

Mr Crocker

THE NEW GYMNASIUM

During the four years that the class of '94 was in St. Lawrence there started and grew a demand for a gymnasium. Innumerable proposals were presented and debated in class and college gatherings; when it became apparent that the funds of the college were not adequate to provide such a building, the students determined that they would attempt to raise the money for a gymnasium of sorts. The result was that a committee of students was elected to approach Dr. Atwood, then President of the Theological School and Acting President of the College, not only to enlist his sympathy but to get his permission to start a subscription list.

This was thought to be a formidable task because Dr. Atwood was supposed to believe that a student came to college to study and that such natural activities as any young, two-legged animal would indulge in were sufficient for his physical well being.

Dr. Atwood was not large, but he made up for small stature by impressive dignity, and it was a "quaking" delegation, headed as usual by Young, which sought him out with its petition.

For some reason unknown "Mac" had been drafted to do the talking, and spent many wearisome hours planning and committing a speech which he hoped would be most persuasive. The delegation entered the august presence and "Mac" commenced to stammer his speech. He had not proceeded more than half a dozen lines (merely far enough to acquaint the good Doctor with the purport of what he was going to say) than the Doctor interrupted and said that he had long been considering the matter and deeply regretted that the funds of the College would not justify an appropriation, but that he wholly sympathized with the ambitions of the students, and not only consented to the petition to raise the amount by subscription, but ^{you} subscribed thereto. "Mac" has since said that he cannot tell whether relief at the result, or chagrin that he had wasted so much time preparing his speech, was predominant in his mind as the delegation filed out.

From that time on, by general consent, Young was in the forefront of all efforts to raise the gymnasium fund, and almost wholly by reason of his guiding direction the result was successful and there was built at that time the (wonderful?) structure which survived until it was destroyed a short time ago by fire.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.