

ARTICLE.

(Unpublished).

No. 2, Vol. 10.

SUBJECT.

Boyhood and Youth of Notable Associates.

1. United States Senator Wm. P. Frye.-- By Gen. O.O. Howard.

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No. 8, Vol. 10.

REPLY.

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During the month of September, and a very pleasant month it was, sixty three years ago, I first saw my classmate William P. Frye. The fall term of study at Bowdoin College began at that time the last of the month. There were over thirty freshmen gathered for morning prayers with the other students of the College. It was so early that lights were necessary at the reading desk to enable Professor Packard, though he wore large gold-bowed spectacles, to read a chapter in the Bible. No hymn was sung as was the custom at a later day, but there was, first, a careful counting of the students in each class by appointed monitors, - students being selected for this duty. After the reading the Professor gave a brief and well worded prayer. As soon as he had finished began the solemn march down the hall to the door of exit, first the seniors, then the juniors, the sophomores, and last the freshmen. The freshmen proceeded at once to their recitation-room on the lower floor of the North College in what students always called "the south end" of this College.

I saw Frye as he tripped along through the doorways into the large room. Professor Upham sat on the north side with his head modestly bowed, with a book in front of him, and carefully looked us over above his glasses as we filed in and took our places alphabetically from Abbott around to Vose, who sat near the only door. The class occupied three sides of a square. As there were plenty of windows and as the sun was just rising and shining brightly, the students and the Professor, by the time we were seated, could see well enough to read. Frye's seat was on the east and mine on the south side of the large room. What

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called my attention to him particularly, before we met and were made acquainted with each other, was the fact that we were both boys of the same age, and, I should say, not quite grown. He had on a shortish coat and his legs appeared to me rather slender and long for his body. His shoes were polished and neat. He was slightly taller than I, had a good pose, and always moved with quickness. His voice appeared to be changing and was somewhat harsh, as is usual with lads from boyhood to manhood; but it was a very peculiar and striking voice of which we generally say, "that voice carries"; in time it softened but was always full and strong.

The first time we heard him recite he attracted the attention of the entire class. Every word of the Latin text (for we were reciting in Livy) was distinctly pronounced; and his rendering, though not always perfect, showed that he had given careful study to his lesson. His large eyes, ranging from gray to blue, were serious enough when at rest, but were full of fire and fun when "off duty".

There was only one other student in our class who always seemed younger than Frye and myself; it was John J. Bullfinch, a previous classmate at the Yarmouth Academy where we both fitted for College. He did not look more than 14 years old, but I see by the Bowdoin Catalogue that he was six months older than I, being born in Waldoboro May 1st, 1830; and he was four months older than Frye. Now by looking over the same record I am astonished to see that five other classmates, namely, Burr, Ingraham, MacArthur, Sewall and Smith, were born during the same year as Bullfinch, Frye and myself; and that Stinson, who was so decidedly mature, was just a year younger than I.

Frye's father was a prosperous business man of Lewiston, Maine. His successful cotton mills, taking advantage of the falls of the An-

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There was only one other student in our class who always seemed younger than Tyne and myself; it was John J. Sullivan, a previous classmate at the Vermont Academy where we both fitted for college. He did not look more than 14 years old, but I see by the Bowdoin Catalogue that he was six months older than I, being born in Walpole, New Hampshire, and he was four months older than Tyne. Now by looking over the same record I am astonished to see that five other classmates, namely, Burr, Ingraham, MacArthur, Sewall and Smith, were born during the same year as Sullivan, Tyne and myself; and that Stinson, who was so decidedly my mentor, was just a year younger than I.

Tyne's father was a prosperous business man of Lewiston, Maine. His successful cotton mill, taking advantage of the fall of the An-

droscoggin for necessary power, were located near the village of that name. No doubt he was anxious to do as well as he could for his fun-loving boy; so to give him a sort of protection against the hazing of freshmen and the best of moral influence he secured for his room-mate Daniel Webster Pickard, a studious junior of marked Christian character. This, I believe, was an admirable provision.

When a late night banquet indulged in by a bevy of terrible sophomores took place in a certain room neighboring to mine, or I may say to ours (for just then H.L. Chamberlin was my chum) Frye's room was safeguarded by Pickard's presence against the offal cast ruthlessly into several freshmen's rooms, ours included. The noise of the rushing and the bursting open of doors hardly disturbed the sleep of my room-mate and myself; so that the next day we laughed at and with the dismal hazers and evidently had a better appetite for breakfast than any of them. Surely late suppers are not good for students.

At our Alma Mater there were three buildings in Frye's time called colleges, North College, Maine Hall and Appleton Hall. Frye and Pickard had their room on the 3rd floor of Maine Hall. Any class soon after entering upon its studies began to divide up into groups. These were occasioned by the different societies, secret and open, into which we boys were introduced. I did not belong to any secret society, having for some reason taken an early prejudice against them, perhaps because the society that pleased me most gave me no invitation; but my room-mate joined the Delta Kappa E and Frye, immediately popular, became a member of the Psi Upsilon. I think the Psi U's were a little more tony than any others and perhaps a little more select in their choice of members. On account of my room-mate my companionship fell more with what were called for short, the "Delta Kappas". My room-mate and myself

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joined the Athenaeum, a general society, whilst Frye with his intimates united with the Peucinian. These divisions naturally kept us somewhat apart in our early days. Again another grouping was had in the way we were then boarding. There were several clubs constituted with a chairman, a caterer and a treasurer; from fourteen to twenty in a club. The club owned its table furniture, and hired some matron with her family to take the furniture and the rooms we hired, to do the cooking, waiting and other needs of the establishment. The club to which I belonged was called the "Grouse Club", because the Grouse family housed and worked the institution in conjunction with the caterer. Frye joined a club which was conducted more in the nature of a boarding-place, not far from ours. This place was regarded as somewhat ahead of ours, and I am sure the weekly charges were higher. As a rule our board came to \$1.00 per week, hardly ever exceeding that amount, whereas Frye's amounted to what we then called 9 shillings,- \$1.50 per week. During our college course I never knew board at any place, even the highest, to exceed 10 and 6 pence, that is, \$1.75 per week. People laugh at me when I say that we lived at that time as well as students do now at Andover and Yale for \$6.00 per week. Surely \$1.00 would buy a great deal more in the line of provisions than \$5.00 will today.

It was about the third week of our first term when a class association, embracing every member, was called for by a group of freshmen. Every member of the class responded to the call. I was made the treasurer of that association, but I do not remember to have received or expended any money, but I do remember how solemn we were when we came and sat together and did business according to the established rules and regulations for public bodies. The hazing by the sophomores was so popular and frequent at that time that we took good counsel to act

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in a body against those troublesome enemies. One of the first things debated and determined upon was to break the "hold-in" tried against us at the evening Chapel exercise. As the sophomores were passing out some of their strong men would put up their hands against the side posts of the doorway, and all the other sophomores would sway back against us and prevent the freshmen from going out. Our object was always to break up the "hold-in" and push the sophomores out. Those of us like Frye, Bullfinch and Howard, being of light weight, were sometimes tossed up over the heads of the sophomores, followed probably by other youngsters. Once or twice I remember working my way forward far enough to pull off the hands on our left of the leading holders. At the same time my companions were releasing the firm holds on their side of the doorway. This with a tremendous and simultaneous push of the freshmen did set the sophs agoing, sometimes headlong, so fast that their effort became a failure. My great objection to this operation was getting our faces scratched and our clothes badly rent in the conflict.

Another joint action of the freshmen was to maintain one side of a big football contest. That was always an exciting operation, and I am sure that our sophomore contestants very often mistook the freshmen's shins and calves for the ball, so that we came out of the struggle frequently with our legs badly bruised. I can see my young classmate Frye today, with his short coat and peculiar hat on the back of his head, chasing the ball. When he once started for the ball he was so rapid in his movements that he was sure to kick it a distance or catch it up and throw it to his companions.

Another sport which we never considered as a class, was the almost daily exercise in our gymnasium. The gymnasium then was a very limited affair compared with that of today,- given by our beloved classmate,

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General Thomas H. Hubbard of New York. We had the horizontal pole, the parallel bars, and the ropes fastened to cross-beams high in air, which extended to near the ground. A young man would seize the rope just above the lowest knot and run as far as he could holding it with one hand, turn in air and seize the rope also with the other hand, and then swing back and out as far as possible, letting go just at the right time to send him forward. He would strike the ground with both feet and mark the jump. In this exercise occasionally Frye, with his exceeding quickness and agility, would outstrip Bullfinch and myself; but we had one other classmate, Hodgman, who could spring far beyond anybody else in the college; he appeared to fly through space.

What we all tried more than this jumping was the number of times we could draw ourselves up from the ground by the horizontal pole (from the ground we could just reach it) to put our chins over the bar. I remember that in this exercise my arms became so strong that I could thus raise myself from ten to fifteen times. Frye in this did not so much excel, but Bullfinch became an adept at this exercise and beat everybody. So it appears that we youngsters, though we did not have the football and baseball organized as they are today, and played between colleges and universities, yet we did have sufficient exercise to keep our bodies in pretty good trim.

I like to say that the great proportion of the time of all the students in my class, with one or two exceptions, was given to serious and hard study. Frye was an apt scholar and easily mastered a course of study. I lost much term time by staying out of college to teach, and suffered greatly from this. Frye was fortunate in not being obliged to do so.

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I remember, however, one evening in a classmate's room, just under the stairs in North College, we were playing several harmless games with dominoes, backgammon or draughts. I do not precisely recall what the game was, but as I think, my friend Frye accused me of cheating. We both rose up at the same time from the table and a lively contest followed. I have maintained that I threw Frye to the floor, but he insists that he threw me. At any rate it was probably like some of the drawn battles of our wars, ^{where} ~~==~~ each retained his self-respect by considering himself the conqueror. Whatever was the cause of it, the difficulty was soon settled, and the next day Frye and I were as good friends as we were before the scrapping.

We had as freshmen ^{an important but often} ~~=~~ laughable exercise conducted by Professor Boody. The subject was elocution. Several of us would be arranged in a row and made to draw in the breath and hold it as long as possible, and then breathe out slowly. The work was serious enough, but a fun-loving youngster like "Bill Frye", as we called him, could not go through with that monkey show without making his classmates scream with laughter. Professor Boody was very patient and did not mind how much sport we made of the operation provided we performed it. He had a way of making us read passages from Milton, Shakespeare or other author, and in doing so a great deal of interest was excited. The Professor would read a passage negligently, then better, and then extremely well, giving the proper accents and emphasis; then he would endeavor to have each of his pupils go through with a like performance. We memorized many paragraphs from important authors, and spoke them before this Professor with results which we have never forgotten. The last time I heard Senator Frye speak to a large audience with magnetic effect, I could see something of this old Bowdoin training which we had in those

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early elocutionary exercises.

Daniel Webster Pickard, after two years with us, graduated and went forth to study for the ministry, and to preach the gospel with great power and success as long as he lived. Frye naturally had to take another room-mate. At one time he became quite a leader in a social group of students. He told me this singular story: "There were fourteen of us of different classes who were wild together and at times took strong drink beyond reason. Inside of my room is a wood-closet. On the inside of the door of that closet we wrote down our names. At the 25th anniversary of our graduation I visited that room and read those names. Every one of them had passed the bourn from which no traveller returns, except myself. Had I kept up the pace of jollification we then indulged in, I should have been with them, but fortunately under an influence sweet and precious to me, my whole soul was changed and I have never indulged in intoxicating liquors since that change." This is a wonderful testimony against the use of intoxicants by students or other young men.

I am glad to say that Frye, after the change to which he refers, became a most decided Christian and united with the Christian church, and whatever position he has occupied since then, his influence and his example have honored the Great Master, whom he so soon chose for his model and his leader.

What a wonderful career Frye has had. First, holding important offices in his own state, and then in ^{filling six terms} Congress; ^{The Lower House of} having been re-elected ^{later} six times as Senator of the United States, having been sent to France as one of the commissioners to make peace after the Spanish War, and having taken upon his shoulders the rescuing of our "merchant marine"

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from destruction, and the planning to open a proper basis for water transportation for the good of the whole country and for the glory of the nation; and, furthermore, having been chosen to act as Vice-President of the United States, and preside over the United States Senate so often during his senatorial career;- verily he is a man of magnificent ability, of unblemished character, sans peur et sans reproche.

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