

Rochester

ALUMNI

Review



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Gleaned from Alumni Correspondence

Personal Reminiscences of General I. F. Quinby

Your late tribute to Professor-General I. F. Quinby and the vivid representation of his loved face, brought back memories of over sixty years. My class was '64. But my acquaintance began with him as a scholar in the preparatory school conducted by him and Professor Richardson in the fall of 1859. Their school was carried on in the old United States Hotel building, which looks today just as it did then, and as the birthplace of the University of Rochester a photograph of it should grace your pages.

I began playing chess with General Quinby then and had the honor of playing the game of games with him frequently through my college course. And he was also endeared to me as a fellow member of Psi Upsilon.

But my purpose in referring to this delightful association with him outside the classroom, where he was without peer in the United States college institutions, was to give him the hitherto unpublished credit of being a prophet. After his return from the campaign with General Grant, and when General Grant was still carrying his unknown "U. S." initials, afterward becoming the significant cynosure of national glory, General Quinby broke out one evening over the chess board with this prophetic eulogy:

"Mr. Wood, from my intimacy with General Grant in West Point, and now that I have been in the field with him through the arduous Vicksburg campaign, I wish to say that in my opinion General Grant is the greatest military genius that ever lived, not excepting Napoleon Bonaparte; and if this war lasts long enough, this country and the world will find it out."

And they did. General Quinby was a very reticent man, though genial and cordial in his bearing, and this is the longest "speech" I ever heard him make.

Here is another item which will be of interest to the friends of General Quinby. While in Florida several months, in 1916, I read aloud to my friends all the books they had connected with the life and speeches of President Lincoln. In one of these books was a reference to General Quinby. I am sorry I did not make a note of its title

and the page. I cannot tell what caused the reference. Here is the incident. It stated that a certain general belonging to General Quinby's division had been ordered to attack a certain point in the rebel fortifications of Vicksburg. He advanced with his force, and after careful examination decided that it was inadvisable to make an attack. While withdrawing from the place, he was met by General Quinby with his staff. He made his report. General Quinby ordered him to halt his detachment. Then he himself went and inspected the situation. As a result he accepted the returning general's report. I was greatly pleased at coming on this little episode in General Quinby's military experience; it was so characteristic of him.

On the whole, I think if General Quinby had been allowed by the faculty, instead of a year's leave of absence at the urgent solicitation of General Grant, a leave "for a year, or the War," he would have been a close second to his famous classmate "chum."

(REV.) CHARLES WILTSHIRE WOOD, '64

R. C. E. Brown Modest But Interesting

I have just received your letter of February 10th and should be glad if I could write something worth while for the new "Alumni Review," which I have enjoyed very much. It is a highly creditable piece of work. You say that you would like me to write something on my "own experiences and life history to date." But it seems to me that if and when I have done anything worth while to justify even a rudimentary life history, it is up to someone else to discover and record it.

I was in the newspaper business for twenty-five years as a reporter, editorial writer, managing editor and assistant editor-in-chief, and then stepped aside to engage in the work of training other newspaper men and have been for some years professor of journalism in Columbia University. I fear I have grown lazy, but I write an occasional magazine article and am just issuing a couple of volumes of historical work, but I am not going to advertise it—that's the publisher's job. The time I