It is now nearly ninety years since William D. Moore, then professor of English at the University of Mississippi, collaborated with Eugene W. Hilgard on his famous geological report of that State. The archivists and historians have lost many of his records (if, indeed, they ever sought seriously for information of him), so that what was written ten years ago by W. D. Moore (in another connection) remains as true as it was then: "No record of whence he came, or whither he went (when the University closed in 1861), is to be found at the University." Since the present writer has been for some time gathering materials on the teaching of American literature in Southern universities and colleges before the Civil War, and since there is now no concern for obscurity about this gifted amateur of science, it seems well to put on paper the outline of at least, of what we know of his life and work.

William D. Moore was born at Harper's Ferry, Jefferson County, Va., on January 15, 1824. He was the son of John and Margaret (née were persons of some means) Moore and was prepared for college at a select school or academy in Elizabeth City County, near present Fortress Monroe. He then, at the age early of fourteen or fifteen, entered the Western University of Pennsylvania, at Allegheny City near Pitts- burg. From this college he graduated with the degree of A.B. in 1841. Following graduation, Moore attended for three years the Western Theological Seminary, also at Allegheny City; in April, 1845 (when he had just passed his twenty-first birthday), he was licensed to preach by the Ohio Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, and three months later was ordained by the Redstone Presbytery in western Pennsylvania. For ten years, Moore was a Presbyterian minister in the western part of the State—pastor at Long Run (Armstrong County) from 1845 to 1850, and stated supply there from 1850 to 1856; and pastor at Greensboro (Westmoreland County) from 1850 to 1854. He probably did some teaching in the towns where he had pastoral charges. It was at Greensboro that Moore met a young law- woman, Eliza (Mrs. George) Carter, and his successor, L. Q. C. Lamar (metaphysics and logic), Burrow Norvell Har-
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In 1855, Moore (whose interests had always been in the educational field) followed his bent and was "dismissed" from his presbytery to one in Mississippi, there to become professor of languages (under the presidency of Dr. James Purviance) at Oxford College, a Presbyterian school in Jefferson County, a short distance north of Natches. Here he was professor for three years, until called to the newly-established chair of English Literature in the University of Mississippi at Oxford, under the chancellorship of Dr. Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard. He held this chair until the closing of the University in September of 1861. The fact that Moore was elected, at the early age of $4 to a professorship under Barnard is indicative of the caliber of the man. As Barnard was notably a good judge of men and scholarship. The chair to which Moore was elected was the first of the sort to be established in any Southern college or university. From 1848 (the year of the opening of the University of Mississippi) until 1858, such subjects as rhetoric, elocution, and belles lettres were parts of a large seminar. When Chancellor Barnard (1858) recommended the creation of a chair of English, Moore was elected professor. This is the bare record of his appointment in the minutes of the trustees of the university. "The course of study in English that appears in the next year's catalogues," says Dean David H. Bishop, "shows that he was intelligent. Without over-emphasis on philology, he made an historical approach." Moore extended the work previously offered in English (grammar, rhetoric and punctuation, Junior figures of speech and sentence-analysis) to a fourth year consisting of an historical study of English literature, and a study of Anglo-Saxon. Moore's tendency possibly were veered toward the philological, but in this he had some precedent—the leading college of the South, the university of Virginia, while it gave instruction in Anglo-Saxon from the year 1850, did not have a "school" of the English language and literature until 1885.

Moore served during the last three years of Chancellor Barnard's headship of the University of Mississippi. As colleague he had Edward Carroll Boynton, later Chancellor of the University of North Carolina, and his successor, L. C. Lamar (metaphysics and logic), Burrow Norvell Harwood. This year was 1885, after seven miles from Roslyn, Miss., by the hammock chamber. The southern storm stood out by the General President Board of Domestic Missions. He was a man of great record force. In 1860, Dr. G. S. Edgell was at the front gate of his college on the campus appropriation. In 1840 and 1841 first buildings on the campus were completed. As some time no record was to be found in the present writer. The college gradually became known as the War and yellowfever epidemic. The hot button fand of the College in the reports of the U.S. Commissioner of Education is that of a President of the University of Mississippi and the Albert Alabamian Electrical College, Albion, Miss., in the Albion, Misco. C. S. E. Byrnes, "A Gentleman of the Old Mississippi," 1930, 273.)


Historical Catalogue of the University of Mississippi, 1810-1905, 1916, 45.

"Revered R. Bishop to C. W. Moore, August 15, 1841, 257-260; see also, A. W. Johnson, "A. T. Barnard," 1912, 150-51.)

"Note, page, 8, 45.


"Charles Washington Cather, Methodist minister, born in Virginia, where in 1848 was formed the Methodist Literary Association. Transferred to the Memphis Conference, 1848, and the Texas Conference, 1860; president of Ouachita University, 1860-63; G.A.A. Conference without being expelled, 1861. See, H. C. Marshall, War, Rebellion, and Reconstruction ... 1899, pp. 196-40; passages; also P. A. P. Barnard, Cather, C. W., pages, 114, 115; also John Fulton, Memoirs of Frederick A. P. Barnard, 1899, passages.

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Moore was a man of the most diverse interests. His interest in geological field trips indeed, he was in many ways a great help to Hilgard in his work; when Hilgard in 1860 published his report on the geology and agriculture of Mississippi, he acknowledged the great aid received from Moore. Writing forty years after the event, Hilgard remarks: "The preliminary report was begun at Jackson in May, 1860; the latter parts of the report were largely written while the first portions were passing through the press. But several forms were yet to be printed when the August impressor called me away to Europe, and Professor W. D. Moore, who had previously aided me in working up the lists of fossils, undertook to see the remainder of the work through the press ... And in the work itself, the following contemporary acknowledgment: "My most special acknowledgments are due to Prof. W. D. Moore ... for voluntary assistance not merely occasional, but on a scale commensurate with the intrinsic, precision, and palisome character." I owe to his patient labor the systematic arrangement and labeling of the Survey collections at Oxford ... and the completion of the catalogue of the fossils is almost entirely the fruit of his labor. Of fieldwork I owe the re-examination and more accurate tracing out of the deposits of hydraulic limestone in Tishomingo, the result of which is given in the appendix." It will be seen from the foregoing that Moore's help was not casual or merely official.

The work of the University was broken up with the onset of the Civil War. Chancellor Barnard had hoped that the struggle would be short—that there would be an accommodation of the difficulties of the two sections, North and South, and that there would be no disruption. After the First Manassas, however, it was seen that the struggle would be a long one. Only four students offered themselves for matriculation in the University in the fall of 1861; as a result, all of the faculty resigned. The War went on, and the University did not reopen until the fall of 1866. Moore, like Boynton, Whitehouse, and Barnard, removed to the North; he became chaplain of the Sixth Pennsylvania heavy artillery.

At the close of the War, attracted by the law, Moore studied with his old friend, Senator Cown, at Greensburg, Pa., Professor Cown, P. F. Greenberg, of the law department of the university, a Northern man long resident in the South, had interests transcended the limits of his field, gld L. Q. C. Lamar, graduate of Emory College at Oxford, Ga., professor of metaphysics and logic, was also a gifted mathematician. He was a son-in-law of the former president of the university, Judge Longstreet. His law career was brief, but in law, in 1876, he was elected as Cabinet member, and on the Supreme Bench of the United States. A maintenance of Student and Lamar's deep interest in the law. But for sensational interest in almost all fields. He accompanied Dr. Hilgard, when opportunity offered, on his geological field trips. Indeed, he was in many ways a great help to Hilgard in his work; when Hilgard in 1860 published his report on the geology and agriculture of Mississippi, he acknowledged the great aid received from Moore. Writing forty years after the event, Hilgard remarks: "The preliminary report was begun at Jackson in May, 1860; the latter parts of the report were largely written while the first portions were passing through the press. But several forms were yet to be printed when the August impressor called me away to Europe, and Professor W. D. Moore, who had previously aided me in working up the lists of fossils, undertook to see the remainder of the work through the press ... And in the work itself, the following contemporary acknowledgment: "My most special acknowledgments are due to Prof. W. D. Moore ... for voluntary assistance not merely occasional, but on a scale commensurate with the intrinsic, precision, and palisome character. ... I owe to his patient labor the systematic arrangement and labeling of the Survey collections at Oxford ... and the completion of the catalogue of the fossils is almost entirely the fruit of his labor. Of fieldwork I owe the re-examination and more accurate tracing out of the deposits of hydraulic limestone in Tishomingo, the result of which is given in the appendix. ..." It will be seen from the foregoing that Moore's help was not casual or merely official.
Moore was a man of the most diverse interests. His interest in geology had been awakened at Harper’s Ferry, and in his early twenties was the most strikingly beautiful and instructive geological localities of the Appalachian highlands—and the early years of his pastorate in western Pennsylvania interested his mind. At the Western University of Pennsylvania were doubtless stimulating and provocative ones. Dr. Robert Bruce, his old president at Western University, was a graduate of the University of Edinburgh (1798), and then for five years had studied theology under the approval of the Associate Presbyterian of Perth; and came to America as a missionary in 1806. Bruce was just the man to touch deeply an impressionable, gifted youth; and as broadly trained as Scottish education would permit. The natural sciences were deeply cultivated and the university deservedly famous for its science, and the faculty—the future historian of Rome, was sent to Edinburgh for a scientific education.

Consequently the University of Mississippi as a young man (he was in his thirty-fifth year), Moore entered actively into the life and work of the university. In Barnard, he recognized one of the soundest, most progressive educators in the United States, and a scholar of the first rank in the field of science. Captain Boynton was an excellent chemist; and in Hillgard, Moore found a scientist who ranked with Chancellor Barnard.—no mean compliment. (Where Moore had been pastor fifteen years before) and at Pittsburgh; and was admitted to the bar of Allegheny County in 1866. For two years Moore was U.S. District Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

In 1868 he went into private practice of the law at Allegheny City and Pittsburgh. He was for some time senior member of the legal firm of Moore & McGill; in his later years he was associated with John M. Routie in the practice of law. His practice was largely in the field of commercial law. "He was one of the most eloquent orators at the bar, and for a long time figured in the most states. Moore was a versatile man, widely read in many branches of learning; he would have been a great and perilous character..."
have been eminent had he given his entire attention to any of the professions to which he had at times devoted his attention." Thus it will be seen that his early-awakened scientific interests pursued him to the end.

He spent his declining years in Allegheny City; the last year of his life (he died at the age of seventy-two) he was confined to his room because of illnesses associated with age. Death was probably hastened by a fall received some weeks before his death, which occurred on November 2, 1896.

"Obituary of William D. Moore, in the Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette, Nov. 5, 1896."

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