

CHAPTER XXIII

A NEW PRESIDENT

In Grandfather's Junior year, the student body was startled by the announcement that President Chamberlin had tendered his resignation and planned to accept a professorship in geology at the University of Chicago which, revivd by a large donation from Rockefeller, had started a graduate school with unusual salaries for professors.

Professor Chamberlin had not been popular with the students, who especially resented his giving testimony in the Reilly hazing case, of which Grandfather may write later. However, when the announcement of his resignation was made, in a sudden revulsion of feeling, the students got up a monster petition which was signed by nearly all the students.

President Chamberlin was in the East when the announcement was made. The plan was to meet him at the railroad station upon his arrival, conduct him to his home, and on the steps of the president's house, in sight of the whole student body, the petition would be presented with a heart-appealing oration.

Grandfather was chosen to give the oration, but in accordance with an incorrect philosophy which the students had come to accept, left the final preparation until the day preceding the president's arrival. This day started with pasting the huge petition into one great scroll and instructing a couple of students how to roll it out dramatically across the lawn. Into the midst of this work, a student rushed breathlessly to announce that word had just been received that President Chamberlin was

returning home a day earlier than expected and that he would arrive in less than an hour.

There was a wild scurrying to get dressed, get a carriage and meet the president. The train was on time, the home was soon reached, the student mob had assembled with marvelous quickness and the address was given much more extemporaneously than Grandfather had intended. Perhaps it was none the worse for its extempore character. As the speech reached its climax, the student petition was dramatically unrolled across the lawn, and as the president started to reply, the student body lustily cheered him.

The boys said that Grandfather made a good speech and that the meeting was a great success, but the president nevertheless stood by his resignation. This was probably a good move on the part of President Chamberlin, for he apparently had little liking for executive duties and longed to return to geology, in which he had been recognized as one of the foremost students of his time.

In his place, Charles Kendall Adams, of the Massachusetts Adams clan, was chosen, and soon changes were instituted. Dress suits were expected at receptions held at the president's house, efforts were made to attract to the University of Wisconsin the sons and daughters from families which were accustomed to send their children to eastern colleges. Steps were taken to win students from beyond the confines of Wisconsin. In short, President Adams came with an ambition which, to a large extent, he carried out, to transform University

of Wisconsin from a provincial state college into a nationally recognized university.

One of the first and most important steps in this direction was the establishment of a Graduate School of Economics.