

ROCHESTER HISTORY

Edited by BLAKE MCKELVEY, *City Historian*

VOL. XXXIII

OCTOBER, 1971

No. 4

President Hill and the Sectarian Challenge at the U. of R.

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At the close of the Civil War, American colleges were mostly small sectarian institutions with antiquated and restricted intellectual programs originally designed for preparing students for the ministry. Little had changed in more than two hundred years; Latin, Greek, and mathematics were still the staples of a liberal education, learning was based on authority, and instruction was largely dogmatic. But in the next few decades a revolution took place in American higher education as traditional concepts and methods gave way before advances in science and technology, ideas brought in from German universities, and increasing liberalism in all areas of thought. New universities and technological schools sprang up to meet new demands on education, and older colleges began to abandon their ecclesiastical emphases, revise their curricula, and find new sources of financial support. These changes were often not easily made, nor were they always wholly welcomed. Sectarian bitterness and fears were inevitably excited as colleges forsook their denominational purposes and slipped from denominational control, an aspect of the history of American education which was revealed with unusual clarity at the University of Rochester during the administration of its second president, Dr. David Jayne Hill.

ROCHESTER HISTORY, published quarterly by the Rochester Public Library, distributed free at the Library, by mail 50 cents per year. Address correspondence to City Historian, Rochester Public Library, 115 South Ave., Rochester, N. Y. 14604

The University of Rochester was founded in 1850 by Baptists of New York tired of the provincialism, theological quarrels, and financial troubles wracking Madison University, their only institution of higher learning in the state, tucked away in the little village of Hamilton. The founders of the new, urban-located university promised that while it would be of Christian character and controlled by their denomination, its educational policy would be liberal and nonsectarian, and neither in its charter nor in its plan of instruction did they make mention of denominational status. When Martin B. Anderson became its first president in 1854, he announced a similar intention to promote Christian education rather than sectarian interests, and during his administration students from all churches attended the University, several of its professors and trustees were men of other denominations, and the principal donors of its campus and buildings were non-Baptists.

Yet people in Rochester generally thought of the University as being exclusively Baptist. According to Dr. Edward M. Moore, a non-Baptist trustee who became president of the board in 1893, pleas for assistance were usually met with the reply: "Oh, it's a Baptist institution—let the Baptists take care of it." Anderson continually insisted that the University's ends were not denominational, but his words were largely ignored, for his social relations with the community were slim, and those few he had were almost exclusively with Baptists. More effective in forming local attitudes was the presence in the city of the Rochester Theological Seminary, an institution established at the same time as the University, which, never content with furthering only its own properly denominational interests, constantly sought to force a denominational policy on the University as well. Anderson always resisted these attempts as best he could in view of his continued dependence upon Baptist funds, and there was generally a want of good will between the two institutions, but the University nevertheless, in the words of one prom-

inent alumnus, "kept taking on more and more, the character of a Baptist nursery."

On other matters Anderson was less liberal. Although believing that college instruction should be broad and up-to-date, he had an exaggerated conception of the value of classical studies and no patience whatever with the elective system. Consequently, while the curriculum did expand during his long administration, the University did not keep pace with more progressive colleges elsewhere, including newer, competitive colleges in western New York and in states to the west, from which it had once drawn many students. When Hill took over the University in 1889,¹ it had eleven professors, several of whom were of unquestioned ability, and it had a pleasant campus with three substantial buildings in an attractive part of the town. But its curriculum was outmoded, its growth had long since stopped at less than 175 students, and it was becoming chiefly a college for candidates for the ministry and for local boys who could not go elsewhere. Baptists were niggardly in their support, alumni and local assistance was weak, and annual income seldom met expenditures. According to William S. Kimball, a wealthy Rochester businessman whom Hill persuaded to become a trustee, "It was fast dying of dry-rot."

At the age of twenty-eight, ten years before coming to Rochester, Hill had been elected president of the University at Lewisburg, a small Baptist college in central Pennsylvania desperately in need of new academic directions and money. Modernizing its curriculum, broadening its goals, and persuading William Bucknell, whose name it was given, to provide generous financial assistance, he had saved the University from closing its doors. Hoping that this young man could build at Rochester the great center of liberal education that had eluded his own efforts, Anderson had wanted Hill to succeed him, a choice with which the trustees had all agreed. Expecting to move into a less provincial atmosphere, Hill found instead a university almost as

untouched by the revolution in higher education as Lewisburg had been a decade before.

President Anderson had ruled the University with a rod of iron, and this too added to Hill's difficulties. At Lewisburg he had himself filled a patriarchal role, personally supervising nearly everything in the life of the college, but knowing that the patriarchal college belonged to the past, he wanted the trustees, faculty, and alumni at Rochester to share initiative and responsibility with him. But the habits of three and a half decades were not easily changed, everyone waited for the new president to move, and no one would act until he did. Some faculty members interpreted his policy as "a want of Presidential Enterprise," and one professor resigned for lack of confidence in the new administration.

For several years the only noticeable result of Hill's new approach was the creation by the faculty in 1889 of a committee to revise the curriculum. Although Hill chaired the committee and appointed its other members, it still seems to have been the first time that the faculty assumed responsibility for a question of educational policy. The new curriculum, introduced during the next two years, offered four programs of study. Although the only major difference in them was the amount of classical language required, and most students continued to take the classical program (anything else was still considered not quite respectable), the revised curriculum marked a revolutionary step at Rochester by permitting the boys to choose about a third of their courses from electives.

Eventually Hill's "cooperative policy" bore greater fruit. The University continued to adopt more courses until by 1896 the number offered had increased from forty-six to ninety-five. A professor was brought in specifically to teach biology, a subject never before named in any University of Rochester publication, with Hill's assurance that he would not be hampered in teaching the theory of evolution, and provisions were made, for the

first time, for teaching physics and geology with laboratory practice. Beginnings were also made in university extension and graduate work, which, though of little importance at the moment educationally, further evidenced the University's new vitality.

As a matter of tradition, Hill had inherited the President's Chair of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy. Under various names, Moral Philosophy had been taught to Seniors by American college presidents ever since it had come from English and Scottish universities to colonial colleges in the seventeenth century. A mixture of philosophy and social sciences, with emphasis on religion and ethics, its purpose was to fit one for a virtuous and useful life by discovering his duty to God, his fellow man, and himself. Though heavily dependent upon syllogistic logic and a priori assumptions, invariably arriving at orthodox conclusions, and usually finding universal truth very much the same as the prevailing ideas of the place and time in which it was taught, it had nevertheless generally been the most beneficial course to which students were exposed. The advance of scientific knowledge and a freer spirit of inquiry, however, were bringing its long day to a close, as it gave way to subjects more specialized and less moralistic. As he had done a decade before at Lewisburg, Hill promptly dropped the courses of this venerable anachronism to teach in their stead psychology, ethics, and anthropology.

The larger significance of these innovations was only indirectly revealed by the changes appearing in the University catalogue. The new courses and facilities represented, as Professor Gilmore wrote in 1894, a great change "in the methods of instruction—the spirit that dominates the new college. Investigation has taken the place of dogmatism."

By this time a new mood was also evident among the students. Anderson had supervised their conduct with the utmost seriousness, but despite all his patient and paternal appeals, the college

was pretty rowdy. Hazings, rushes, and scraps went on uninterruptedly, sometimes destroying college property and sometimes erupting in the streets, forcing the local police and courts to take a hand. Hill was no less patient and certainly no less firm than Anderson, but his appeals hit a more responsive chord. "There is no doubt that a new spirit has entered our university during the last few years," noted the student newspaper, the *Campus*, in March, 1894, "not a spirit of sullen obedience generated by strict discipline, but rather a loyal, law-obeying spirit filling the students with deep desires for wellfare [*sic*] of the college." As far as order was concerned, Hill wrote to his successor some years later, his last two years at the University were close to ideal. The change had come about very gradually and in a manner he could hardly explain. "One element in it I am sure was a constant appeal to the manliness of the students until at first the best and finally the worst came to feel ashamed of many things that had formerly been common and which are common in most colleges." The college yearbook, *Interpres*, of 1897 attributed the change "more than all else . . . to the quiet and unostentatious influences of a perfect gentleman, whose genial sympathies have aroused the loyalty, and whose courteous bearing has excited the emulation of the whole student body."

A new interest in competitive sports, which Anderson had never encouraged, helped. A gymnasium and an athletic association, Hill had said in his inaugural address, were "a hundred times more effective against rowdyism and barbarism than proctors and informers," and because he also believed that intellectual and physical fitness went together, he assisted the boys in organizing interclass and then intercollegiate football, baseball, track, and other sports. He failed, however, in repeated attempts to stir the alumni into providing a gymnasium, "the most imperative need of the University." Indeed, on one occasion, the alumni dinner of 1895, he, a trustee, and a guest offered among them to give more than two-thirds of the money

needed, yet the old grads just sat on their hands as they had all through his administration.

One development of the modern university which Hill did not encourage at Rochester was coeducation. A movement to open the University to women was already on foot in the city when he arrived; with Susan B. Anthony in town it could hardly have been otherwise. Hill had promoted coeducation at Bucknell, but the whole force of the movement here, he thought, lay with parents who wished to give their daughters a college education and could not afford to send them elsewhere, and with a coterie of people who adulated Miss Anthony and saw an opportunity to further their propaganda efforts. It was not a movement likely to benefit the University, whose faculty and resources were already much too inadequate. Several women's clubs in the city insisted that if the college were opened to women they could easily meet the additional costs by raising \$300,000 or more, but Hill and some of the trustees knew better from hard experience, and during his administration no action was taken. Women were finally admitted to the University in 1900 after the club ladies had spent two years scraping together \$50,000, which the trustees accepted in lieu of \$100,000 they had originally stipulated, and to complete even that sum Miss Anthony had to pledge her life insurance.

When he came to Rochester, Hill had hoped to raise \$500,000 for the University in short order. With that sum, he wrote to Anderson, "we can have and hold the educational leadership of our denomination in this country," and it could be done, he thought, if he could get \$300,000 from trustees, alumni, and friends in New York City. He visited New York several times during the next year, but the attitude of Baptists there, he found, was that the University was filling its mission quite well enough. "With the University as it was and the Theological Seminary at Rochester, ministerial education appeared to be pretty well provided for, and that was a sufficient effort for a denominational

college!”²

If youth were to be educated in a Christian atmosphere, colleges ought to be under denominational control, Hill believed. Universities, on the other hand, whose function was to provide specialized education, should not be. Since the University of Rochester was for the present suited only to be a liberal arts college, he thought it should be so administered and remain denominational. But a narrow and outdated ecclesiastical purpose had no place in his thinking. For more than two decades sectarian colleges had been de-emphasizing ministerial training, liberalizing their curricula, broadening their appeals for financial assistance beyond their denominations, and looking to merchants, bankers, and industrialists rather than to clergymen to fill their boards of trustees. At Lewisburg, Hill had guided the University along these lines without opposition, in part, perhaps, because Baptist control was ensured by its charter and so the question was never raised. But Baptist control of the University of Rochester rested only on moral right, and a number of conservative Baptists, some of whom had inexplicably expected him to make the University more sectarian than ever, were soon alarmed by his religious liberalism, his enthusiasm for the sciences, and his appeals to the city, rather than exclusively to Baptists, for financial support.

The first open indication of this apprehension appeared in a report on the commencement week of 1891 in the *Philadelphia National Baptist*. Its author, under the pseudonym, “Rochesterian,” commented that President Hill in his baccalaureate sermon, by paying no respect to theological systems or traditional orthodoxy, and representing Christ as having recognized nothing authoritative in the Old Testament, had certainly placed himself in the “advanced wing of religious teachers.” In his speech at the alumni dinner, the unidentified reporter also noted, the president had indicated his policy would be “to appeal, not so much to the Baptist denomination for the support of

the University, but rather to the citizens of Rochester and of Western New York." Since liberal Baptists had congratulated Hill for the "courage" and "plain words" of his sermon, no doubt to conservative ears it was unorthodox; and at the alumni dinner he had appealed to the city for support—"for our chief support," one newspaper quoted him. Yet there was an element of misrepresentation in the *National Baptist* report, and, apparently already irked by sectarian criticism, Hill believed that it was intentionally designed to portray him as a heretic trying to alienate the University from Baptists. Replying in the *National Baptist*, he scathingly said so. From the Reverend J. W. A. Stewart, pastor of the First Baptist Church and member of the Theological Seminary's executive committee, he received a private reply. Stewart protested that he had not written in the spirit Hill supposed, explained why he had written under a pseudonym, and regretted that he had written the account at all. Still, however innocent his intentions, Stewart's report sharpened the fears of conservative Baptists that Hill was out to snatch the University away from them.

These fears dominated a committee of trustees meeting in New York City the following May to consider ways of getting the University out of the red. A Mr. Gates, who was not a trustee but took an active part in the meeting, was certain that Baptists would not give money to the University unless it were absolutely and undeniably under their control and confined itself to Christian education; and he urged that the University and the Seminary be united under the presidency of Dr. Augustus H. Strong, the president of the Seminary. Both he and the Reverend Robert S. MacArthur favored amending the University's charter to require that at least two-thirds of the trustees be members of regular Baptist churches. Protestations by John P. Townsend that this was probably illegal and surely unnecessary, for no one wanted to take the University away from the denomination, could not dissuade the two conservatives, for their suspicion had

been honed the more by an earlier suggestion that the board solve its financial problems by co-opting wealthy men like Chauncey Depew and Pierpont Morgan.

At the annual meeting of the trustees the next month, MacArthur moved that at least two-thirds of the board should be members of regular Baptist churches. Several trustees questioned the propriety or necessity of the resolution, but when a motion to table it lost by a vote of six to seven, the board adopted it unanimously. He had proposed the resolution, MacArthur explained in the *New York Christian Inquirer*, to clarify the denominational standing of the University, which was being injured by fears and rumors. It was said that Rochesterians would not give freely to it because it was so strictly denominational, and that many Baptists were afraid to give lest it someday slip from denominational control. Now all doubts could cease; the Baptist churches could heartily support Dr. Hill, and the non-Baptist people of Rochester could take advantage of the generous recognition given them on the board of trustees. However, according to the later testimony of John H. Deane, a trustee who had attended the meeting in New York the month before, MacArthur had revealed that his real purpose was to get rid of Hill and elect Dr. Strong. If this were so, the resolution failed to weaken Hill's backing on the board. There were sixteen Baptist members, four non-Baptists, and four vacancies when it was adopted. The board thereupon elected four new members from the Rochester business community, all non-Baptists and all partisans of Hill's effort to bring the city and the University into closer union.

Consequently, rumors about the University continued unabated. "From many different sources we hear the statement made that our college is becoming irreligious, skeptical, heterodox, heretical, and several other dreadful things," commented the *Campus* in March, 1893. "The alumni are heard to bewail our low spiritual condition. The people of the city frequently

ask us with doubtful accent 'how the battle is going'. Over at the seminary we are sometimes set down as a 'hot-bed of heresy'." Some professors, the *Campus* explained, were being shamelessly misrepresented by oversensitive students, "trembling for their notions of faith, and ready to take offense at everything not exactly in harmony with it," who simply failed to understand what their instructors were saying. A few professors, it conceded, held unorthodox views and perhaps at times over-emphasized them. "But never have we heard anything . . . at variance with our notions that need move a jot the simple, living faith of the most sincere follower of Christ. On the contrary, these very things, that some find so disturbing to their peace of mind, have been to us a means of clarifying our vision, and broadening, deepening, testing and strengthening the foundations of our faith in the essentials of Christianity."

But it was precisely this attitude of religious liberalism, which smacked of Hill's teachings of the sole essentiality of Christ to Christianity, that Baptist die-hards found upsetting, and Hill soon set them on edge the more. To show that the University was not merely a stronghold of Baptist interests, he preached the baccalaureate sermon that June in the Central Presbyterian Church instead of in the First Baptist Church, where the service had previously been held, and then followed this at the alumni dinner with a new plea for community support. "Let us arise as one man and say that we will build for our city and in the cause of honest education," he exhorted. "The day has gone by for any small number to build an institution for a small purpose. Humanity is larger than any creed or sect. Let us say, one and all, we will build here on this campus a university whose foundations shall be laid upon truth and righteousness. That is a sufficient creed for union in a great work like this, although every man's personal creed will probably exceed it."⁸

The reaction came thundering in two weeks later in a letter to the New York *Examiner* excoriating both events as imple-

mentations of Hill's scheme to hand the University over to whoever would furnish the money to build it up. "Rochester," for the letter was again pseudonymous, was dismayed that Baptists should surrender without a struggle the advantage which possession of the University gave the denomination "for the moral defense of its distinguishing principles." Insisting that this did not require the University to be sectarian in any narrow sense, "Rochester" in the same breath spoke of "the narrow range of aims in which it has hitherto been held," and of surrender "to alien control with reference to alien interests." "There are, indeed, those who think and say," he commented, "that a man who was elected as a Baptist to administer a college under Baptist control is not true to his trust if he seeks to place it upon foundations other than those laid for him by those who established the institution."

Editorially, the *Examiner* disputed that anyone wanted to make the University anything but a Baptist institution in the only sense it ever was one and deplored the tone of the letter, but as this was the first time anyone had ventured to say in public what many had been whispering in private, it thought it better for all concerned if the matter were discussed openly rather than by "winks and shrugs and innuendos." The *Examiner's* editor was Henry C. Vedder, a Rochester alumnus and *doctrine*, his words were less platory than intended. He was glad to hear that Strong's mind was relieved about Baptist control of the college, Hill lashed back. Now an anonymous correspondent was charging him with denominational treason. He would not imply that this misguided zeal had the official sanction of the Seminary, but he intended to state in the *Examiner* that the hostility toward him arose from the same desire on the part of a few to hold the University merely tributary to the Seminary against which Dr. Anderson had struggled all his life, and that now, in order to unite the two institutions, a secret movement was afoot to force him out. Strong protested

and later a trustee, who privately implored Hill to answer the letter promptly. He was astonished by the industry and success with which an anti-Hill faction had been propagating their views, Vedder wrote. Hill had once hinted he might be hounded out of the University by their underhanded work, Vedder recalled, and he was afraid this would happen unless Hill answered and silenced those who were traducing him. Trustees Myron G. Peck and Martin W. Cooke were of the same opinion. They thought the letter was inspired by the Seminary, and Cooke suspected it was written by the Reverend Dr. Henry E. Robins, its Professor of Christian Ethics.

Hill already believed that the Seminary was behind the campaign against him, and several recent communications from Dr. Strong had hardened his convictions. When calling for community support at the alumni commencement dinner, he had also spoken of the need for still more courses at the University, whereupon Strong, who was also at the speakers' table, had handed him a note and left. "I unfortunately got ready a speech which would advocate the fixed curriculum and discourage the proper University idea," Strong had written. "It would seem to cut into your views and would be all out of place. So let me off, I insist." He saw now that it would not have been best in any case for him to advise, Strong wrote a week or so later. He thought he understood Hill's plans better than at first, and his mind had been relieved of fears about Baptist control of the college. "I wish we could some day have a frank and full conference with regard to matters of management as well as matters of doctrine," he added, "but time and work do not seem just now to favor,—that is, unless you will come down to this resting place of the Saints and see me." Since Strong had intended to propose at a University function a policy that he already knew conflicted with Hill's, and was now suggesting that Hill come to the Seminary to discuss the University's manage-

that he knew of no such plotting and would oppose it if he did. The old ill-feeling between the University and the Seminary had been a purely personal affair, he explained. The present trouble had another origin. Hill had sometimes said things susceptible of two interpretations, and his own friends had reported him saying it would be better to make the University undenominational in order to secure greater support. All future difficulty might be prevented, Strong suggested, if Hill would show more interest in the Baptist churches of Rochester, and his own church in particular, for he had not identified himself with his own denomination as his predecessor had. Since Strong was obviously referring to Hill's sometime attendance at a Presbyterian church with his wife, the words of the Seminary's president were again less than mollifying.

There was no new policy at the University, Hill wrote in the *Examiner*. Every step he had taken was in the spirit of President Anderson's counsels to him. It was those who wanted the University controlled by the Seminary for strictly denominational purposes, and were determined that it should have Baptist money on no other terms, who were trying to force a new course. Let his critics give a bill of particulars over a genuine signature, he challenged, then he would compare records with them.

To no one's surprise, it was Dr. Robins who replied. With a lengthy list of particulars, including Hill's recent appeal to the community, his appeal of two years before, and even the surprising argument that Dr. Anderson's "broad-minded and sagacious policy" had necessarily died with the man and Hill as another person had to be following a new policy, Robins sought to prove that a new policy did indeed exist at the University which would inevitably put it under alien control. It was also incontestable evidence of something, Robins said, that in order to allay fears for control of the University the trustees had resolved that two-thirds of their number should be Baptists. But only by count-

ing as Baptists men who did not attend Baptist churches could the two-thirds be made out, and only fourteen of the trustees "ought to be reckoned as Baptists." The character of the four recently elected trustees made this danger to Baptist control immediate, Robins warned, for of the eleven trustees who now resided in Rochester, where actual control of the college necessarily lay, only three could "fairly be classed as Baptists," and of the six members of the executive committee, only two could "be classed as Baptists." The president of the board, Robins went on, was the noble and wise Dr. E. M. Moore, a man to whom the University owed a debt of gratitude it could never repay and who had always acknowledged the moral right of Baptists to control the University. But Dr. Moore was not a Baptist and could not have "a Baptist's instincts" to guide him. He would "naturally and inevitably act along purely secular lines." In making him the head of the board, "a vast step was taken in putting the college under undenominational control." Finally Robins came to Hill's preaching of the baccalaureate sermon in the church of another denomination. It was not merely to express interdenominational goodwill, it was to further Hill's purpose of basing the University's administration upon a creed of "truth and righteousness"—"a creed, without further explanation, altogether too narrow for Baptists to stand upon." It was an event that marked "a period of decline in Baptist prestige and power in Rochester."

Sending Hill a passage from Dr. Anderson's inaugural address in which the late president had appealed for community support on the same basis as had Hill at the recent alumni dinner, Professor William C. Morey, who had been with the University for twenty-nine years, remonstrated: "To those who knew Dr. Anderson it seems a species of puerile folly to use his name as a shield behind which to advocate any sectarian views of a liberal education. . . . Your friends regard your position that there is 'no new policy at Rochester' as solid. The only novelty

that the situation presents is the indiscreet and unprecedented affrontery on the part of the disaffected few in publicly announcing that the University should be more of a Baptist institution than it has ever been before." To Professor Henry E. Burton, who had spent twelve years at the University with Anderson, Robins' contentions were "absurdities"; the policy of the University was no different than before, it was simply that non-Baptists were responding more heartily to appeals for their interest and sympathy.

Rebutting in the *Examiner*, Hill point by point reduced Robins' particulars to a collection of fears and misrepresentations arising from his own strictly sectarian ideal for the University. So little remained of them, commented Vedder in an accompanying editorial, that until somebody was ready to name the Baptist trustees who would betray their denomination and the non-Baptists who would violate their honor, further discussion of the subject would be a waste of good white paper and printers' ink.

But if Baptist control of the University was as firm as Vedder seemed to think, conservative Baptists might still wonder to what end. In an address to the national Baptist Congress in Philadelphia the year before, Hill had extolled higher criticism and practically thrown everything but Christ out of Christianity. If there were still any lingering doubts about his heresy, he removed them in the fall of 1893 with a book on philosophy which denied any room at all to orthodox theology.

Since his youth, Hill had been groping for a reconciliation of science and religion—he has left a typescript memoir of his life to 1896 which is almost wholly concerned with this intellectual inquiry. Ultimately, in *Genetic Philosophy*, he reached a monastic interpretation of the universe in which it became the expression of "will" or "force" or "Dynamic Reason," of which mind and matter were two aspects held together in a dynamic unity. Where dualism pointed to a mere "chasm" between phenomena,

to be filled by faith, the “unknowable,” or left vacant, he explained, scientific monism placed “Dynamic Reason, with all the possibilities of hope and faith grounded upon reality.” “The Supreme Being, as known to science, is both reason and energy, infinite to our understanding, but not altogether ‘unknowable.’ The elemental concomitance of the psychic and the physical in being as known to us,” he reasoned analogically, “indicates the existence of a psychic unity above our own which may be called cosmic; and if this is not personal, it is because it is more than personal, surpassing the limits within which we are accustomed to circumscribe personality as manifested in ourselves.”⁴

Scholarly reviews, unable to find the scientific basis that Hill claimed for his conclusions, saw little in *Genetic Philosophy* that threatened to turn the world of philosophy on end. But many Baptist journals were critical for quite another reason. The Indianapolis *Baptist*, distressed because Hill’s system led to pantheism, worried about students in the University of Rochester’s classroom of systematic theology. The Boston *Watchman*, while conceding that the book showed candor and courage, took pains to identify its author for parents who were deliberating where to send their children to college. Several Baptist reviews found Hill’s interpretation of the universe materialistic, and almost all took a dim view of his monism. Henry C. Vedder of the *Examiner*, who thought the book’s logic irrefutable, balanced praise with misgivings, for it seemed “to have its end in a materialistic pantheism, of all the philosophies the most dreary and the least reconcilable with Christianity.”

Philosophy by itself was necessarily inadequate to the needs of Christian theology, and he had written as a philosopher rather than a theologian, Hill explained to Vedder. Suppose, however, that he write an article for the *Examiner* showing that genetic philosophy was entirely in harmony with religious conscience? Nothing would be more welcome, Vedder replied, for it would close the mouths of people who were as busy as

ever circulating reports of irreligion at the University. Unfortunately, Hill's article was scarcely conducive to that end. Although ably arguing that his doctrines were not pantheistic, that his conclusions were theistic rather than materialistic, and that monism was supported by both reason and the Scriptures, Hill gave short shrift to orthodox theology. It was historically a patchwork creation of revelation and pagan speculation, lacked inner coherence, and needed to be thoroughly rehabilitated in the light of scholarship and science. When theologians themselves could agree as to what it was, he would undertake to see how far his own doctrines could be reconciled with it. This undisguised scorn took even the *Examiner* aback.

In March, 1894, while Baptist journals were still clucking over *Genetic Philosophy*, Hill delivered the Levering Lectures at Johns Hopkins University. Speaking on "Religion in the Light of Science," he outlined the struggle waged throughout history by science, conscience, and scholarship against theological oppression; called for untrammelled scientific investigation, confident that the authority of the Bible would remain unimpaired; rejected the elaboration of creeds; and, as always, emphasized the prepotent role of Christ in Christianity. The Levering Lectures were annual discourses devoted to the defense and promotion of Christianity, and owing to the recent publication of Hill's book, reported the *National Baptist* and the *Examiner*, particular attention was attracted to them that year.

Sales of *Genetic Philosophy* were disappointingly small, but it received enough publicity in Baptist journals, along with Hill's addresses at Philadelphia and Baltimore, to satisfy conservative Baptists beyond doubt that modernism had taken over the University of Rochester. The last straw for some die-hards was laid in January, 1895, when Hill decided to make an unmistakable declaration of policy. In order to draw support from the whole of western New York, as it should, he told a meeting of the local alumni, the University must enter upon a new course of

development. In every college the transitional point to public usefulness and greatness had been the abandonment of the purely ecclesiastical aim of replenishing the ministry, an aim which subordinated knowledge to dogma. The University of Rochester had started right in this regard; its founders had wanted to educate men in general rather than ministers in particular, and to join with non-Baptists in this work, and no honest man had ever doubted the institution's Christian character. Later, a retrogressive spirit had appeared. Although this spirit had not triumphed or shown much strength, the plain course of the University was to maintain the purpose of its founders.

On March 4 the Genesee Baptist Ministerial Association, meeting at the Theological Seminary, responded with a formal set of resolutions which declared that the University had been founded in the interests of the Baptist denomination, had been held true to that end throughout the administration of Dr. Anderson, and should continue to be held true to that end. This did not involve a narrow sectarianism, the ministers said, but it did require "that in the weight and ability of its teaching force, its governing officers and executive agents, the denomination which it represents shall be easily foremost; . . . that the influence of every classroom shall be unequivocally Christian in the sense which Baptists put upon that term; and . . . that in order that the education given in the University may be Christian in this sense, it must be held close to the heart of the churches of the denomination which gave it life."

Special invitations to the meeting had been sent out, one of the four alumni of twenty-four ministers present had been selected to present the resolutions, and they were immediately released to local and denominational newspapers. But who wrote and promoted them was never disclosed. Direct questioning by Hill and Cooke of several of the clergymen as to why they had taken this action brought only vague replies about in-

jured Baptist sensibilities and "current tendencies." The Reverend Frederick L. Anderson, pastor of the Second Baptist Church and member of the Seminary executive committee, was no less vague from the height of his pulpit. "Current tendencies," he explained, had persuaded the ministers that the University was in real danger of being taken from the denomination's control, and they felt it their duty to declare that if origination, money, labor, and possession counted for anything, it was a Baptist institution. "To take it out of Baptist hands, either formally or virtually, is simple stealing. It is easy to be liberal with other people's institutions and other people's money. We do not propose to look on and see our property stolen without protest. It strikes us as a question of common honesty."⁵ It was at best an ill-tempered tirade, yet Dr. Strong stated for the newspapers that he endorsed every word of Dr. Anderson's address, just as he had endorsed the resolutions. The Reverend C. A. Barbour, president of the Ministerial Association, however, later publicly declared that he had been misled into voting for the resolutions by statements which he afterwards learned were untrue.

The resolutions had to be answered, Hill told the executive committee of the trustees, for they were an attack on the University designed to convert it to purely ecclesiastical ends, and they brought into question the fidelity of every member of the corporation. For the full board, meeting in June, he historically documented that the University's purpose as interpreted by its founders and by Dr. Anderson had always been educational, not ecclesiastical, and he called upon the trustees to reaffirm that purpose in order to remove all doubts about the institution's future policy. The committee charged with considering his report then endorsed it, in language no one could misunderstand, with an emphatic declaration of the University's independence from ecclesiastical interference. The trustees approved both reports without a dissenting vote, though perhaps with one or

two unwilling ones. There was never again any question as to what the intellectual stance of the University would be.

Hill had broken the University away from an outdated patriarchal mold and equally outdated ecclesiastical meddling. He had modernized its instruction and infused its students, faculty, and trustees with new enthusiasm. Equally significant, his whole administration had been one of a new appeal to the community on a credo of expanded usefulness; and he did arouse in the city an interest that would ultimately help make the University the institution he envisaged. But the translation of this interest into financial support to the measure needed was just beginning. Between 1888 and 1895, gifts to the University amounted to over \$357,000, virtually a third as much as had been raised in the previous thirty-seven years of its existence, and over sixty percent of it came from non-Baptists. Yet because of its considerably enlarged program, the University still had a small annual deficit. To sustain its work at the level it had reached required at least \$100,000 additional endowment, Hill reported to the trustees in June, 1895, and unless this were obtained the work that should go on expanding would have to be reduced. Before the year was out, an unprecedented expression of community interest in the University promised, briefly, to provide this sum.

The day after the trustee meeting, Hill handed Dr. Moore his resignation, to take effect any time in the coming year convenient for the University. He had intended to present it at the meeting but had deferred to advice that it would be best for the University if it were not made public until shortly before he was to leave. Despite the board's emphatic endorsement of his policy, he knew that his work at the University could never be wholly congenial, and it was a step he had long been considering. The past unpleasantness had not affected him alone; his wife, as one of the "aliens," had been made the subject of a whispered scandal for having led him so far astray as to be

married, take communion, and have their children christened in her church. Hill also had new ambitions. Like not a few college presidents of those years, he looked longingly to a diplomatic post abroad, an aspiration probably kindled by his friendship with Andrew D. White, president of Cornell University and former United States Ambassador to Russia. He also wanted to write a history of the diplomacy of Europe, an idea inspired by Professor Morey, for which a diplomatic mission in Europe would ideally offer leisure and opportunity for research.

That autumn Hill prevailed on the trustees to make his resignation known, and on November 20 the local papers announced that he would leave the University in June. The next day every student in the college joined in petitioning him to stay. The faculty published an open letter, signed by every member, defending his administration and urging him to remain. In the next few weeks various educational, religious, professional, and business organizations in the city similarly petitioned him not to leave. The Chamber of Commerce appointed a special committee to confer with the trustees on how he could be induced to stay, and the trustees appointed a special committee to request him to reconsider.

On December 10 Hill promised the trustee committee he would give them a definite answer on January 1. Meantime, a member of the Chamber of Commerce committee suggested that Rochesterians give him the auditorium and gymnasium he had asked for at the last commencement, an inducement to remain which the Rochester *Herald* promptly raised to a quarter of a million dollars and the other dailies took up. On December 20 the Chamber of Commerce announced it would raise \$100,000 by popular subscription—the \$250,000 figure was discarded as beyond reach and not necessary—which on Hill's advice would be used to support free scholarships for local boys which had been causing annual deficits. On January 1, though the Chamber had secured pledges for only \$20,000, it assured Hill the

whole sum could soon be raised and asked for a fair chance to find out exactly how much the people of Rochester thought of their university. Although he apparently never contemplated withdrawing his resignation,⁶ Hill was reluctant to discourage this unique civic effort and agreed to postpone his final answer. In the next few weeks, however, the Chamber was able to raise only \$10,000 more, and finally on March 7 Hill informed the trustees that he could not withdraw his resignation without sacrificing personal plans he greatly desired to carry out. He hoped the scholarship endowment drive would continue, but the Chamber dropped it, blaming the financial stringency of the times.

Without added endowment, the University was left with hard days still ahead. Yet the fact that the city's business community had sponsored a fund-raising drive at all was witness to a new relationship developing between the college and the city. Though an unpleasant personal experience, Hill's clash with Baptists determined to hold the institution to sectarian ends had finally brought about acceptance in Rochester of the idea that the University existed, as Hill said, for purposes "larger than any creed or sect."

Upon leaving Rochester, Hill went to Europe to study international law and diplomacy, becoming one of the first Americans to prepare scholastically for a career in diplomacy. Between 1898 and 1911 he was successively First Assistant Secretary of State under John Hay and United States envoy to Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Germany. He served in these posts with distinction, and became particularly involved in the century-old international arbitration movement that reached its climax in the two decades before World War I. He completed three volumes of his planned six-volume history of the diplomacy of Europe, which were reputed to be the best works on the subject in English, but following his retirement from the diplomatic service he laid the project aside. Liberal in the realms of religion

and education, he was deeply conservative in his political convictions, and when progressivism triumphed in the United States and Woodrow Wilson entered the White House the affronts to this conservatism were too great to be ignored for the Muse of history. Devoting his voice and pen to these issues, and then to others that followed, especially the questions of American membership in the League of Nations and the World Court, Hill was until his death in 1932 one of the country's most prolific publicists.

NOTES

*Aubrey Parkman, Professor of History at Tufts University, wrote his doctoral dissertation at the University of Rochester on David Jayne Hill several years ago. He has extracted and revised portions of it for this article. *Editor*.

1. Hill was elected president in June, 1888, but as an inducement to accept was given an immediate year's leave of absence for study and travel in Europe.

2. David Jayne Hill, "As It Seemed to Me: Confidences Regarding the Inner and Outer Phases of a Varied Life," pp. 612-613.

3. Quoted in the Rochester *Herald*, August 18, 1893, from a manuscript submitted by Hill. The wording is almost the same as originally reported in the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*, June 23, 1893.

4. David J. Hill, *Genetic Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1893), pp. 371-372.

5. Determined not to be misquoted, Anderson gave his manuscript to reporters after the service. Rochester *Herald*, April 1, 1895.

6. Several years later, when asked about rumors of his becoming president of Columbian (now George Washington) University, another Baptist institution in financial trouble, Hill retorted that he wouldn't give the proposition a moment's consideration. "It would put me once more into a situation that it took me two or three years to get out of and which, with the Lord's help, I shall never get into again."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The private papers used in the preparation of this article were the Hill and Anderson Papers at the University of Rochester, the Andrew D. White Papers at Cornell University, and the Hill Papers at Bucknell University. Especially important in the last collection is a typescript memoir to 1896, devoted largely to Hill's philosophical speculations, entitled, "As it Seemed to Me: Confidences Regarding the Inner and Outer Phases of a Varied Life." Hill's address to the Baptist Congress in Philadelphia is found in *Proceedings of the Tenth Baptist Congress, . . .* (New York, 1892), and the "Syllabus of the Levering Lectures for 1894 . . ." is in the Hill Papers, Rochester. The records of the University of Rochester consulted were Trustees' Records, Faculty Meeting Records, Treasurer's Statement's, Hill's annual reports to the trustees, and the Inaugural Addresses of Anderson and Hill. The college newspaper, the *Campus*, and yearbook, *Interpres*, the local dailies, and several Baptist journals were of great help, as were accounts of the University's history by William C. Morey, Dexter Perkins, John R. Slater, Joseph H. Gilmore, and Jesse L. Rosenberger.