however, the use of this money for private interests became a great temptation.

This, however, was only one of the many forms of abuse so prevalent at the time, and the people were becoming aroused to the fact that something could and must be done. They were slowly becoming aware that their money, obtained by the severest struggle and most painful toil, was serving merely to furnish luxury and ease for those in whom they had placed the utmost confidence. What could they do—a people untaught in the wiles and crafts of deception, ignorant of those arts and devices so cunningly and proficiently practiced by the priesthood? Whence would come a champion who would espouse their cause, a leader who would arouse their energy and direct their efforts? Could they look to those in authority to right their wrongs, to bring to justice those who had so misused the trust placed in them? Alas! no. These were the very men who strove by wrong doing. Could they then rely upon their own strength and wisdom to bring them safely through?

At last a solution presented itself. Out from their own ranks there arose a young man, up to this time little known and little appreciated, a pious, consecrated man, interested alone in his tireless efforts to better the condition of his people; a man of the strongest moral convictions, to take his stand firmly and to publicly denounce the immorality

which he saw only too clearly; a man simple in his habits of life, gentle in manner, but of such indomitable will power and unconquerable determination that the Pope felt his power and trembled before it. Such was the man, Martin Luther.

He alone seemed to realize the great need of someone to take the lead and challenge the misuse of papal authority. He saw perfectly where the stand must be taken and that it must be taken at once. Force he would not use, but one weapon Martin Luther possessed against which even the Pope was powerless. His mighty pen portrayed the existing conditions so powerfully yet so simply that the most ignorant could not but understand and feel the compelling force of what he said.

Soon the Pope was aroused and he resolved that Luther should go no further, and that as a warning to others, he should be punished for what he had done. But by this time Luther's ninety-five theses had been read everywhere throughout the country. The excitement was becoming intense. Never before in the history of man had anyone dared to arise and assert his convictions as contrary to the edicts of the Pope. This was exactly what Martin Luther had done, he had publicly declared the whole system of indulgences, of which the Pope was head, to be in no particular in harmony with the Gospel of Christ. Could the Pope sit calmly by and allow this common peasant to thus defy his authority! No, he would humble him to the very dust and show him in whom authority was vested.

Luther was therefore summoned to appear before the Diet of Worms. He was promised that he should be safely conducted to the city, and in spite of advice and entreaty from his friends he fearlessly set out on

his journey. Never was prince or king more royally received by the people than was this humble peasant. The streets were crowded with eager faces waiting to catch but a glimpse of the man as he passed through the town. Worn and exhausted after his long journey, he at last appeared before the Diet. Every eye was fixed upon him as he entered the room. Fearless he certainly was, and positive that he was in the right, but his eye instinctively turned in search of some sympathetic face. The demand that he "consent to retract certain of his doctrines" was put before him. Conscious that was on trial before men whose lightest word was law, realizing what punishment awaited him should he refuse to comply with the demand, and remembering the family that he had left at home, whose every thought was a prayer for his safe return, he curbed his impetuous spirit, and with cautious deliberation consonant with the momentous crisis he requested twenty-four hours for further consideration.

On the following day Luther went again before the Diet. Slowly and with a calmness born of perfect assurance, assurance that he was guided by divine power, he walked alone down the aisle, through the assembled throng. The silence was deathlike, men quivering with expectation sat breathlessly awaiting the reply which would mean to them a happier and truer condition for the future, or, if he failed to stand firm to his conviction, a condition more miserable than they had yet known because more hopeless. Again the question was propounded "Would he consent to retract certain of the doctrines which he had set forth?" Thoughtfully and carefully Luther framed his answer, acknowledging that perhaps his words had been harsh in those writings wherein he had attacked the papacy, but maintaining that when that body openly violated the

teachings of the Gospel and misrepresented its doctrines to the people he must protest against it though he defy both Pope and King. "If the Scriptures," he said, "convict me not it is not in the power of Pope or councils to do so. I have no guide but the Bible, the Word of God, I cannot and will not retract because that would oppose my conscience. Such is my profession, expect no other." The trial was over and Luther had remained invincible, unconquerable. He no longer stood alone; the throbbing heart of all Germany was ready and anxious to support him.

What was to be the effect on Germany, on the world? There had been a time when men were ruled entirely by the power of the sword, they knew of no other way whereby they might be ruled, or government maintained. The world of books was closed to them; the papacy knew well what it would mean should the masses of the German people learn to read and understand even the writings of that time. But at last there had come one man brave enough to defy the papacy and by his own writings show the people that there was something better in store for them if they would but take it. He had succeeded in arousing, and at last in thoroughly wakening them, and now in the first part of the sixteenth century, on the dark horizon gleamed one star of hope, the consciousness of ignorance. Bitterly did the papacy oppose the steady course of that star as it slowly but surely rose and shed its radiance over the world. With fierce tenacity it clung to its power and authority, and wildly hurled its anathemas vainly trying to stop the oncoming tide of awakening civilizations. Meanwhile the printing press had been introduced and men read what they chose, thought for themselves, formed new opinions and determined for themselves, what was right or wrong. A

worldwide reformation had been set in motion; men everywhere grasped eagerly for truth and whatever appeared as a means to the one great end of higher and more intelligent living, of broader and truer civilization. As well try to stop the onward rush of a mighty tide as try to check or stay the course of this new thirst for learning, discovery, and research in its mission of enlightenment.

A hopeless consternation was upon the papacy as it viewed its helpless position while men rushed on not even seeing the hand thrust in their path to stay them; for ahead of them was liberty, knowledge, and a happiness hitherto unknown. Pointing to that goal, exhorting, encouraging, still fighting their fight against all the powers of evil, and moving ever forward to higher effort was Martin Luther. Others were ready to follow, but who else would have dared to come out before the world alone, unsupported, repulsed and thwarted at every step, and with never flagging determination bring justice to her own throne.

Germany and the world had, through his labors, come to a higher standard of living and thinking. Men were no longer inanimate beings, tools in the hands of those who could use them. They had been filled and thrilled with pulsing, throbbing life, newly awakened energy, noble ambition for themselves and their country. Stimulated every step by the greater activities of their leader and guide. A common peasant they called him, but where in the history of man can be pointed out mind more uncommon, character more noble than that of Martin Luther. All honor then to him who braved defeat and the scorn of his fellows for the principle he loved, and who dared to decide for the right for the sake or right alone.

APPENDIX F

Oration delivered by K. B. Van Wagenen to the Michigan Agricultural College Oratorical Association in the spring of 1910, winning first place. Later in the year delivered at the annual contest of the Michigan Oratorical League.

"The Newer Justice"

During the last two decades more deaths have occurred from murder alone that resulted from four years of Civil War. Emerging from one of local concern the problem of crime becomes one of national importance, and its solution bears a tremendous weight upon the progress of civilization. Crime is a relic of barbarism; and it exists because it is met with another relic of barbarism--the prison. For just as hate begets hate, love begets love; and tonight I wish to present a principle by which, at its very fountain head, civilization begets civilization.

Along the river front of one of our typical American cities, a motley collection of boys once banded themselves together. They called themselves a "gang;" the police called them a desperate band of criminals. One night their leader was captured, and to secure a confession the police, as was their custom with boys, beat him cruelly. Failing, they strapped him to the hard bench of a prison cell. Sullen, bitter hatred glared from the young eyes, but back of them one terrible thought was born--revenge against that system which had brought about this punishment; the cold, heartless, bluecoated, ironhanded law. Amid the jeers of the police force, and even with misgivings in his own heart, a famous Judge of the Juvenile Court steps in. In this man, the lonely, belligerent

soul found a friend, a friend who could understand and care. It seemed incredible at first, but slowly confidence was won, and under the soothing, inspiring influence of plain human kindness, the childish instinct of confession crept up and swept away all other emotions, and the kindly judge heard a tearful record of doings such as the police had never imagined.

How striking the contrast between the two methods; that of the police and prison regime founded on fear and brutality; that of the Juvenile Court founded on kindness and confidence. The Old and the New in conflict. Civilization and barbarism; the Christian principle of "an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" brought directly face to face. The one the boy's natural friend, and the other his natural enemy; the one cooperates, the other antagonizes. The new regime brought not punishment, but probation; with probation, came penitence, and instead of further depredations this intrepid young leader brought his companions into the court room, everyone of the wrong doers. The result was complete eradication of trouble along the river front; and the members of the gang became defenders of the court. The seeds of potential social anarchy had somehow been transformed into useful, industrious citizens. Why this marvelous difference? Simply because brutal enforcement of a law apparently with no other object than revenge, out of the very nature of things, excites antagonism and leads to inevitable failure. Whereas, from the operation of the same fundamental principle of human nature, kindly enforcement of the same law, in a spirit of justice, demands respect and stimulates co-operation. Barbarism brings forth barbarism; civilization produces civilization.

The line of cleavage between these two systems strikes deep into the bedrock of our social organization. Consider what constitutes a criminal. Is he an individual predestined to a life of crime and good for nothing else? Or is he not simply a victim of a society, itself not yet entirely civilized? It is true that there are some whose heredity and constitution make them criminals, but by far the large number are helpless victims of conditions over which, not they--but society--has control. Some petty act in early life landed them in jail and the deplorable circumstances and mismanagement of these institutions influenced them not toward reform, but impelled them, forced them,--at times even against their own wills--into more expert criminality. Statistics show us that from sixty to seventy out of every one hundred released prisoners follow lives of crime. Think of it. Will more laws change this? Will a more efficient police force prevent this? Can laws or police, or any arbitrary, superficial means--any method however powerful and farreaching, which does not reach down into the heart and soul of the child, begin to penetrate to the deep substrata of such conditions?

The magnitude and seriousness of this question is seldom realized. It is an established fact, that over half the inmates of our prisons and reformatories--that over 40,000 prisoners, are under twenty five years of age. A noted English investigator has gone so far as to declare that less than two per cent of London criminals had formed the habits which led them into crime after their twentieth year. But does this mean that children have greater criminal tendencies? Is it not rather but the natural, inevitable expression of that primitive savagery so characteristic

of energetic children? In the words of Judge Lindsey: "children are neither good nor bad, moral nor immoral, but either weak or strong. They are little savages, living in a civilization which has not yet civilized them." They are waiting to be led. Their activity is but an expression of their blind struggle toward the light; they are as clay for the hand of the Great Potter. To influence these plastic characters toward evil, deception, lawlessness, means to create hardened individuals with vice predominant. Treating them as criminals makes them criminals. There is no escape. Nowhere is it truer that "the child is father to the man" than in the prisons. In the case of children, prisons are nothing but training schools for crime, for instead of emerging reformed, the child is merely molded into a more intelligent savage, transformed from an energetic, but perverted child, into a keen, black-hearted criminal, bent on revenge, with respect neither for himself nor for others, and with a profound disrespect,--a bitter antagonism--for that Law which, from his point of view, stands back of all this suffering and degradation.

The solution of this problem calls for great and radical changes in our judicial system. To this end, the Juvenile Court has been established, a court based on the assumption that the child has committed not a crime, but a mistake; and that he therefore deserves not punishment, but correction. The working principle is in all cases, to appeal to his sense of honor, and consequently develop his self-respect; to give him another chance if possible; and by any means to keep him from the contaminating influence of prison life. In this court, the law operates upon the child in such a manner that all the old antagonism is swept away as naturally, as inevitably, as the mists disperse before the morning sun; and out of

the crude but promising material of the street, are made not criminals but men. Law defenders and not law breakers are constructed from this, the material for future citizenship. And in this way is crime reduced. If criminals are the result, in most cases, of causes which are of our own making; if it is seen that by trial a new method proves these causes not only harmful but unnecessary, the logical solution for this vital national problem seems to be at hand. The Juvenile Court may be only a temporary institution, later to give way to something larger, better, more fundamental. But when the nation realizes the principle which this court enforces--that youthful lawbreakers are not criminals, but are perfectly normal, and exceedingly enterprising young citizens; and when our courts become so organized that individuals will be treated as such; then indeed will a newer, truer, Justice be established in America.

The problem of the alarming increase in crime demands a solution. Tonight, while I am speaking, twenty-eight murders are being consummated. Before this week is finished, two hundred lives will have been sacrificed in the United States to this cause alone. The wholesale violation of law is a depressing fact, but it is a fact. What are we to do with it, is the question we are compelled to face and answer. Is our method to be punishment? Does experience indicate that this way succeeds; that released prisoners make good citizens? Or is our method to be reformation? As compared to the brutal procedure of the old criminal court, the inspiring methods and gratifying results of the Juvenile Court proclaim the dawn of a new era in jurisprudence. The one great need of all our courts is not more force, but more humanity. The principles which

underlie the Juvenile Court apply with equal force in every other court, and they must be made the dynamics which move the wheels of justice in whatever court applied. Reformation, or punishment? Shall we degrade ourselves to the brutal spirit of revenge, or shall we employ the God-given power of building character? Let us not confuse the issue; it is not a question of leniency; it is not a question of protecting mere property; but it is a question which lies at the very foundation of the truest Christianity; it is the principle which at its very fountain-head begets Civilization; it is that which by means of love, pours forth into our world, instead of crude, prison-cramped victims, reformed, transformed men.

APPENDIX G

An article entitled "Debating" by Professor A. B. Noble of the English Department published in the M.A.C. Record, Vol. II, No. 11, March 16, 1897, p. 5.

The debate Saturday evening between chosen members of the Hesperian Society and the Union Literary Society indicates a growing interest in debating as a feature of society work. It is only within recent times that the College societies have recognized debating as worthy of a place on the formal weekly program, and I doubt if its place is yet as secure as that of the oration and the essay, its most worthy competitors. But that it has been rapidly advancing in favor is shown conclusively by this joint debate, constituting, as it did, an entire evening's program for two societies.

Elsewhere, also, there has been a similar growth of interest, or more strictly speaking, a revival of interest. An excellent article in the January Forum on intercollegiate debating, traces this revival of debating in the leading colleges and universities of our country, from the Yale-Harvard contest of 1892, down to the present time. The writer of the article, Mr. R. C. Ringwalt was a member of the Harvard team in the contest with Yale in 1895, and now completing his second year as assistant in rhetoric in charge of debating in Columbia University. His experience, therefore, enables him to write understandingly, and his description of the methods of preparation, the choosing of contestants, the diligent search for everything that bears on the subject, the brief, or outline, the dividing of the work among the members of a given team,

the practice debates, and then the final contest with the excitement and rivalry necessarily accompanying such an event; this description is one well calculated to arouse the enthusiasm of every college student who has enough life and vigor to enjoy a contest. And now that debating is established as a form of intercollegiate contest, we may expect it to grow in power and influence. The Sunday Free Press of a week ago reported the arrangement for such a contest between the State Normal School and Albion College. How soon may we expect it to strike nearer home?

But how long is this interest in debating likely to continue? Will it soon fade away, or will it endure? The only safe answer is, wait and see. But, considering its new function as a form of inter-collegiate contest, there seems good reason to believe that it will not soon disappear. Its give and take, its thrust and parry, make it more exhilarating to the participants and more interesting to an audience than the oratorical contest, and that has endured for many years. But a much stronger claim to a continued existence is in its disciplinary value. As compared with the oration, it requires a fresher, more vital, more practical subject. The real oration, it is true, deals only with vital topics; but the average contest oration shuns such a topic, lest perchance some judge should hold an opposite opinion. But debate cannot flourish on dead questions; it must have something fresh and living, something practical.

Moreover, the thought basis of the debate is better than that of the contest oration. The would-be-orator sees no skilled opponent watchful to detect the slightest misstatement, quick to expose any and every

fallacy, no matter how plausible, and alert to turn aside every argument that does not drive straight home. The oratorical contestant is apt to care little how weak the thought, for if he can dress it up so as to make it "sound well", he stands a good show of winning the prize. Not so the debater. His speech must not only "sound well", it must also be logical and consistent, and true; at least, it is hazardous for it to be otherwise. The debater must not consider himself above the use of evidence fairly. If there is an exceptional case, more striking, or thrilling, or dramatic than other cases belonging in the same class, this exceptional case is to the orator more valuable than all the others put together; to the debater it is worthless, for the rules or general principle is determined by the cases that are not exceptional. In brief, the debater must seek to base his conclusions on facts that are unquestioned and on arguments so logically constructed that they cannot be shaken. If he does not, it is the business of his opponent to expose every fallacy, to lay bare every weakness.

In the method of presentation, also, the debate affords a better discipline than the oration. The orator does his work in the quiet of his study, with nothing to distract his attention. In choosing words, in constructing sentences, in marshalling his thought he has time for deliberation. If all is not arranged to his satisfaction at the first sitting, he is at liberty to lay it aside and come back to it fresh the next day or the next week. The debater, on the other hand, must learn to test and analyze arguments on the spur of the moment, to decide at once what is to be done and to do it, to coin his thought into words and cast the words into sentences while standing before his audience, and

all the while to keep clearly in mind the course of his arguments and an estimate of the amount of time he can afford to give to each point. An afterthought as to a better word, a more telling sentence, a more effective arrangement of thought, is without value. He must cultivate readiness. He must think on the spot and speak immediately.

Practice such as this is valuable not only as discipline, but also as direct training for the practical duties, or at least opportunities, of life, especially the life of an educated man. Every community, be it large or small, is constantly confronted with problems pressing for solution. The right solution is based upon facts, and the method of reaching that solution is, first, to find out the real facts, and secondly to draw correct inferences from them. This is no easy problem, and many there are that fail. He who reasons on practical problems must learn to look beneath apparent resemblances, to search for fundamental principles, to guard against fallacies, and to test patiently and carefully every step in the course of reasoning. Moreover, he must learn to think at once and to speak at once. He must be ready when the occasion arises, must "strike while the iron is hot." Men need practice in dealing with such problems, and I for one know no better training for the forcible discussion of the practical problems of life than long continued, faithful practice in debating.

To be sure these real problems are not always dealt with in formal debate. Many a time the work is done by informal discussions in the field or shop or street; sometimes the discussion goes into the papers, and sometimes upon the platform. But however wherever one, the man trained in debating has an advantage, and the community soon learns of his power,

and pays him for it, too, by advancing him to a higher rank in its estimation. Indeed, if we are unwilling to be set down as nonentities, we must show the community that we have opinions, and we can set them forth and defend them, and that is virtually debating. Moreover, if our defense or our opinions is weak, we get little credit for them, however, good they may be. The real debaters in a community are, after all, few in number, and the community knows who they are. Fortunate is that community whose leaders are trained to careful, logical reasoning.

Debating, rightly conducted, is a search for the truth, an attempt to reach just conclusions; and upon the finding of truth, and the reaching of just conclusions, depends the welfare of each and all; or, in other words, the progress of the world. This view, it is true, comes only when we look at debating as conducted ideally. It is well, perhaps, to admit that it is not always a disinterested search for truth; that the rivalry of the contest frequently brings forth trickery and deceit and cunning. Grant it all. But if the debate has been ably conducted on both sides, after it is over every unprejudiced man, whether debater or listener, ought to be able to approximate somewhat more nearly the real truth of the matter. Of course, if, in extreme cases, all or the majority have not caught a clearer glimpse of the truth, some at least may be expected to have done so, and that is a gain. The main argument for freedom of speech and of the press is that this freedom helps to bring out the truth. If, then, it is well to have freedom of discussion, let college students train themselves to be skillful in debate. It will give them a better standing in their community, and at the same time will help somewhat in reaching right conclusions.

Debaters, we welcome you. Do your very best. The task you attempt is great, but great also is the reward.

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