

New York State Veterinary College
at Cornell University
Ithaca, N. Y.

JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS,
1917.

To the Alumni of the Veterinary College :

Many events have occurred during the last year to occupy one's attention and to cause him to forget, for the time being, college life and its associations. However, the Christmas season gives an opportunity to break away for a brief moment from the stern realities and to reflect upon the agencies which have contributed to give us greater power as workers in the field of conservation either at home, in the camps or at the front. The season's greetings from the college of which you are a part are sent with the hope that they will bring pleasant memories of the past and renewed hopes for the future.

At this time, your first thought will be an inquiry concerning the action of the alumni in connection with the army. Nine of them were veterinary officers in the United States and British armies when war was declared. Since that time, 50 others have joined the veterinary corps and several of them are "somewhere in France." Many others have been commissioned and are waiting to be assigned. They have responded to the country's call in a most loyal manner and in the spirit exhibited by General Wayne of Revolutionary days who wrote to a friend, "I am called to sup, but where to breakfast, either in the enemy's lines in triumph or in the other world!"

Notwithstanding the misfortunes of war, the work at the college is advancing steadily. Many things have been done in the different departments to increase the efficiency of the teaching. This is more pronounced perhaps in the clinics which have increased steadily until last year the cases treated numbered

3,937. The clinics are valuable not only because of the abundance of material but also for the variety of diseases represented. They give the student a wonderful opportunity to acquire knowledge of the practical part of his profession.

There are many trying experiences here as elsewhere on account of the great war. However, the thing more important than these is to have the veterinarians successful in their task of minimizing loss from disease among the food producing animals at home and the beasts of burden assembled for army use. Veterinarians must become missionaries to teach the gospel of prevention. This calls for a close application of knowledge and a still more devoted service. That means that the public will put the stamp of approval upon the profession and be convinced that a veterinarian's call means more than his fee.

In recent years, the college has been losing the younger men from its faculty. Last June Dr. C. P. Fitch resigned and accepted a professorship in the University of Minnesota. He is at the head of the veterinary department in the Agricultural College there. Dr. H. E. Johnson also resigned to accept the place of assistant professor of anatomy in the Michigan State Agricultural College at East Lansing. Our loss is a gain to the profession in the states to which they have gone. Dr. W. A. Hagan, of Manhattan, Kansas, who was with Dr. Williams last year, and a graduate student here, has taken Dr. Fitch's place. We believe it to be wise to have men in the faculty who were trained in other state colleges. Because of the reduction in the number of first year students, the position made vacant by Dr. Johnson's resignation has not been filled.

I am sorry to record the untimely death of Dr. G. S. Skillman, '16, of Ransomville, N. Y. He was killed in an automobile accident near Buffalo. Dr. Skillman is the third of our graduates who have been killed in similar accidents.

It is a pleasure to announce that Dr. Law remains well and active. On February 13, 1918, he will be 80 years old. I am suggesting that each of us send him a word of congratulation on that day. Let us cheer his heart with an assurance of our appreciation of the great service he rendered the profession when

he fought alone for higher veterinary education in America and won.

The faculty is building up as efficient a curriculum as possible. The last report, recently sent you, shows what it is doing. We hope you will feel free to give us the benefit of your suggestions and criticisms. "Our friends tell us of our errors that we may correct them before our enemies find them out." We are working together for the best service that our profession can give and at this time our responsibilities are exceptionally heavy.

Finally, our Christmas greeting carries with it not only the hope for an abundance of pleasure, happiness and prosperity but also a wish for your useful service—"a full share in the work of building an increasingly better world, wherein beauty and usefulness shall be wedded, plenty shall abound and love shall rule."

Sincerely yours,

