

would be turned in this direction. And they will be. The progress of the physical sciences in the nineteenth century will in the coming century be paralleled by advances in the psychological sciences. Science and education have given us democracy; it is the duty and the privilege of democracy to repay its debt by forwarding science and education to an extent not hitherto known in the world's history.

J. McKEEN CATTELL

THE PROFESSORSHIP OF PHILOSOPHY AND  
PSYCHOLOGY AT LAFAYETTE  
COLLEGE

At a largely attended joint meeting of the American Philosophical Association and the American Psychological Association, held at New Haven, December 31, 1913, the report of a committee appointed to inquire into the circumstances connected with the resignation of Dr. John M. Mecklin from the professorship of philosophy and psychology at Lafayette College was read and approved, *nemine contradicente*, and ordered printed. The committee was composed of Professors A. O. Lovejoy, of Johns Hopkins (*Chairman*), J. E. Creighton, of Cornell; E. Hocking, of Yale; E. B. McGilvary, of Wisconsin; W. T. Marvin, of Rutgers; G. H. Mead, of Chicago, and H. C. Warren, of Princeton. The report involves principles of general interest to American university teachers and administrators; and the more essential parts are, therefore, here reproduced at length.

The committee's understanding of the scope and purposes of its inquiry is set forth in its original letter to Dr. E. D. Warfield, president of the college:

The function of the committee is primarily to secure an authoritative statement of the facts in the case which can be laid before the members of the associations (of both of which Professor Mecklin is a member) at their approaching annual meetings, for their information. The concern of these bodies in the matter is twofold. They consist for the most part of members of the university teaching profession, and they are therefore anxious to ascertain the reason for any action which may have

the effect of injuring the professional standing and opportunities of any of their own members. It would seem, in the second place, desirable that the members of these associations should know somewhat definitely what doctrinal restrictions are imposed upon teachers and investigators in philosophy and psychology in the principal American institutions of learning. Such knowledge it is important to our members to have, both in order that their action in making recommendations for positions and the like may be guided thereby, and also that in their judgment of the department of philosophy and psychology in any institution, they may bear in mind the predetermined limits of liberty of opinion which affect the tenure of professorships in that institution. It has been publicly asserted that restrictions of this kind obtain at Lafayette College.

In its attempt to secure the desired information the committee, of course, turns first to yourself and to Professor Mecklin. We shall therefore be greatly obliged if you will let us know whether the statements already published in *SCIENCE* and the *Journal of Philosophy* regarding the circumstances of Professor Mecklin's resignation seem to you accurate, and what your understanding is as to the doctrinal requirements imposed upon professors of philosophy and psychology at Lafayette. The points about which we especially desire to be informed are indicated by the accompanying questions; we shall be obliged if, as an aid to giving definiteness to any statement which the committee may prepare on the subject, you will cover these questions in the reply which we hope you will be good enough to let us have.

The appended questions were as follows:

1. Was the resignation of Professor Mecklin called for by the administrative authorities of Lafayette (a) because of certain doctrines held or taught by him; or (b) because of certain doctrines contained in the text-books used by him?
2. In either case, what, specifically, were the opinions or teachings to which objection was made?
3. Are the statements made by Professor Mecklin in *The Journal of Philosophy* of September 25, 1913, regarded by the administrative authorities of Lafayette College as giving a substantially accurate and sufficient account of the facts in the case?
4. Is subscription to any specified creed a requisite to appointment to a professorship in Lafayette College?
5. Are the professors of philosophy and psychology required, so long as they hold their positions,

to conform their teachings to any specified creed or doctrine?

6. If so, what is this creed?

7. Are similar requirements imposed upon professors of other departments, such as biology and geology?

8. In case of alleged deviation by any professor from the doctrinal standards of the college, by whose interpretation of these standards is such deviation determined?

To these inquiries the committee reports that it has been unable to secure any definite answers from the president of Lafayette. After a month's delay, a reply to the above letter signed by President Warfield, the president of the board of trustees and the chairman of the curriculum committee, was received; but it "could be construed by the committee only as a courteous declination to furnish the definite information desired." A subsequent letter from President Warfield "accentuated this declination." The first of these communications does, however, contain at least one statement which a member of the board of trustees formally declares to the committee to be "not in accordance with the facts." In spite of this refusal of information by the college administration, the committee secured a large mass of evidence from other sources—trustees, members of the faculty, and former students under Professor Mecklin—and arrived at certain conclusions bearing upon three general questions. The committee's findings upon each of these are in part as follows:

I. *What, before the present case arose, has been the accepted understanding as to the limits of freedom in philosophical and psychological teaching at Lafayette College?*

American colleges and universities fall into two classes: Those in which freedom of inquiry, of belief and of teaching is, if not absolutely unrestricted, at least subject to limitations so few and so remote as to give practically no occasion for differences of opinion; and those which are frankly instruments of denominational or political propaganda. The committee does not consider itself authorized to discuss the question whether the existence of both sorts of institution is desirable. If, therefore, the present case were one in which a teacher in a professedly denominational college had in his teaching expressly repudiated some

clearly defined and generally accepted doctrine of that denomination, the committee would not feel justified in proceeding further with the matter. These associations should, in the committee's opinion, intervene in questions of this sort only for three ends: (1) To ascertain which institutions do, and which do not, officially profess the principle of freedom of teaching; (2) to ascertain, with a fair degree of definiteness, in the case of those institutions which do not, what the doctrinal limitations imposed upon their teachers of philosophy and psychology are; and (3) to call attention publicly to all instances in which, in institutions of the former sort, freedom of teaching appears to have been interfered with, or in which, in institutions of the latter sort, restrictions other than those antecedently laid down appear to have been imposed.

Upon the question whether Lafayette is to be classed with institutions of the first or second type, the committee finds a surprising measure of disagreement among officers, teachers and graduates of the college. Article VIII. of the college charter provides:

"That persons of every religious denomination shall be capable of being elected trustees, nor shall any person, either as principal, professor, tutor or pupil, be refused admittance into said college, or denied any of the privileges, immunities or advantages thereof for or on account of his sentiments in matters of religion."

In accordance with this clause of the charter, a trustee writes the committee as follows:

"I need not remind you that Lafayette College is not a theological institution, nor does it profess to teach or impose upon its teachers or students, any creed or doctrinal religious standards. . . . Whatever may be Dr. Mecklin's impression of the attitude of the president, so far as the trustees and faculty of the institution are concerned, I know of no policy or shaping thereof that in any way involves the recognition or inculcation of any sectarian creed, Presbyterian or otherwise, much less any particular type of Presbyterianism." This interpretation of the charter—which is obviously in harmony with its text—is evidently shared by other members of the board of trustees.

On the other hand, the testimony of some members of the faculty, and that of President Warfield and two trustees, is that there is a general assumption that the teaching of professors must be in harmony with the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church. The General Catalogue

(1912-13) contains the following statement (p. 146):

"The aim of Lafayette College is distinctly religious. Under the general direction of the Synod of Pennsylvania of the Presbyterian Church, its instruction is in full sympathy with the doctrines of that body. At the same time religious instruction is carried on with a view to a broad and general development of Christian character, within the lines of general acceptance among Evangelical Christians, the points of agreement, rather than those of disagreement, being dwelt upon."

The last sentence would appear to indicate the understanding upon which Professor Mecklin accepted the call to the professorship of philosophy and psychology in 1904; he writes that he then and at all times recognized that his teaching, "as well as that of every other professor," was to be "in accord with Christianity in the broad Evangelical interpretation of that term."

Here, then, would appear to be three distinct views of the position and policy of the college: It is committed to no specific creed; it is committed only to the principles of "Evangelical Christianity"; and it is committed to the principles of the Presbyterian Church. The committee, for the rest of this report, assumes that substantially the last-mentioned view is to be taken as the answer to the first question,—that, in the words of a trustee, it has been "commonly understood that the teachings in such departments [*i. e.*, those of philosophy and psychology] are in general to be in harmony with the doctrines of philosophy usually taught and held in the Presbyterian Church." But the committee can not but think it highly undesirable that in any college a question of such importance should be left open to such divergent official answers; and it appears of doubtful legality that the prevailing practise in the matter should be in express contradiction with an unreppealed clause in the college charter.

II. The second question which the committee has endeavored to answer is: *What were the actual grounds upon which Professor Mecklin's resignation was asked for, and what do these indicate as to the doctrinal limitation imposed upon professors in philosophy and psychology under the present administration of the college?* Upon this the committee's findings are as follows:

1. No connected and altogether definite statement seems ever to have been formulated of the specific points in Professor Mecklin's teaching to which objection was made, or of the manner in

which these were held to conflict with Presbyterian principles. A member of the board of trustees of the college, who was present at the meeting of the curriculum committee at which the matter was first brought forward, states that he was unable from the discussion at that meeting, or in any other way, to ascertain precisely on account of what charges as to doctrines held or taught by him Professor Mecklin was dismissed. This trustee writes that the accusations of erroneous doctrines or opinions made against Professor Mecklin at this meeting "were indefinite and as far as I am concerned remain so to this present time." Another correspondent conversant with the facts writes the committee that the president of the college simply asserted that "the doctrines set forth in certain text-books adopted by Professor Mecklin, viz., Angell on Psychology, Dewey and Tufts on Ethics, McDougall on Social Psychology, and Ames on the Psychology of Religious Experience, were a departure from the doctrines that had been taught in the college in previous years. No definite statement was ever made by the president to the board of trustees, so far as I recollect, of the exact teachings to which he made objections, other than the general objections to the text-books above mentioned, and a general and indefinite statement that the teachings of Professor Mecklin were not in harmony with the traditional teachings of the college in the department of philosophy. Previously to Professor Mecklin's occupying the chair of philosophy, the teaching in that department had for some years been by Presbyterian clergymen who devoted a portion of their time thereto, but did not undertake to present to the student any clearly defined system of philosophical instruction. Professor Mecklin undertook to introduce such a system of instruction, in line with other first-class educational institutions, some of which were well-known Presbyterian colleges, and used in connection therewith, among others, the text-books above mentioned. Some of his teachings as inferred from the said text-books were objected to by the president as contrary to the traditional teaching of the college on these subjects. The board of trustees did not pass upon the questions raised, although they discussed them, and there was a difference of opinion among them on the subject. Some of the trustees, feeling it desirable that a controversy of a religious or denominational aspect should be avoided, thought it wisest, in view of all the circumstances, to advise Professor Mecklin to resign rather than have the

discussion proceed to a vote, which might or might not have been in his favor." There seems, in short to be no general and clear understanding among the members of the board of trustees and the faculty of the college as to the precise doctrinal grounds upon which the president's insistence on Professor Mecklin's dismissal was based. It is the opinion of the committee that in no institutions, of whatever type, should a professor be compelled to relinquish his position for doctrinal reasons, except upon definite charges, communicated to him in writing and laid, with the supporting evidence, before the entire board of trustees and the faculty; and that it is unfortunate in any case of this kind that, even by agreement between the persons concerned, the matter should fail to be brought to an explicit issue before the responsible governing body of the institution.

The committee, however, reports that, so far as can be determined in the absence of definite charges, the president's original and decisive objection to Professor Mecklin's teaching was, in the words of another professor at Lafayette, "based upon Dr. Mecklin's use of the doctrine or theory of evolution in his discussion of the growth of religion."

The committee observes that "as a body it has no competency to discuss whether or not the doctrines and text-books in question are or are not in harmony with Presbyterian standards." With regard, however, to the restrictions now imposed at Lafayette the committee reports as follows:

The committee is forced to conclude that at Lafayette College at the present time tenure of the professorship of philosophy and psychology is, in practise, subject not only to the requirement that the teachings of the incumbent shall be in substantial harmony with the commonly accepted doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, but also to the requirement that his teachings shall be in substantial harmony with the theological opinions of the administrative authorities of the college, and with their interpretation of the philosophical implications of those opinions. The committee also concludes that the statement of the Lafayette College Catalogue, that the religious instruction there "is carried on within the lines of general acceptance among evangelical Christians, the points of agreement, rather than those of disagreement, being emphasized," is not accurately descriptive of the present policy and practise of the college. The

committee further gathers from various evidence brought to its knowledge that the administration of the college disapproves of the mere presentation to the students, through text-books or collateral reading, of any philosophical views which it regards as seriously erroneous, and discourages instruction which has the effect, as Professor Mecklin's evidently had, of provoking thought and stimulating discussion and debate among the students upon philosophical and religious issues.

III. The third general question taken up by the committee concerns the attitude of the administrative authorities of Lafayette College towards the committee's inquiry. This attitude, as indicated above, was one of unwillingness to give the information asked for. Upon this the report makes the following comments:

It is true that President Warfield [in his last letter to the committee] gives as a reason for his refusal to make "a statement with regard to these matters" a formal request by "those who were recognized as speaking for Professor Mecklin" that "no information should be given out with regard to what took place before the board of trustees except that after the consideration of a report from the curriculum committee Dr. Mecklin offered his resignation which was accepted and that he was granted a year's salary." President Warfield thus represents his reticence as actuated, at least in part, by a deference to Professor Mecklin's wishes. Upon this matter Professor Mecklin makes the following statement to the committee: that no such request was made to the trustees by his authority, that, on the contrary, he regarded such a policy of secrecy about the causes and circumstances of his resignation as unfair to him and likely to be detrimental to his professional reputation; that he expressly informed a committee of the trustees which conferred with him that he desired no concealment of the grounds for the action taken; that he has publicly given evidence that such was his desire, by his letter on the case, published in *The Journal of Philosophy*; and that his wish that the facts should be fully made known has come within the knowledge of President Warfield. Your committee notes, also, that there was published in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* of June 20, 1913, a long and circumstantial (though incomplete) statement (already referred to) by Dr. Warfield respecting Dr. Mecklin's resignation; it can not, therefore, be said that hitherto "no information" has been "given to the public with regard to what took place be-

fore the board of trustees," beyond that contained in the letter above cited. In view of these circumstances the committee finds itself unable to suppose that the decisive reason for President Warfield's reluctance to answer its inquiries is his consideration for the interests and wishes of Professor Mecklin. The committee notes, moreover, that two out of the three questions last laid before President Warfield asked for information, not about the resignation of Professor Mecklin, but about the general policy of the college and the specific credal requirements attaching to the professorship of philosophy and psychology. These inquiries, also, President Warfield has declined to answer. He intimates, indeed, that he regards it as improper for persons not connected with the college to ask, or for him to answer, "questions concerning the college or its members."

The attitude thus assumed does not seem to this committee one which can with propriety be maintained by the officers of any college or university towards the inquiries of a representative national organization of college and university teachers and other scholars. We believe it to be the right of the general body of professors of philosophy and psychology to know definitely the conditions of the tenure of any professorship in their subject; and also their right, and that of the public to which colleges look for support, to understand unequivocally what measure of freedom of teaching is granted in any college, and to be informed as to the essential details of any case in which credal restrictions, other than those to which the college officially stands committed, are publicly declared by responsible persons to have been imposed. No college does well to live unto itself to such a degree that it fails to recognize that in all such issues the university teaching profession at large has a legitimate concern. And any college hazards its claim upon the confidence of the public and the friendly regard of the teaching profession by an appearance of unwillingness to make a full and frank statement of the facts in all matters of this sort.

The report is published in full in the *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods* for January 29, 1914.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

DR. CALVIN MILTON WOODWARD, emeritus professor of mathematics and applied mechanics and dean of the school of engineering and architecture of Washington University, past

president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, of the board of regents of the University of Missouri and of the St. Louis Board of Education, died from apoplexy on January 12, aged seventy-seven years.

SIR DAVID GILL, the distinguished British astronomer, for many years astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope, died on January 24, at the age of seventy years.

COLONEL WILLIAM C. GORGAS has been nominated to be surgeon-general of the army of the United States, with the rank of brigadier-general.

DR. S. S. GOLDWATER has been appointed commissioner of health for New York City to succeed Dr. Ernst J. Lederle.

CHARLES W. ELIOT, president emeritus of Harvard university, had been elected a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation for the term of three years.

DR. J. S. HALDANE, reader in physiology at Oxford, has been chosen as Silliman lecturer at Yale University for next year.

THE organizing committee, selected by the American members of the international committee of the Second International Eugenics Congress, has met in New York City and unanimously elected Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn as president of the congress. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell was elected honorary president. The congress will be held in New York City near the end of September, 1915.

PROFESSOR ANDREW C. McLAUGHLIN, head of the department of history in the University of Chicago, was elected president of the American Historical Association at its recent meeting in Charleston, South Carolina.

At the recent annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association held in New York City, Professor Roland B. Dixon, of Harvard University, was reelected president; and Professors Franz Boas, of Columbia University, and George Grant MacCurdy, of Yale University, were designated to represent the association at the International Congress of Americanists, to be held in Washington, D. C., October 5 to 10, 1914.