

to the greater number, hence they make the little they do go as far as possible. This is a superficial scholar—a writer of considerable prettiness but not much force or depth.

In his last years Yates became alienated from President ELIPHALET NOTT, partly because Nott had failed to appoint him Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy when Francis Wayland resigned in 1826, but also because his influential family—especially his uncle, HENRY YATES—quarreled with Nott over the LOTTERIES.

The trustees abolished Yates's position at the end of 1848/49, ostensibly because there was too little demand for "Oriental Literature" (though they promptly hired TAYLER LEWIS, with a similar title, to teach Hebrew and Greek). Both the board and Nott insisted that the president, who was ill at the time, did not initiate the action, but he probably did not object. Yates, who held Nott responsible, is said to have responded with a complaint to state assemblyman Robert H. Pruyn which led to the very troublesome legislative investigation of Nott's handling of College funds.

During his final year on the faculty Yates had become involved in a serious personal scandal, which may have influenced the board's action. It became public after his death, as his friends and enemies traded blows in the newspapers, but the details remain obscure.

As nearly as the story can be reconstructed, sometime around the beginning of 1849, Yates, a widower since 1842, announced his intention to remarry. The match itself was seen as so unsuitable that he was said to believe that only the governor (an ex officio trustee) could prevent Union from dismissing him; his chief adversary, James P. Fisher '39, thought the woman would be better off dead than married to Yates. Yates' connection with the woman was, at least for a while, believed even by many of his friends to be a "guilty" one, and charges were made against him in the church where he preached as supply; they were apparently dropped when he requested dismission from the church. Yates' physician was said to have described his patient as suffering from "an alienation of mind"—a diagnosis in which Nott seems to have concurred.

One suspects that the woman was quite young (Yates was forty-eight) and a member of his household; a servant or possibly a distant relative, but nothing is known about her, and despite rumors, it was never established that Yates had done anything improper; indeed, the funeral address by Dr. Campbell claimed, "There was one statement of his enemies upon which all other evil reports were made to rest as upon a firm foundation; and this statement it was which gave substance to shadows, opened the mouths of the malicious, and silenced friends. But in last February this statement was proved to be utterly false."

Yates accepted a call to the Reformed Church in Jersey City, but he died in a cholera epidemic before

leaving Schenectady. On his deathbed he was reconciled with Nott.

**Yudis Prize.** Following the death in the fall of 1956 of Eugene I. Yudis, who had graduated from Union the previous year, his friends established the Yudis Prize for creative writing. It was awarded for the first time in 1958.

**Zabuesnic, Augustus Philipp** (1887–Feb. 1963). Professor of Modern Languages, 1927–44.

Apparently born in Landshut, Bavaria, A.P. Zabuesnic was the son of a Freiherr (Baron) von Zabuesnic, a music correspondent, and his wife, the former Fraulein von Hagel. His grandfather, General Anton von Zabuesnic, commanded a Bavarian army corps during the Franco-Prussian War. After preparatory school in Vienna, Zabuesnic probably attended the Sorbonne and the University of Munich, before emigrating to Canada about 1913 to escape service in the German army.

Even these basic biographical facts are not entirely certain because, throughout his career, Zabuesnic disseminated contradictory information about his origins and education. There is little agreement among the four *curricula vitae* he prepared—two at Union College and two at Lafayette College—as to the details of his education or his teaching experience. He always reduced his age by two or three years, claiming to have been born in 1889 or 1890, and he carefully concealed, even from his closest friends, his German birth (at Union, he claimed to have been born in Prague; at Lafayette, in Vienna). The fact that he gave conflicting information to the same institution suggests a cavalier attitude toward dates and a disinclination or inability to check documents. Concealment of his German origins, however, is probably explained as a reaction to the anti-German feelings generated by the First World War.

After serving as an instructor in French and German at the University of Alberta from 1913 to 1914 or 1915, he came to the United States, probably to avoid internment as an enemy alien. He taught French and Spanish at several preparatory schools until 1927, except for the period 1919–21, when he lived on Capri with a friend and worked for a time in Naples as a Thomas Cook's tourist guide. He became a naturalized American citizen in 1921.

He came to Union as instructor in French and Spanish in 1927, after his friend JAMES GREEN informed him of a vacancy. John C. Davis '37, his student and later a friend, described Zabuesnic in his book *The ordered web*:

He was tall, distinguished, almost skeletally thin, with receding blond hair which he combed and brushed frequently....

[H]e always behaved as someone young, with both the energy and rapid intellectual inconsistencies of youth, and

students gathered around him because he seemed their constant contemporary. Especially did they follow him in his preference for emotion over reason, to which he paid almost no attention.

Elsewhere, Davis recalled his French classes:

A dramatic personality in the classroom, capable of leaping on a chair to show how Sarah Bernhardt declaimed Racine's *Phèdre*, he was popular with students, and used French almost exclusively, interposing English equivalents here and there, which kept up both the interest and understanding of his classes. He was never dull. His personality, antics, and sheer difference from others in the Department excited amusement and jealousies...

Among those who were not "Zabby's" fans was GEORGE DANTON, who came to Union as Modern Language department chairman in 1935. He objected to Zabuesnic's anti-scholarly attitude, insisted Munich had never awarded the kind of degree Zabuesnic claimed to possess, and complained to President Fox of the professor's "personal disloyalty."

The Second World War diminished the demand for French courses, and the College gave Zabuesnic a leave of absence for 1943/44 to teach during the summer at the Northampton School for Girls and during the academic year at the Englewood County Day School for Boys. When the year ended, although Zabuesnic and Fox had been friends, Fox pointed out to Danton that the untenured Zabuesnic's failure to extend his leave allowed the College to close the door on the possibility of his return. With Danton's strong encouragement, Fox diplomatically elicited Zabuesnic's formal resignation in December 1944.

After teaching during 1945/46 at the Lawrenceville School, Zabuesnic obtained an instructorship in foreign languages at Lafayette College. Promoted to assistant professor in 1954, he retired the following year, but returned to teach during 1957-59.

He died of a stroke while visiting Rome. When friends arrived to arrange for the burial of his ashes in the Protestant Cemetery there and for the disposition of his possessions, they began to learn the truth about his origins.

**Zeta Beta Tau (Eta chapter).** A national fraternity, Zeta Beta Tau grew out of a Zionist organization begun on December 29, 1898, in New York City. A group of young men attending various universities there gathered at the Jewish Theological Seminary under the guidance of Rabbi Gustav Gottheil and his son, Columbia University professor Richard Gottheil, to form an organization calling itself ZBT. The name came from

the Hebrew transliteration of Isaiah 1:27—"Zion *Bemishpat Tippadeh*" ("Zion shall be redeemed by justice.") In 1901 the group transformed itself into a social college fraternity, the pioneering Jewish fraternity.

Nationally, Zeta Beta Tau was originally composed largely of German Jews and was the most aristocratic of the early Jewish fraternities. It has been officially non-sectarian since 1954.

A Union chapter was first chartered December 27, 1909; the seven charter members came from various branches of Union University. The constitution stated that the object of the fraternity was to promote fraternal union among Jewish college men.

The Union chapter died out about 1933; there were by that time three other Jewish fraternities at Union.

National Zeta Beta Tau merged in 1969 with PHI SIGMA DELTA, and in 1970 with PHI EPSILON PI, both of which had chapters at Union. However, both Union chapters went out of existence soon after that time, and Zeta Beta Tau did not significantly return to Union until 1977. A Union chapter was rechartered on January 17, 1978, and at that time was named the Epsilon Iota chapter, but it continued to call itself the Eta chapter.

Nationally, Zeta Beta Tau became in 1988 the first fraternity to abolish hazing by abolishing pledging and all secondary classes of membership.

During its first life at Union, Zeta Beta Tau had rooms in Old Gym from at least 1922 until 1927, except for 1925/26, when it was at 850 Union Street. When the chapter was reactivated in 1978, it was assigned to the North Section of Davidson House, where it remained until voting at the end of 1995/96 to disband owing to dwindling membership.

**Zeta Psi (Theta chapter).** A national fraternity founded June 1, 1847, at New York University, Zeta Psi was the first national fraternity founded at an urban university. The Union chapter was formed March 4, 1856, at the impetus of three Zeta Psi members who had transferred from Colby College. The ten charter members included two seniors: Charles Wayne Sanger and Jesse Shepherd; four juniors: Clinton Howe, Mark Walton Piper, John Hart Prentiss and Franc Byron Wilkie; two freshmen: William Cowan Jones and Archibald Smith McClure, and two men not on the College roster: Alexander Bullions Morye and George Clinton Harrington.

Although only three of the founders eventually graduated from Union, the chapter lasted for fifteen years; despite officially ceasing to exist in 1868, it initiated its last member in 1871.