

## The Middle Years—1870-1900

The middle years of the University saw the institution develop in many ways and its influence spread throughout the state. Better support came from the Legislature, internal troubles were resolved, and a Legislative investigation in 1888 cleared the University of charges brought against it. A Board of Regents replaced the Board of Trustees in 1870.

In March, 1870, the Legislature appropriated \$25,000 as increased support for the University, especially for science. At this time the University had one of the best science laboratories in the nation and, under the direction of Gustavus Detlef Hinrichs, was assuming world leadership in this field. However, under sweeping changes made by the new president, George Thacher, authorized by the Board of Regents, those on the faculty opposed to the rapid growth of science had their way.

Chairs of English Literature and Language were introduced in 1873. In 1875 the Board of Regents provided for a Chair of Engineering. In 1874 a Chair of Military Tactics was created and compulsory military training was established in 1875. An astronomical laboratory was erected on the site now occupied by the President's Home in

1875. Social Studies were improved in 1875 when Leonard F. Parker was named instructor in History and Stephen N. Fellows became instructor in Political and Moral Science. In 1876 the Homeopathic Medical Department was established.

The Regents asked for and received President Thacher's resignation in 1877. Christian Slagle, a lawyer and Board member from Fairfield, was his successor. Up to this time the presidents and most of the faculty had been ministers.

As early as 1868 a Legislative Visiting Committee had recommended an annual University endowment support fund from a statewide tax. Such a bill, introduced by Representative John Powell Irish of Iowa City, was defeated; but in 1878 a similar bill, providing a permanent annual endowment of \$20,000, passed the Legislature.

In 1878 the Board of Regents elected Josiah L. Pickard, superintendent of schools in Chicago for thirteen years, as president. That same year the Collegiate Department was divided into a School of Science and a School of Letters in an attempt to provide a better education—both the practical and the liberal. For nearly a decade after 1878 the University enjoyed a substantial growth and acceptance throughout the State. The course of study adopted in 1879 remained in effect until 1885 with no fundamental changes.

The Board passed a resolution in 1873 declaring: "That smoking and spitting tobacco spittle in

the University buildings be strictly prohibited, and that the president of the University be required through the faculty to see to the strict enforcement of this resolution."

During the middle seventies the Board raised the question as to whether the faculty was working hard enough to earn the salaries paid. Faculty members were asked to submit reports, from which it appeared they were a much overworked group.

An improvement ordered by the Board in the early seventies was an iron fence to be built around the campus. In the late seventies gas lamps were installed between Old Capitol and North and South Halls.

On March 22, 1878, the General Assembly authorized a \$20,000 annual appropriation provided no part of it be used for the Preparatory Department. This came at a fortunate time. Old Capitol was in need of repair both inside and out as was North Hall. The fence on the west side of the campus was in a tumbled down condition. A new heating system was needed.

The Board of Regents dropped the Preparatory Department completely in the summer of 1879, complying with the mandate of the General Assembly. The effect was good throughout the state. Additional high schools were accredited by the University, and in Iowa City some 300 students enrolled in two academies.

A Visiting Committee from the General Assem-

bly approved the request of President Pickard and the faculty for more space and equipment. A new Medical Building in 1882 relieved some of the congestion but the establishment of a Department of Dentistry in 1882 and a Department of Pharmacy in 1885 created fresh demands for buildings. In 1884 money was appropriated for a new Science Building which was constructed on the present site of Macbride Hall and completed in 1885.

Throughout the 1880's, the struggle for needed appropriations continued. In 1886 a bill to reorganize the University, dismiss the Regents and many professors, was introduced in the Legislature. It was defeated. From 1885 to 1889 the University passed through what was called an "Era of Doubt." President Pickard resigned in the spring of 1887 after nine years of faithful service.

In the 1880's the University became involved in political and personal controversies. The dismissal of Professor Hinrichs from the Collegiate Department in 1885 and from the Medical Department in 1886 for his violent disagreements with the faculty and president pleased his enemies and shocked his friends. For years after his dismissal Hinrichs was an outspoken foe of the Board of Regents, the faculty, the president, the Medical Department, and the entire University.

Early in 1887 the Regents selected George Ashmead Schaeffer of Cornell University as President from a field of eight well-qualified candi-

dates. He was inaugurated on June 22, 1887, and assumed his duties the following September. The inauguration was held in the Opera House to accommodate the large crowd.

In his inaugural address President Schaeffer announced his program to place the University of Iowa on a level with the leading universities of the country. This plan included better assignment of duties for and treatment of the faculty; more commodious buildings and laboratories with better equipment; a library supplied with more books and journals; the addition of charts and models for science; the addition to the collections in the museum; the building of a gymnasium for physical development of students; and finally, additional financial aid for the University. The University, he said, should provide excellent training in letters and science for both men and women.

When President Schaeffer took over his duties in the fall of 1887, he found himself in the midst of a discordant situation. The dismissal of Professor Hinrichs in 1886 remained a distressing problem. He was further troubled by the dismissals of Professors Nathan R. Leonard, Stephen N. Fellows, and Leonard F. Parker by the Regents in June of 1887. They were lost in a bitter clash involving the Legislature, the Board of Regents, the liquor interests of the State, and their own support of prohibition. This action aroused the faculty, students, newspapers, and alumni. All these men

had served the University well—Leonard for a quarter of a century and as acting president twice.

As a result of public demand, the Legislature launched an investigation of the University which lasted for two months—May to July, 1888. The Legislative Committee aired all charges against the University—including those of Hinrichs, Fellows, Leonard, and Parker—and, at the end, declared most of the charges untrue. The Committee said, however, there was room for improvement in the management of University affairs. All in all, the report was favorable to the University, the Committee concluding that the University was a great credit to the state.

Schaeffer was now faced with the problem of strengthening the support and good will of the Board of Regents, the faculty, the student body, and the alumni. University morale was at low ebb. Both the Medical and Dental Departments had internal troubles. Homeopathic Medical students were jeered by students in the Allopathic Medical Department. Townspeople complained of student pranks. Governor Larrabee was concerned about student discipline. The majority of the alumni, doubtful about the general management of the University, looked on with skepticism.

Because of his many difficulties and the magnitude of his administrative task, President Schaeffer gave up the Professorship of Political Science in the Collegiate Department and later the Chair of

Chemistry and Toxology in the Medical Department. His efforts to develop cooperation with, and support of the Board of Regents, was successful. Regent Albert W. Swalm expressed the opinion of the Board when he said: "In my opinion it was a day rich in great good fortune for the University when Dr. Schaeffer was put at the head of it. His splendid executive qualities, his ripe, thorough scholarship and the dozen other qualities that mark him all combine to make him a model President of an institution as varied and great as this."

Schaeffer also won over the faculty. He attended their meetings frequently, took a personal interest in each one, defended them from attacks, and showed a deep concern for their welfare.

Likewise, he gained the support of the student body. He aided many with gifts or loans of money, he endorsed and supported their activities, and visited various student functions with his wife. He also helped students obtain employment after graduation. In 1889 he had tennis courts built on the campus for their use, and in 1894 helped obtain a field for track, baseball, and football along the Iowa River southwest of the campus (Old Iowa Field). He was especially interested in the student publication—*The Vidette Reporter*. He administered discipline with justice.

President Schaeffer recognized the importance of the alumni in his program. He traveled throughout the State visiting and speaking at alumni meet-

ings. The alumni attitude changed from skepticism to enthusiastic support.

One of the methods which Schaeffer used to establish friendly relations between the Board of Regents, faculty, students, alumni, and himself was the presidential reception during commencement week. Everyone connected with the University was invited and this won him many friends.

The work of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. at the University helped offset charges of lack of religion among students. The building of Close Hall as their headquarters, through donations of Mrs. C. W. Close, other citizens, and students in 1890-91, reflected a good moral atmosphere.

President Schaeffer frequently accepted invitations to speak before various groups in Iowa, and he invited organizations to visit the University. His relations with the State Legislature were friendly—legislators responding more liberally to his requests for additional funds in the 1890's. He often had the help of key men in Des Moines and throughout the State during Legislative sessions. His biennial reports to the Legislature were clear and effective statements of University needs. He also was on friendly terms with the governors of Iowa (William Larrabee, Horace Boies, and Frank D. Jackson), and secured their support of his requests for appropriations.

There was great rejoicing among faculty, students, alumni, and people in Iowa City when Pres-



ident Schaeffer received, in 1896, Legislative consent to use the proceeds of a one-mill tax for five years to build new University buildings.

In 1890 Iowa City gave the State a city park between Iowa Avenue and Market Street, east of Dubuque Street, to meet the expanding needs of the University. The Legislature then made an appropriation of \$50,000 for a new Chemistry-Pharmacy Laboratory to be built in the southeast corner of this park area.

President Schaeffer supported and promoted athletics at the University. His daughter made the awards at the First Annual Field Day of the Iowa Athletic Association held on Old Iowa Field on May 10, 1890, where two Irish lads from Dublin via Dubuque (William P. Slattery and his cousin, Jeremiah Slattery) won most of the first and second prizes. They wore track suits for the first time at an Iowa sports event and brought exclamations of shocked surprise from the ladies present. Iowa then went on to win first place at the First Annual Field Day of the Iowa Inter-Collegiate Athletic Association held in June at Grinnell. Later Iowa won national fame with the spectacular feats of John V. Crum of Bedford, Iowa, who, in 1894 and 1895, won thirty-seven consecutive races in the 100-yard and 220-yard dashes. Crum won both events in the Western Intercollegiate Meet in Chicago in 1894-1895, American Intercollegiate Meet in 1895, Chicago Athletic Games in 1895,

and the Labor Day Games, New York, 1895. Students, faculty and townspeople turned out to give him a tremendous ovation on his return.

President Schaeffer was an ardent supporter of football which had begun in 1889; of baseball which had begun earlier; and of tennis for which he had supplied new courts. He encouraged forensics. Iowa joined the Northern Oratorical League in 1891 and won distinction in debating.

Schaeffer scoured the country to get outstanding men for the faculty. Several members of his staff attained national reputations for their achievements. C. C. Nutting, Thomas H. Macbride, Bohumil Shimek, and Samuel Calvin had enviable reputations among naturalists of the East for their museum work and scientific expeditions. Additional support from the Legislature made it possible to raise the salaries of some of the professors. Dean Amos N. Currier was raised to \$2,200—an increase of \$400 over his annual pay for ten years.

From 1896 to 1900 more money was granted the University for support, equipment, and physical expansion. The Regents decided to concentrate on a collegiate building to cost not less than \$150,000 and a hospital building to cost not less than \$75,000.

Plans went forward to build a durable and commodious Collegiate Building, harmonious in style with Old Capitol. Henry Van Brunt, Court of Honor architect of the Chicago World's Fair in

1893, was secured to advise the Regents. The location of the building followed suggestions of Van Brunt. This building, dignified and classical, was the beginning of the Pentacrest which reflected the architecture of the Chicago World's Fair.

On the morning of June 19, 1897, North Hall was badly damaged by fire cause by a bolt of lightning. The library on the top floor lost all but 8,821 books out of a total of 33,000 volumes. The Legislature, then in session, refused to make a special appropriation to replace North Hall, and the Regents were compelled to reconstruct the old building. The next General Assembly made an appropriation for the repair of the building and a partial replacement of the books.

The astonishing development of the University during the decade 1887-1897 was largely due to the genius and untiring efforts of President George Ashmead Schaeffer, who died on September 23, 1898. His funeral was held three days later at the Trinity Episcopal Church. It was attended by Governor Leslie M. Shaw and other notables, the Board of Regents, faculty, students, alumni, and townspeople who mourned his loss. He was laid to rest in the Iowa City cemetery near the scene of his many triumphs. *The Hawkeye* of 1900 was dedicated to his memory.