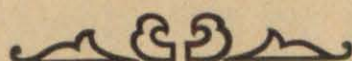


# A RETROSPECT



ALUMNI ADDRESS

by

Henry Sturgis Drinker, '71,  
President of Lehigh University

At the Exercises of University Day  
June 6, 1916

Concluding the Semi-Centennial  
Celebration of  
Lehigh University

LEHIGH  
UNIVERSITY  
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## A RETROSPECT

We celebrate this year the Semi-Centennial of our University and the exercises today close the gathering that we have had of Lehigh's sons—a great gathering, expressive of the love and devotion that is so deeply felt by them for the Alma Mater, a mother to whom they may well pay heartfelt devotion and reverence for her accomplishments in these fifty years in education and in leadership in all things that are true, that are just, that are pure, that are lovely, and of good report, and if there be praise due to her let us think on these things—and how, in Lehigh's record of her fifty years of life, she has ever stood for the highest and the best, and that her deserved reputation rests on the fact that at the beginning she set high her standards, and has never lowered them; that from the first she established them on a firm foundation of honesty of teaching, straight living, and Christian principles. Owing to our location in this valley, teeming with metallurgical and other

industries, we have naturally always attracted a large clientage of men desiring to prepare for technical pursuits and to study where the surroundings afford an atmosphere conducive to and sympathetic with such study—but from Lehigh's earliest days we have had our School of Arts and Science, known originally as the School of General Literature, giving to our University a cultural side and coordinating with our engineering courses. And in our memories of Lehigh, and in our pride in her today, what is there we value more than the beauty of her setting on this South Mountain of ours—our Sayre Park, fitting monument of one to whom Lehigh owes much. Well did Mr. Carnegie say when, in 1908, we celebrated his valued gift of Taylor Hall, named by him for one beloved of all Lehigh men, and instituted our dormitory system: "The longer I live the more importance I attach to the element of beauty arising from Nature. I believe that educational institutions should always have sites as much resembling Lehigh as it is possible to get. I have attributed the in-

tense loyalty of the Alumni to Lehigh, which we see evidenced on every side, in some measure to the love of Nature and of the beautiful so richly displayed here.”

We welcomed this tribute from Mr. Carnegie when it was given by him in connection with words of kindly appreciation of our scientific work, and we shall always value it as the comment of a keen observer, a master in judging men and the elements that go to making serviceable all-rounded men.

It is hard for those of us, whose memories go back over years numbering more than twice the years of the men who graduate here today, to realize how time has passed, but in the retrospect we have many precious memories. There are a few of us here who personally knew Asa Packer, to whom the presence of that venerable figure was familiar and welcome, and who met and were privileged to confer with him, and we of the older alumni remember with love and tender thought how, when as young men, with our undisciplined and impetuous desires and views in matters of college management, we went to

him with solemn yet very youthful statements and expressions of view on what we youngsters deemed to be matters of proper University policy, he heard us with patience and appreciation, because he knew we were earnest and sincere in our loyalty and desires for the betterment of Lehigh, though we urged measures and changes of policy that were essentially unwise and born of our inexperience. I well remember particularly an interview, at which I was a member of a Committee of Alumni, away back in 1878, who called on Judge Packer at his office in Philadelphia and presented to him a printed address urging that Lehigh University be made a purely engineering school, thus doing away with the School of General Literature, as it was then called, now the Department of Arts and Science, which was established in 1866 as one of the fundamental courses of the University. Those of us who presented this address to the Founder were all graduates of the Engineering Schools of the University, and I venture to say that, as added years gave increase of judgment, every one of

these men came to agree with the wise decision of the Founder and Trustees to abide by the broader scope in which the institution had been organized; and we know that today it is the practically universal opinion of leading engineers that the trained and successful engineer should base his technical training on a broad foundation of culture. But we young fellows, while we were wrong in our judgment, were true in our loyalty and interest, and the men who as a Committee presented that address gave, and some are still giving, life-long evidence of love and devotion to the Alma Mater, and at least two of them (I confess to being one,) are here today to feel pride in the development and present prosperity of our Department of Arts, so well housed in the building bearing the name of our honored first President, Dr. Henry Coppée, and which is so essential and valued a part of our University organization.

Of course Lehigh has always essentially benefitted by its location in this Lehigh Valley, by its environment of mining, metallurgical and other industrial enterprises.

To study engineering at Lehigh is like going to Paris or Rome to study art. You work in a surrounding atmosphere pregnant with suggestion and sympathetic influence.

In this fiftieth year it is a happy thought for the older alumni who are here for our Semi-Centennial gathering to feel that Lehigh was not founded and has not existed in vain, that her work has highly ministered to the betterment of our land, and that her sons are laboring today not only in our own country but in many lands for the betterment of mankind, and we know that it is no idle boast to say that Lehigh men have made good and have justified the founding of this Institution.

Entering here in the autumn of 1867, I followed by a year my friend, Dr. Price, the honored President of our Board of Trustees. We had the privilege of personally knowing the men chosen as a Faculty to lead and to manage Lehigh in those olden days, and we know that the men so chosen by the able Board of Trustees who directed the early growth of Lehigh were well chosen and strong men.

Dr Coppée, our first President, was a man of high culture and strong character. A West Point graduate and an experienced teacher, coming to us from the Chair of Belle Lettres at the University of Pennsylvania, he gave the University an early and lasting impress of high ideals and scholarship. We, who knew them, reverence the memory of Wetherill in Chemistry, Morgan in Mathematics, Mayer in Physics, and grand old Prof. Roepper in Geology and Mineralogy, the first Faculty. "There were giants in the earth in those days" and our Faculties of today show that the race is still in being and progressive.

In the third year of the University, opening in September, 1868, it became necessary to provide some organization for the third year or Junior class men in the Engineering Departments for professional training, and H. Stanley Goodwin, then Assistant General Superintendent of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and Richard P. Rothwell, a graduate of the Ecole des Mines, then conducting a Mining Engineering office at Wilkes-Barre, were



appointed Demonstrators, as they were called—Mr. Goodwin of Civil Engineering and Mr. Rothwell of Mining and Metallurgy. I entered the Mining course in the next year, September, 1869, but in my Senior year, beginning in September, 1870, Mr. Rothwell found that his duties here so interfered with his professional office work that he would have to give up attendance and lecturing at the University, though he consented to continue to give general supervision to the course, and to hold his office open for our students for practical experience. I happened at the time to be the only student in the University taking Mining, and President Coppée sent for me and suggested that it seemed hardly worth while to continue the course for one student, and that I had better transfer to Civil Engineering. To this I objected on the ground that I had come to Lehigh to study Mining Engineering, that the course was advertised in the Register, and that I had given a year to it. Dr. Coppée acknowledged the justice of the claim, and did me the honor to confer with me as to what could

be done. After consultation with Mr. Rothwell I purchased three ponderous volumes entitled "Crooke's Metallurgy," from which I proceeded daily to lecture to myself, making copious notes. Dr. Coppée who, while a distinguished Man of Letters, was rather at sea in Metallurgy and Mining, would on the next day examine me from my notes, and now and then I would run up to Wilkes-Barre to derive fresh inspiration from a day in contact with the practical work in Mr. Rothwell's office, and during the year I trudged out every Saturday with Miles Rock, of '69, to the Friedensville Zinc Mines, of which he was the Surveying Engineer, and spent the day in survey work. We walked out from Bethlehem to Friedensville in the morning, and back in the evening, and it was my duty to carry the transit out and back. In June, 1871, I presented a Thesis on the Mines and Works of the Lehigh Zinc Company, and received my diploma.

I tell you of this to emphasize the contrast between the Lehigh of then, and today, and between this attempt at a course in Mining En-

gineering and the splendid training given now in the course, with its Coxe Mining Laboratory, a monument to one of the greatest mining engineers, and one of the noblest men that Pennsylvania ever produced. And yet, we of those olden days survived, and somehow blundered into and through our life work.

And turn to the School of Civil Engineering, with its contrast between the early effort to found a school under the faithful and painstaking oversight of Mr. Goodwin, with no plant, no laboratory, no assistants—and our well officered department of today, with its adequately equipped Fritz Laboratory, the gift of one revered and beloved in this community, who, hand in hand with Eckley B. Coxe—close friends and associates—early joined our Board of Trustees and gave a life-time of thought to Lehigh's needs.

From her earliest days Lehigh had the benefit of the care and oversight, among its Trustees, of Robert H. Sayre, a great engineer, who projected and built the Lehigh Valley Railroad; of Elisha P. Wil-

bur, and of Dr. Garrett B. Linder-  
man, who, with Mr. Sayre, had the  
prescience and foresight, and the  
patriotism, to found here the  
earliest works started in our coun-  
try for the manufacture of armor  
plate, a hazardous business venture  
as it then appeared to some, and  
from which our ungrateful country  
has derived and is deriving such in-  
estimable benefit.

The University owes (and of this  
I speak as one who knows, for it  
was my privilege for many years to  
be closely associated with him) a  
lasting obligation to the great fi-  
nancial ability and business care of  
Elisha P. Wilbur. He it was who  
piloted our craft through our finan-  
cial storms of the past, and our  
debt to his son, Warren A. Wilbur,  
for his oversight, care and guidance  
of the University's financial inter-  
ests, since his father's death in  
1910, cannot adequately be put into  
words.

And let us remember today, al-  
so, William H. Sayre, who, for so  
many years made the interests of  
the University his own, and who,  
with the modesty that so charac-  
terized all his life, did so much for

Lehigh in ways in which his left hand knew not what his right hand did. Charles Brodhead was among those who for years gave time and thought, as a Trustee, to Lehigh's good, and to whose generosity we were indebted for a large share of our beautiful campus.

Dr. Robert A. Lambertson brought to the Board of Trustees the trained reasoning powers of a great lawyer and a highly educated man. His transition from a leading position in the Board of Trustees to the Presidency of the University, in 1880, was a natural tribute from his colleagues in the Board to his efficiency, and his incumbency of the Presidency of Lehigh from 1880 to his death, in 1893, was marked by a firm, intelligent, broad progressive management of the University's affairs. During his administration the growth of the University was rapid in numbers, buildings, and equipment, and the Faculty was enlarged and strengthened. He was succeeded as President by Dr. Thomas M. Drown, who had made a distinguished reputation in Education, and had also won high cred-

it as an Administrator as Secretary and then as President of the American Institute of Mining Engineers. Dr. Drown's incumbency left an abiding impress on the University of his refined, gentle, cultured personality, and under his able guidance the University advanced greatly in the field of higher education. His lamented death, in the autumn of 1904, left Lehigh men with heavy hearts and deep sorrow for one who led in high ideals, Christian manhood, and scholarship. He was succeeded in 1905 by the present incumbent of the Presidency.

In this year of reunions of alumni, and of rejoicing over Lehigh—a deep note of sadness comes to those of us of the early days—and to many men of later dates at the absence from our gathering of one who was loved by all Lehigh men, always ready with a cordial greeting and infallible recollection of all Lehigh men, dear old James Myers—janitor of Lehigh from 1869 to 1913. How he looked forward to living out his half century of service and of being here today. It was not to be, and it has been

well said of him in the eloquent tribute to him hanging in our alumni room:

“James Myers is dead. ‘In his life he was lowly and a peacemaker and a servant of God.’ In his death he had the rare distinction of having his name pass into a Lehigh tradition.”

Reverting to our early history, the Board of Trustees was, from 1866 to 1872, headed by the Rt. Rev. William Bacon Stevens as President of the Board. He it was whom the Founder of the University consulted in the first instance in regard to his desire to found a modern institution in the Lehigh Valley devoted to higher education, and who indicated the broad lines of our original organization. He was succeeded in 1872 by the Rt. Rev. M. A. De Wolfe Howe, who ably carried on the great work until 1890, when he was succeeded by the Rt. Rev. Nelson Somerville Rulison. On the death of Bishop Rulison, in 1897, Robert H. Sayre became President of the Board, of which, from the first he had been one of the principal mainstays, holding office until 1906, when, at

his request, he was relieved from the cares of office and, at his suggestion was succeeded by a distinguished alumnus of the University, William A. Lathrop. On the death of Mr. Lathrop, in 1912, our loved and honored alumnus, Dr. Henry R. Price, who is with us today, succeeded to the office, heading a board of Trustees of whom it may well be said, "*Si duces quaeris, circumspice,*" and, in paying my tribute to them of thanks for the constant kindly consideration and support they have given to me in the eleven years of service as President of Lehigh, with which they have entrusted me, I wish also to tender to them the thanks and appreciation of our alumni body for the splendid care and business management which has given to our University its present condition of prosperity and success.

In our retrospect of Lehigh's development let us pay further tribute to the great teachers in the past who have built up our educational work. To Herr and Doolittle and Meaker, in Mathematics; Harding, in Physics; Chandler and Schober, in Chemistry; Wm. A.



Lamberton, in Classics; Kroeh and the beloved Ringer, in Modern Languages; Bird, Worcester, and Stewardson, in Christian Evidences and Religious Instruction; McMillan, DuBois and Merriman, in Civil Engineering; Frazier, Kimball, and Williams, in Metallurgy, Geology and Mining; and they, great men of the past, have been succeeded by our Faculty of today who so ably uphold Lehigh's reputation for thorough teaching and high scholarship.

Meeting in this, our beautiful chapel, we remember with gratitude Mary Packer Cummings, its donor, who supplemented this great gift with such large generosity in her life-time and by her will.

And what shall I say to our Alumni—the men who stand for Lehigh, and by whose work, as her finished product—Lehigh's reputation must stand or fall. Loyally they have stood by her in storm and sunshine. In the dark days of our financial stress, in the nineties, the Alumni came forward with substantial aid—and in the later Alumni Endowment Fund they have given generously,—the Frank

Williams Fund of \$140,000 established in 1900 for the aid of needy students, and Williams Hall, built in 1903, so named by the Trustees after our honored alumnus, Dr. E. H. Williams, jr., the donor, were signal instances of generous alumni support. The record on the walls of our new stadium shows what Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Schwab, and the Trustees, Alumni and friends of Lehigh have done for the promotion of sport and manliness in our students, and Charley Taylor's gift of our great gymnasium and his wise projection of our entire modern athletic plant, constitute a magnificent instance of wise and generous giving by a son of Lehigh. Lehigh has ever stood for manliness—and from her earliest days for service in education that shall stand for uplift in our land of scholarship hand in hand with material development.

Taking into account the generally accepted opinion among professional men that a foundation of cultural education is advisable as an antecedent to professional studies, how interesting it is in this year of 1916 to quote what was said

by Bishop Stevens nearly fifty years ago, in the very early days of technical training, when Lehigh was breaking the way, when, as President of the Board of Trustees, he delivered, in 1869, the Commencement Day Address. He then said:

“What our land now needs, aside from the three great professions, Law, Divinity and Medicine, is not so much scholars, as that term was understood half a century ago, men learned in the classics and polite literature, but men, who with minds previously disciplined to careful and exact thought by a due study of the dead languages and mathematics have then devoted themselves to the study of the phenomena of nature, its laws, and resources. Men who make their studies tell in their practical benefits in developing the resources of the land, in opening up new highways of communication, in broadening the range of human comfort, in increasing the productive power of machinery, in utilizing the agencies of the material world, and in doing those things which make the world a better place to live in,

draw out of it new treasures, add to man's domestic and social comfort, and elevate him in the scale of moral beings. These are the kind of men needed in this bustling, wrestling, grasping age. Men with drilled minds, and taught eyes, and skilled hands, and steady wills, and earnest purpose, and plodding progress. Men who make past discoveries stepping stones to new ones, past triumphs herald to new conquests, and who, feeling that we are but in the infancy of the developing state of our country, and but in the childhood of scientific research are stretching forth to higher results, and nobler aims, and will not tire or falter until they have reaped new fields or opened long-buried treasures, or unlocked the still guarded secrets of nature's laboratory."

May we not justly feel that this prescient aspiration uttered in 1869 has had potent fulfillment.

Lehigh—beloved Alma Mater—your sons today kneel in homage and love at your feet and pay reverent devotion to the record of large service you have rendered to our land—homage to your educa-

tional leadership, to your present-day public service in great questions of the day—in the Conservation of our Natural Resources and in Forestry, in patriotic moves for the training of our youth for national service and defence, and in the great and notable task and duty of maintaining and increasing in our people high standards of efficiency in life work, and of honor and purity of living.

It is a high privilege to be admitted to a share in this great work, and in its support is enlisted our ever-growing army of the sons of Lehigh who carry her name to many lands in many climes, and whose thoughts turn to the Alma Mater today with love and devotion, and with gratitude for what she has done for them, and with pride for what she is doing for the world.