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## April 1900

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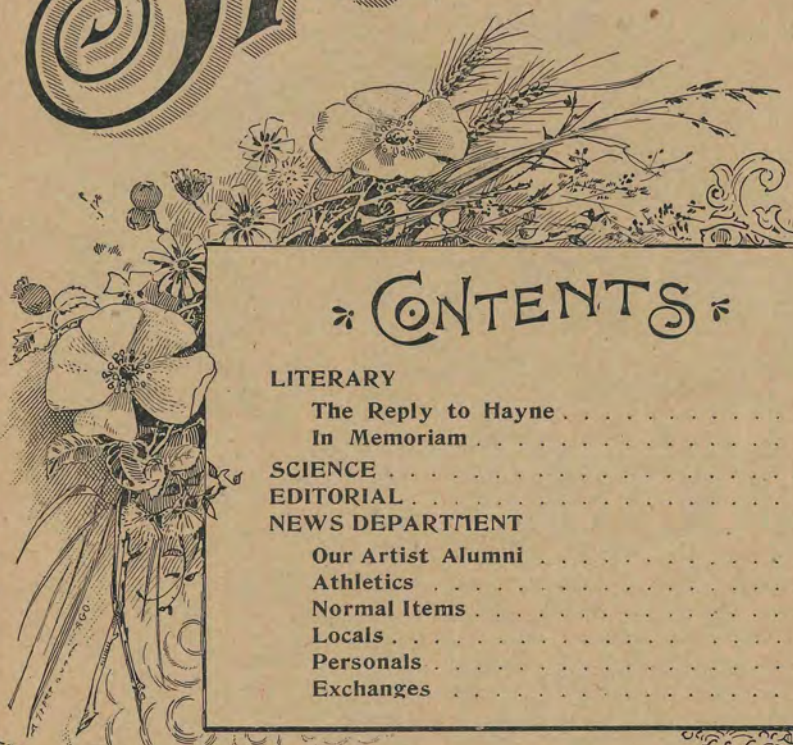
Elizabeth C. ...

APRIL, 1900

Vol. XIII

No. VI

# THE STUDENT



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# The Student

UNIVERSITY, NORTH DAKOTA

Volume XIII - Number Six

APRIL, 1900

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△ △ △ LITERARY △ △ △

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## The Reply to Hayne.

In the history of nations there are events which cast their shadow on the future for years and even centuries. Such an event was that which occurred in the Senate Chamber of the United States on the 26th day of January, just seventy years ago, when Daniel Webster delivered that famous speech popularly known as the "Reply to Hayne."

For years men's ideas of the Constitution and of the Union had been confused. They did not realize that they had advanced from a loose confederacy to a closely united state and that the Constitution was the sacred bond of union. They did not realize that they controlled the destiny of a mighty nation; that to them was given the sacred trust of the future years.

Some months before this event, South Carolina had received the old doctrine of State Rights, when the legislature had declared the right of the state to secede from the Union, should the tariff law of 1828 be enforced. They had asserted this right of Nullification because the obnoxious law was considered contrary to the Constitution. It had mattered little what men thought of the Constitution in the early days of the Republic, but to threaten the existence of the Federal government now was a more serious thing. The greatness of the struc-

ture which had been erected made its overthrow look very terrible. It made peaceable secession a mockery and a withdrawal from the Union equivalent to civil war. Hence political parties sought a constitutional defense for all doctrines they promulgated. And this is what led Mr. Calhoun to build up that intricate network of subtle reasoning and keen logic in favor of Nullification as a Constitutional principle.

In December, 1829, the inevitable struggle began in the United States senate. In the protracted debate which followed, Senator Hayne of South Carolina, made an elaborate attack on the New England States, to which Daniel Webster replied with the most destructive criticism. This so aroused and humiliated Mr. Hayne that he soon spoke again, delivering an impassioned Phillipic in which he made an attack on New England, on the patriotism of Massachusetts and on Mr. Webster personally. He then expounded fully the doctrine of Nullification as set forth by his master the great "Nullifier," who was then president of the Senate.

Mr. Hayne had boldly carried the standard of Nullification into the Senate of the United States. The seeds of sedition and rebellion were planted by the ablest champion of State Rights and with the most elaborate reasoning. At this critical juncture of our national affairs, there was only one man in the Senate who was equal to the

task of answering the champion from South Carolina. That one was the great defender of the Constitution, Daniel Webster. On him the very safety of the Union seemed to rest.

The report of the impending conflict had spread abroad, and hundreds of people from all parts of the country had arrived in Washington to hear this debate, so ably conducted on both sides. The North was angered at the attack on the Union. They hoped with an intense longing that it could be repelled, yet doubt and fear swayed their minds, for it seemed a well-nigh impossible task.

The Senate Chamber on that memorable morning presented a scene long to be remembered. The great hall was packed. Every seat on the floor and in the galleries was taken and all available standing room filled. Some had been drawn there by curiosity only; some there were whose confident faces betrayed their exultation in the anticipated defeat of the Northern champion; but there were others who had come with fear in their hearts for the safety of the Union. After the preliminary proceedings of the Senate were finished, a silence, deep and oppressive settled over the assemblage. All eyes were turned toward the senator from Massachusetts. Silently he had sat there during the days of the debate, his calm, massive features giving no sign of feeling at the storm of argument and invective raging about his head. But now his time had come. Slowly he rose. His personal dignity and grandeur produced a deep impression on those who saw him. Never had nature done more for a man than she had for Daniel Webster. It is told that as he was once passing through the streets of London an English navy pointing at him exclaimed, "There goes a god."

In a clear, low tone he began: Mr. President: "When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and before we float farther on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are." The fitting figure, the low voice and easy manner relieved the excited strain of the listeners. Mr. Webster was complete master of the situation.

One by one he took up the arguments of his opponent and like the giant he was, he crushed them. His strong manly gestures seemed to sweep away all opposition, his very statement seemed argument. He answered Mr. Hayne's personal attacks with cool dignity and cold sarcasm, but when New England or the Union was his theme, his eyes glowed and flashed. His voice at times rang forth like a clarion call, then sank into the deep mellow tones of an evening bell. Chains of reason and irrefutable logic were followed with bursts of eloquence and biting sarcasm, touching pathos and burning appeals to patriotism and love of country.

When he showed that Nullification was revolution he had completely answered the South Carolina doctrine; when he drew a picture of practical Nullification he reduced it to ridicule. He caught up the thoughts that men were thinking vaguely and crystallized them in words of grandest eloquence, and the principles which he set forth that day went on broadening and deepening until

thirty years later they had gained sufficient strength to sustain the North in that terrible struggle which resulted in preserving our national life.

Fondly he lingered on the glorious destiny of the Union under the Constitution, and then followed that grand peroration like deep strains of melody from a cathedral organ. "While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise; God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on states dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards;" but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

As he sat down, the friends of the Union knew that this time he could not be an-

swered. They felt that this was one of the great landmarks in history. They were assured that the Union was saved.

G. K. R.

#### In Memoriam.

Edward Beeson Robbins was born at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, June 9, 1871. He removed about 1878 with his parents to Minneapolis, Minn., removing thence in 1882 to Stark County, North Dakota. He lived at Dickinson and Gladstone for about ten years, attending school at Dickinson and subsequently teaching in the county. In 1892 he removed to Grand Forks and entered the preparatory department of the State University, graduating as Bachelor of Arts with the class of 1897. He died at his father's home in Grand Forks, March 2nd, 1900. In November, 1898, he was married to Miss Marie Monroe, of Grafton, N. Dak., who, with an infant son, survives him.

At the funeral services held at the Presbyterian Church, Grand Forks, Sunday afternoon, March 4, President Merrifield spoke in part substantially as follows:

"My impressions of Mr. Robbins almost from the start were those of a young man possessed of an unusually strong and clear mind, rather mathematical in its bent, although he showed great aptitude for all the academic subjects. He was a hard and systematic worker and remarkably even in his work. His remarkable accuracy of scholarship, his clear insight and faculty for lucid exposition soon commended him to Prof. Estes, of the department of mathematics and physics, who requested his appointment as an assistant in that department. In the discharge of his duties as an assistant to Prof. Estes he was frequently

called upon to take charge of classes in mathematics and physics in Prof. Estes' absence or illness, and he displayed on these occasions the qualities of a very successful teacher. He was also a superior writer and speaker. He took second place in at least one of the inter-collegiate oratorical contests in this state and third place in the inter-state contest the same year. All remember his chapel orations as models of chaste, yet at times, highly impassioned oratory. I recall in particular his chapel oration on Wendell Phillips, which struck me as one of the best interpretations of that great agitator's character and achievement that I have ever heard. Mr. Robbins had the true orator's temperament. He possessed in an unusual degree the sympathetic temperament and fervor, coupled with a sense of proportion and a self restraint which are highly effective with an intelligent audience. He was a ready and graceful writer, and contributed freely to the *STUDENT*, a magazine published by the students of the University. For two years—perhaps longer—he was one of the editors of the magazine. He won distinction also as a debater, and was always one of the most active members of the two debating societies at the University in his time. As a debater, he was fluent, forcible, clear, driving his arguments home with a sort of sledgehammer directness and emphasis.

If Mr. Robbins was not conspicuously popular among his mates, it was perhaps in a measure due to the fact that his natural reserve prevented his yielding a ready sympathy to everyone with whom he came in contact; and because his strong convictions and his unbending loyalty to them often-times forced him into quick and unsparing

denunciation of actions or measures which were to him reprehensible, though they might do no violence to accepted student standards of conduct.

For four years Mr. Robbins was a member of one of our military companies and early displayed the qualities of a true soldier. His promotion was rapid and when he left the companies he ranked as Senior Captain, and his was the first of the names sent to the war department that year for honorable mention. When, at the outbreak of the Spanish-American war, the war department decided to appoint to positions in the regular army a number of young men who had served as cadets in institutions receiving military details in the several states, the University was asked to nominate one candidate for First Lieutenancy and Mr. Robbins received the nomination. He reported during the summer of '98 at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, for examination but was rejected on the physical examination for some technical defect of eyesight.

Mr. Robbins early identified himself with the religious interests of the University and was for some years president of the local organization of the Y. M. C. A. He took great interest in its work, presiding at the mid-week prayer meeting and the Sunday evening Bible class and Song Service. He took up this work in no half hearted spirit and no one was ever left in doubt as to his attitude towards Jesus, the Christ. He was one of the foremost students in our Science work at the University, was thoroughly familiar with the latest scientific methods of research, was an ardent believer in the modern doctrine of evolution, but through it all maintained his faith in revealed religion, in the divinity of Christ and in the

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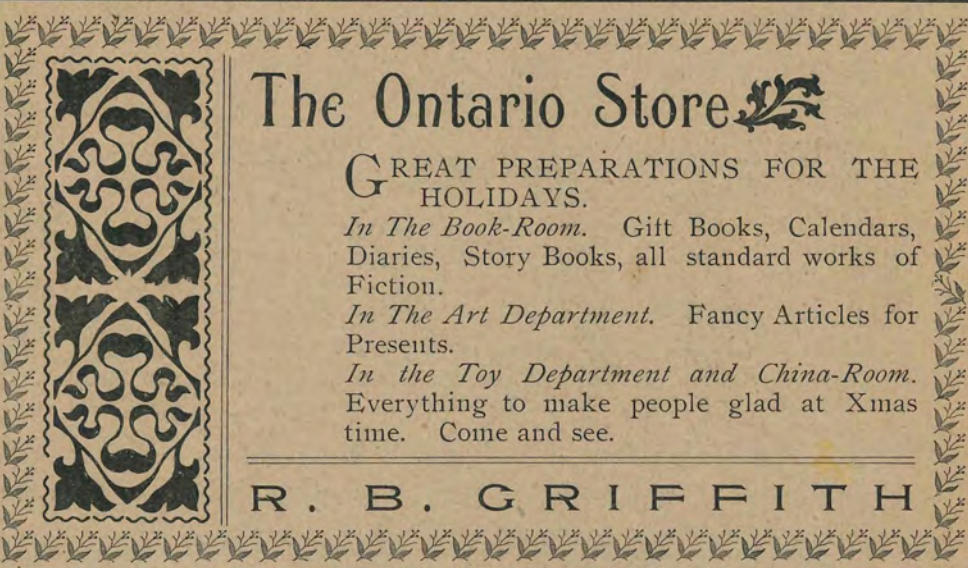
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