FRIEDRICH LIST, 1789-1846

Attributed to Joseph Kriehuber, 1801-1871
Courtesy of the Historical Society of Berks County
THE efforts of Friedrich List and of Lafayette College at educational innovation in the 1820's have been largely ignored. Lafayette College was known before the Civil War as a small Presbyterian College struggling to keep its head above water in the main classical stream of American collegiate education. Studies of the history of higher education have continued to identify the early college with denominationalism and traditionalism. Friedrich List, the German economist who lived in the United States from 1825 to 1830, was identified at the time as a political economist propagating economic protectionism. Later studies of his American career describe him as a theorist for the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Mechanic Arts, and a campaigner for Andrew Jackson in 1828. The indifference to their efforts to break new ground in the field of higher education can be accounted for by their mutual failure. This study examines the proposals of Friedrich List and the founders of Lafayette College, shows the way their educational ideas were a response to the times, and indicates their frustrations in attempts to put new plans into effect.

In February, 1828, a committee of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College invited Friedrich List to be Principal. The recently granted Charter provided "that there should be maintained in the establishment a 'Professorship of the German Language and that in addition to the usual Course of Collegiate..."
Studies, there should be taught in and at the Institution: Military Science and Tactics, and Civil and Military Engineering.” At the same time a graduate of West Point, N. Hall Loring, of Lebanon, Pa., was offered the Professorship of Military Science and Tactics and Civil and Military Engineering. Friedrich List was to be Principal and Professor of the German Language, and was expected as well to organize the instruction in “the usual Course of Collegiate Studies.”

Friedrich List knew of the founding of the College, had followed the progress of the bill of incorporation through both houses of the state legislature and had seriously considered, in March of 1826, as the Charter was being approved, applying for the German professorship. His interest in the act of incorporation had been aroused in part by the name of the college, for General Lafayette had been his friend and benefactor. In 1828 he was ardently advocating the establishment in Philadelphia of an institution very similar to that provided for by the Charter of Lafayette College and was now hoping to serve on its faculty if it were to be established. At Lafayette he could probably have held a chair to his liking and might have formed the entire college in the image of his ideas. The result would have been an institution similar with respect to technical instruction to only four then in existence. By virtue of the anticipated alliance of technical instruction with modern languages and “the Usual Course of Col-

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2 James Madison Porter, et al., to Friedrich List, February 16, 1828, copy attached to the Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 1, 1828: Minute Book of Lafayette College, Vol. 1, 17, Lafayette College Archives. On February 16, 1828, the Board of Trustees had appointed a committee of three “to ascertain whether suitable persons can be obtained as principal and professors in the Institution and upon what terms.” James Madison Porter was Chairman of the committee. The other members were Jacob Wagener and William Shouse. See David B. Skillman, A Biography of a College (2 vols., Easton, Pa., 1932), for an excellent narrative of the early history of Lafayette College.

3 List, Friedrich, Schriften, Reden, Briefe, edited by the Friedrich List-Gesellschaft (Berlin, R. Hobbing, 1927-35), 10 volumes in 12, VIII, 338. This is a draft of a letter to General Lafayette, dated March 1, 1826, in which he writes of the founding of the college and asks for the General’s influence in getting him a position there. There is, however, no indication in any of Lafayette’s letters to List that he received this request for help.

4 The American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy (later known as Norwich University) founded in 1819; the Gardiner Lyceum, founded in 1822, but lasting only until 1832; Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, founded in 1824; and West Point. See James G. McGivern, “Polytechnic College of Pennsylvania (A Forgotten College),” in Journal of Engineering Education, Vol. 52 (1961), No. 2, 106.
"Legiate Studies" Lafayette College might have been far superior to these other technical institutes and have presented an early experiment in the combination of Engineering and the Liberal Arts.

List emerged suddenly from obscurity into national prominence in the summer and fall of 1827. He had emigrated from Germany in 1825 at the urging of General Lafayette. After an unsuccessful venture in farming near Harrisburg, he had become editor of the German weekly, the Readinger Adler, in Reading, Pennsylvania, in September, 1826. His editorials in what became a highly influential paper in Berks County brought him to the attention of Charles Jared Ingersoll, President of the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Mechanic Arts. Almost overnight List became the theoretician of this group of prominent Philadelphians.

This Society had been actively engaged for several years in publicizing and sponsoring petitions in favor of protectionism. In spite of some very powerful support, the members felt, particularly after the failure of their efforts to establish a protective tariff on woolens in 1827, that they were beating their "practicalities" futilely against the theoretical walls of the free traders—of Adam Smith and his American supporters. The particularly indestructible bastion of free trade was Thomas Cooper, Professor of Chemistry and Political Economy and President of Columbia College, South Carolina. Cooper’s Lectures on the Elements of Political Economy had become a textbook on Adam Smith in the United States, and the authoritative support of the free traders. A theoretician was needed to champion the cause of the protectionists in the battle

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6 There were only ten schools teaching engineering before the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862. Ibid.
7 General Lafayette had been responsible for List's emigration to America. When Lafayette was planning his triumphal tour of the United States at the invitation of the federal government, List was an exile in France. He had been attracted to Lafayette, as had many a frustrated liberal of the 1820's, and was singled out by the General to join in the tour. When Lafayette left France for the United States in July, 1824, List was in prison in his native Wurttemberg. He had returned to seek a pardon and to straighten out family affairs. He was ultimately released in 1825 on condition that he depart for America. When List and family arrived in New York, he joined Lafayette for the rest of the tour, and met many prominent Americans in the process. When Lafayette returned to France, he wrote for List a glowing letter of recommendation, of which List made what use he could. See Lafayette to List, On Board the Brandywine, September 7, 1825.
8 List, op. cit., II, 98.
against Cooper. In 1827, Charles Jared Ingersoll, President of the Society, asked Friedrich List to write a refutation of Cooper’s Lectures. In response to this request List wrote a series of twelve letters to Ingersoll, which appeared in the Philadelphia National Gazette from August 18 to November 27, 1827. In their “refutation of the theory of Adam Smith and Co., the fundamental errors of which have not yet been understood as clearly as they ought to be,” these letters contain the embryo of List’s later economic thought.

The letters erected a theoretical structure of thought based upon the patriotic and national sentiments felt by the members of the Pennsylvania Society. List immediately became one of the most important champions of the protectionists and a prominent advocate of Henry Clay’s American System. He was present as unofficial adviser for Ingersoll at the Harrisburg Convention called by the Pennsylvania Society in midsummer, 1827, to prepare a memorial in support of new tariff legislation. He may have helped in the preparation of the petition and may also have addressed the convention on the principles of protectionism.

In appreciation of List’s letters and his advisory services at the Harrisburg Convention, the Society held a dinner in his honor at the Mansion House Hotel in Philadelphia, November 3, 1827. The dinner celebrated the National System. Toasts, to be sure, called for a protective tariff on woolens. They also recognized “Internal improvements and all the arts of peace,” and the interdependence of agriculture, commerce, and industry. The Society identified itself as “the union of sound science and successful operation—practice directed by system—system corrected by practice.” The members also toasted their recently acquired theoretician:

"List, op. cit., II, 99-156. Ingersoll was careful to introduce List’s letters to the Editor of the National Gazette with Lafayette’s letter of recommendation. See Ingersoll to the Editor of the National Gazette, no date, ibid., II, 97-98. Ingersoll’s letter and Lafayette’s endorsement appeared with the first of List’s letters in the August 18 (1827) issue.


"Harry Rickel, in “Friedrich List Whom American History Forgot.” Concord Society, Historical Bulletin (May 1926), 10, makes the assumption that List did address the Harrisburg Convention. John F. Bell, in “Friedrich List, Champion of Industrial Capitalism,” The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXVI (January 1942), 69, repeats it. They may have been referring to his speech at the Mansion House Hotel on November 3, 1827, or the one delivered February 2, 1828, to the Pennsylvania state legislature. List, op. cit., II, 186-206."
"May this society never be List-less of their true interests." List gave an address at the dinner in which he elaborated on his economic theories and on the role of education in the American System. More was still desired of him. The Society passed a resolution calling on him to write a detailed and comprehensive text on his theories concerning a national political economy—to refute Cooper's work.

The sentiments of the citizens of Easton, Pennsylvania, who constituted the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College were similar to the feelings of the members of the Pennsylvania Society. James Madison Porter, a prominent Eastonian and former resident of Philadelphia, President of the Board of Trustees, was a close friend of several members of the Society and of the American Philosophical Society as well as the Franklin Institute. He had prevailed upon seven of these Philadelphians to become college trustees. Whether any Eastonians were present at the Harrisburg Convention or at the Mansion House dinner in honor of List is not known, but they followed these events closely. They knew of the Harrisburg convention and approved of the economic policies it advocated. There was a difference of opinion in Easton only over political questions. Was the convention primarily called to rally support for protectionism, or as a political device in support of John Quincy Adams and against Andrew Jackson? Public celebrations in Easton in 1827 expressed in general terms the same sentiments as those in the toasts at the Mansion House dinner. For example, on July 4, 1827, after appropriate Independence Day ceremonies and a speech by James Madison Porter, the

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11 List, op. cit., II, 128. An account of this dinner along with Friedrich List's speech was published: Account of the dinner given to Professor List by the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Mechanic Arts at the Mansion House, Philadelphia, November 3, 1827 (Philadelphia, 1827).
13 Skillman, David B., op. cit., I, 30. They were: General Robert Patterson; General Andrew M. Prevost; Colonel John Hare Powl, a founder of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society in 1823; the Honorable Judge Morin Scott; Peter Arrel Browne, corresponding secretary of the Franklin Institute; Benjamin Tilghman, son of William Tilghman, former President of the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Mechanic Arts, and former President of the American Philosophical Society; and Silas E. Weir, a manager of the Philadelphia House of Refuge.
14 The Easton, Pa., Centinel, Friday, July 6, 1827.
citizens of Easton drank toasts: "To domestic manufactures—may they be cherished by enlightened legislators as one of the most important pillars in the fabric of our national freedom," "To canals and improvements—they will not only promote the industry and prosperity of the country, but unite the feelings and interests of our citizens," "To Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures—they belong together, let no man put them asunder—the success of each is the true national prosperity."

James Madison Porter could well have been a member of the Pennsylvania Society and a participant in the Harrisburg Convention, for his sentiments were identical with those of the Society and the Convention—judging from the following typical selection from his Fourth of July (1827) speech:

Under this Constitution we have risen in power and influence. Our flag, the star spangled banner, floats in every sea. Our population has been more than trebled. An asylum has been afforded the oppressed of all nations. Rational liberty has been enjoyed. The science of government has been cultivated and improved by experience. The general condition of the people has been ameliorated. The liberal arts are taught in numerous schools and colleges. Domestic manufactures, upon which our actual independence of foreign nations very much depends have been fostered and home markets thus established for our surplus products. Agriculture and the mechanic arts have also kept page [sic] in the general march of improvement. Civil and religious liberty are here tolerated; the clergy are permitted quietly to perform their clerical and sacred functions and each sect and each teacher are left at full liberty, unawed and uncontrolled by government, to assert, and if they can, maintain by reason and argument, their own superiority. The internal wealth and resources of our country have been and continue to be developed. Canals have been cut, roads made, and rivers bridged and improved, to aid us in our intercourse with each other. . . . Never, in any country has so much been done and so regularly and peacefully too as has been done in America in the last half century.26

Some of this could have come straight from List's letters or his

15 The Easton, Pa., Centinel, Friday, July 13, 1827.
16 Ibid.
dinner address, or the minutes of the Harrisburg Convention. Although this patriotic address made no mention of tariffs, James Madison Porter was a leading protectionist in Easton and felt that protectionism was one way of assuring the continuous advance of the United States toward her national goals. His arguments in favor of protection for particular industries, including those in which he had a direct concern, such as slate, and his statements concerning protectionist principles have the same ring as those of Friedrich List and the Pennsylvania Society.¹⁷

James Madison Porter stated that he had been inspired to foster a college at Easton by the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy, founded in 1819 at Norwich, Vermont. He variously described this school, which he had visited in the fall of 1824, as “a military and scientific institution” and as “a literary and scientific institute.”¹⁸ It was attempting to break loose from the constricting bonds of the traditional liberal arts program offered in the more venerable institutions of the day. The founder, Captain Alden Partridge of Norwich, had hoped to make it possible for the student to elect, in addition to the required course in military science and tactics, either a literary (by which he meant English rather than the classics), or an engineering, or an agricultural course.¹⁹ Mr. Porter and some of the other Easton members of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College were more radical in their hopes and aspirations. The bare statements of the Charter of the College reveal a more elaborate plan than that of Captain Partridge.²⁰ The memorial to the Pennsylvania state legislature requesting approval of the Charter reveals the new philosophy—felt rather than articulated—behind this plan. It reflects the grassroots educational movements of the 1820’s that

¹⁷ On February 16, 1828, the same day, incidentally, that he wrote to Friedrich List, Porter wrote to Representative George Wolf asking that slate be included in the tariff bill then being considered by the Congress. His defense of this measure and the statistics on several slate quarries in Pennsylvania, including his own, have the same tone as the reports of the Harrisburg Convention. See the Easton, Pa., Argus, February 22, 1828.

¹⁸ Skillman, op. cit., I, 3.

¹⁹ Butts, op. cit., 141-142.

²⁰ "It is hereby enacted. . . . That there be and hereby is erected and established, at or near the Borough of Easton, in the County of Northampton, in this commonwealth, a college for the education of youth in the various branches of Science and Literature, the useful Arts, Military Science, Tactics and Engineering and the learned and foreign languages. . . .” See Skillman, op. cit., II, Appendix C, 304. (Italics supplied.)
sprang up in various places from the growing faith in American democracy and the American System.\textsuperscript{21}

The emphasis in the plan for Lafayette College was on education for citizenship. "The Governments of the American Union are essentially dependent on moral influence for their support, and hence it is that with us, education, as a means of virtue, is an object of political importance. . . . It is . . . the first dictate of wisdom, to avail ourselves of all rational means for the preservation of our liberty, and by preserving it to deserve it. Of these means Education is the most important."\textsuperscript{22} Additionally, citizens should learn how to defend their liberties. A free democracy must develop a military system which "identifies the soldier with the citizen . . ." rather than one in which the "citizen is . . . lost in the soldier. . . . Knowledge, said Lord Bacon, is power, and of nothing is this more true, than of military knowledge. It is not the mere physical force of a nation but its physical force under the guidance of cultivated intellect which gives it ascendancy."\textsuperscript{23}

These views on the purposes of education were considered by the Board of Trustees to be revolutionary. Captain Partridge's academy was the only school besides West Point that emphasized military training, and no college of long standing, it was thought, emphasized higher education for everybody as preparation for citizenship. Joel Jones, one of the writers of the Memorial, an Easton lawyer, was the only active member of the Board of Trustees with a college degree (from Yale). He knew well the sentiments of the faculty there, sentiments to be expressed in 1827 in a report written in rebuttal to some of the new ideas in education. In this report the Yale faculty asserted the object of Yale College was "to LAY THE FOUNDATION of a SUPERIOR EDUCATION."\textsuperscript{24} This was achieved through the study of the classics and natural philosophy.


\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, 1.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{24} Benjamin Silliman, "Resolution of the Faculty of Yale College," September 11, 1827, \textit{The American Journal of Science and Arts}, XV, No. 2 (January 1829), 300. Hofstadter, Richard, and Hardy, C. DeWitt, \textit{The Development and Scope of Higher Education in the United States} (New York, 1952), 15-16, discusses this report of the Yale College faculty and its impact in frustrating curricular changes in American higher education.
Education at Lafayette would be not only democratic and nationalistic but also utilitarian. This was shown in four ways. The dead languages were not to be discarded, but after the study of Latin “the Romanic dialects of modern Europe” were to receive attention. Secondly, the student would concentrate on English and German as the languages in current use in Pennsylvania. It was particularly deplored that the study of English was so neglected on the blithe assumption that the study of the classics would automatically lead to a knowledge of English. To make certain that Lafayette graduates were conversant in their own tongue, the College wanted to offer three years of preparatory work before college, since “the language most neglected in our seminaries [was] the English . . .” and “no public seminary” offered German. Thirdly, in science and mathematics the emphasis was on utility. “In the mathematical course,” the Memorial stated, “it is proposed to keep practical utility constantly in view. Such branches will be selected and so pursued, as will not only discipline the mind and induce habits of patient investigation, but also directly subserve the purposes of life.” Finally, it was particularly “those Mathematics which illustrate the principles of Mechanics—civil and military engineering” that would receive the greatest attention.

This last provision was the real innovation. Engineering was taught at West Point and two other schools—Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, at Troy, New York, and the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy at Norwich, Vermont. Recognition of a branch of engineering distinct from military—civil engineering—was only just beginning to dawn, and Lafayette College hoped to be one of the pioneers in civil engineering courses. But Lafayette wanted to go further. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute was solely a technical school to help the student “become practically scientific.” Literary and physical exercises were both subordinated to this end. Captain Partridge at Norwich was hoping to create an elective system—a Literary, or an Engineering, or an Agricultural Course. Lafayette hoped in the seven year preparatory and college course to provide a grounding in the “usual Liberal

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2 Ibid., 2.
3 Butts, *op. cit.*, 130.
Arts” course, including the classics, Natural Philosophy, and Mathematics; in English, German, and perhaps some Romance languages; in Engineering, civil and military; and in Military Science and tactics.

This gargantuan academic menu was meant to satisfy the appetite of the average young man and future citizen of the environs of Easton in Pennsylvania and neighboring New Jersey. It reflected some knowledge of the traditional collegiate course offered at the older, established colleges and a desire to combine it with a new bill of fare. The classics and natural philosophy were to be augmented by a large measure of contemporary language and literature, and practical science and engineering were to contribute to the realization of the American System.

In the summer of 1827 the Trustees decided to request the officers of “Mount Airy College” to associate themselves with Lafayette College, and appointed a Committee to communicate with them. This was the American Classical and Military Lyceum owned by B. Constant and A. L. Roumfort. It would seem from this overture that the Trustees now thought only of emulating the Academy at Norwich, whatever their original hopes. But the letter sent to Constant and Roumfort, by the committee on October 15, 1827, sounds as ambitious if not as eloquent as the original memorial to the state legislature.

We take the liberty, therefore, of inclosing to you, a copy of the Act Incorporating the College, which specifies the powers, general objects and purposes of the Incorporation. To this we add that, under this Act, the Trustees propose to establish a Seminary, which, in a literary and scientific point of view, shall ultimately be inferior to none in our Country. The course of instruction, they propose, shall embrace the learned and the more useful of the Modern European Languages—an extensive course of English literature—of the Mathematics—of Natural Philosophy—Ethics and Military Science and Tactics will be pursued to a considerable extent, and perhaps far enough for every useful purpose, though it will be much

26 Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College, August 14, 1827, Minute Book of Lafayette College, Vol. I, 14. The committee was composed of Joel Jones, Thomas McKeen and Peter Ihrig, Jr.

28 Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College, February 16, 1828, ibid., 15.
When the refusal of Messrs. Constant and Roumfort was reported to the Trustees at their meeting of February 16, 1928, the Board appointed a new committee "to ascertain whether suitable persons can be obtained as Principal and Professors in the institution and upon what terms." The Chairman of this Committee was James Madison Porter, who wrote that same day to Friedrich List. Porter thought List was the man for the job of Principal because of his academic reputation.

List would, perhaps have been the right man to organize the curriculum desired by the trustees. He not only had expressed the correct sentiments about freedom, American democracy, and the American System, but had also worked out an argument to support the development of an educational system directed toward their propagation. These ideas were included in his letters written at the request of Charles Jared Ingersoll and in his Mansion House speech.

List's educational theories had been developing for years in Europe and had reached maturity after his arrival in the United States. In his native German state of Württemberg, he had attended lectures at the University of Tübingen while employed in the state civil service. Although he had not stood for his doctorate, he was appointed Professor of Public Administration in the newly established faculty of political economy at the University of Tübingen in 1817. In 1819 he was elected to the Württemberg Diet and served concurrently as counsel and editor for the German Commercial and Manufacturing Association. Based on his experience in the civil service, List had proposed the more direct instruction of potential public servants in economic practices and

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29 Jones, McKeen and Illrie to Constant and Roumfort, October 15, 1827, copy attached to Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College, February 16, 1828, *ibid.*, 14-15.
31 List's "character as a professor would, at once we think enable us to start the college with a handsome support for scholars," James Madison Porter, *et al.*, to N. Hall Loring, February 16, 1828, copy attached to Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 1, 1828, *ibid.*, 18.
32 The *Deutscher Handels- und Gewerbsverein*. W. O. Henderson in *The Zollverein* (Cambridge University Press, 1939) translates this as "Union of Merchants."
public administration rather than in theory and classical letters.\(^{21}\)

It was he who had recommended the establishment of a faculty of political economy.\(^{25}\) When he became interested in the work of the German Commercial and Manufacturing Association, he came to realize the significance of a national economy as a means of achieving national unification, and saw the way education could be used to create a receptive climate of opinion and the requisite commercial and mechanical skills to create a national economy.\(^{26}\)

Before coming to the United States, he had experimented with the establishment of a technical institute in the Swiss canton of Aarau.\(^{27}\) He had also seen several educational institutions which seemed the embodiment of his own growing educational theories—one in the German state of Bavaria, the Imperial Polytechnic Institute in Vienna, and the National Polytechnic Institute in France.\(^{28}\) List's educational ideas were developing along with and as part of his theories on protectionism and the subservicing of economic activity to national ends. Educational theory was thus inextricably woven into economic theory in List's writings and speeches in the United States.

Friedrich List was more than merely a high tariff man. He knew that protecting a growing industry could turn it into an unhealthy hothouse plant, always needing protection. High tariffs indeed were only one means toward a greater end—the full exploitation of the productive resources of a nation. While protecting itself against a more advanced economy, a nation must be developing the will, intellectual power, and technical skills of its citizens. This was the role of education. A college or a society dedicated to letters was "an ornament of a nation, highly advanced in literature, arts and sciences."\(^ {29}\)

But for a young, growing nation the educational establishment must be as dedicated to the develop-

\(^{21}\) List, \textit{op. cit.}, I, Pt. I, "Gedanken über die Württembergische Staatsregierung" (1816), 96-97; and "Kritik des Verfassungsentwurfs" (1816). 247-249.

\(^{22}\) \textit{Ibid.}, I, Pt. I, "Die Staatskunde und Staatspraxis Württembergs im Grundriss" (1816), 287-289; and VIII, letter to King William I of Württemberg, Tübingen, December 24, 1817, 117-118.

\(^{23}\) \textit{Ibid.}, I, Pt. II, "Wozu sollte der Ertrag einer gemeinschaftlichen deutschen Douanenlinie verwendet werden?" (1820), 590-595.

\(^{24}\) \textit{Ibid.}, Vol. IX, "Rundschreiben des Lehrvereins Aarau an Eltern und Vormünder" (Aarau, October 15, 1823), 58-60.


\(^{26}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 171.
ment of its "gigantic productive powers" as to its defense from outside aggression. For List "industry and knowledge were the causes of individual wealth and public prosperity."40

The model List offered to his American audience was the French National Polytechnic Institute. This school, founded in 1794 was as responsible as any other force for French prosperity, he contended, since "not less than 4,000 public officers acquired [there] the necessary knowledge, and ardent spirit of promoting internal industry."41 List painted a glowing picture of what America would gain if it established a similar institute,

for the future miner and manufacturer, for the future sheep grower and proprietor of large estates, where the son of the southern planter may learn, that there are yet other means of rendering mind, labor, and land of the south lucrative, than by planting a superabundance of cotton; where the future statesman and legislator may receive a knowledge of the resources of his country, and of the means to develop them; where the youth may be inspired with a noble spirit, to search after the hidden treasures of their country and teachers may be educated to dispense useful knowledge over the whole Union—a national foundation for useful knowledge—a great model for filial institutions in all our states and cities.42

At an American national polytechnic institute there would also be taught the true principles of political economy. List was not content with refuting the free traders and letting "the right" emerge from the debate. He wanted rather to supplant the teachings of Adam Smith and his American disciple, Dr. Cooper, with the teachings of the American System. This would be the role of the professors of political economy. Furthermore, the federal government and the governments of the states should support the study of the American System in the schools, colleges, and universities.

... if the supporters of the American System are convinced of the superiority of their doctrine, is it not their duty to go on theoretically as well as practically? Ought

40 Ibid., 170.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., 171.
they not to procure for the people, and especially for the youth of their country, elementary works and professional teachers, explaining the principles of political economy according to their own system, which must ultimately prevail in proportion as the national legislature becomes convinced of its propriety.

This was not education as the faculty of Yale College understood it; this was indoctrination. While recognizing the dangers of protecting infant industries List seemed happy enough to protect young minds against other than his own brand of political and economic theory. One wonders if the founding trustees of Lafayette College noticed or concerned themselves about this discrepancy in List's educational theories. They were anxious to avoid religious sectarianism at their college. Did they not recognize List's peculiar brand of orthodoxy? Possibly they would have noticed it, for their concern was not so much to replace the traditional educational program as taught at Joel Jones' alma mater as to augment it with practical application.

List declined the offer of the Presidency of Lafayette. His stated reason was the commission of the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Mechanic Arts to write a major work on political economy—but this was an excuse.


See Article VIII, of the Charter, "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." Skillman, *op. cit.*, Appendix C, II, 307. James Madison Porter in his charge to President George I. Junkin at the latter's Inauguration on May 1, 1834, referred to this clause and added: "This provision was inserted to prevent the institution from ever being perverted to sectarian purposes; and it is the desire of the board literally to fulfill this injunction. Yet whilst they would strictly comply therewith they desire to record their testimony, that they believe no institution of this kind ever can be properly conducted where the interests of religion are unattended to or disregarded. And whilst they would wish to know no sect or party of religion within its walls, they would still more dread the withering, desolating, demoralizing and injurious tendency of anything which would lead to scepticism, infidelity or a disregard of pure, evangelical and vital piety." *Inaugural charge by J. M. Porter, Esq., President of the Board of Trustees and Inaugural Address of the Rev. George Junkin, D.D., President of Lafayette College*, delivered at the installation of the Faculty, in the new college edifice, May 1, 1834 (J. P. Hetrich, printer, Easton, Pa., 1834), 6.

List to Porter, February 19, 1828, copy attached to Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Lafayette College, March 1, 1828; *op. cit.*, 18-19.
to have the Franklin Institute converted into a National Poly-

technic Institute. This organization had been founded in 1824
to promote the mechanic arts, through lectures, a library, industrial
exhibits, and prizes for inventions. A school of architectural and
mechanical drawing had been opened in 1824, and two years
later Franklin High School—model and predecessor of Phila-
delphia Central High—was opened to teach ancient and modern
languages, history and geography, and "the theoretical and prac-
tical sciences." Many of the sponsors and members of the
Franklin Institute were also members of the Pennsylvania Society
and of the American Philosophical Society, and were in sympathy
with the American System and the economic theories of Fried-
rich List. There was a group interested in converting the Franklin
Institute into something comparable to the kind of establishment
List was suggesting. They had encouraged him to support his
observations about the French National Polytechnic Institute with
more facts and figures. List thereupon wrote to his old benefactor,
General Lafayette, not only for data but for his venerable opinion,
too.

One of this group, Peter Arrel Browne, corresponding sec-
etary of the Franklin Institute and a Philadelphia trustee of
Lafayette College, was prompted to try to secure a state charter
for a new school.

Browne was a supporter of another of List’s proposals—a chair
of political economy (with Friedrich List in it) at a converted
Franklin Institute. This was apparently List’s ambition at that
time. It would be similar to the position he had held at the Uni-


Wright, Sydney L., The Story of the Franklin Institute (Philadelphia,
The Franklin Institute, 1928), 16.

Hepburn, Joseph Samuel, "The Franklin Institute and Central High
School in their early Days," Journal of the Franklin Institute, 265 (1928),
No. 1, 44.

List to Lafayette, Reading, Pa., November 29, 1827. List, op. cit., VIII,
352. The original of this letter is in the possession of J. Bennett Nolan
of the Berks County Historical Society. See Historical Review of Berks
County, I (1935), No. 1, 9. This Society has the fullest collection of List
material in the United States. List kept up a continuous correspondence with
General Lafayette. After the General’s death, List still used his name and
the recommendations of his son George Washington Lafayette. In this
instance List seems to have received no information about the French
National Polytechnic Institute or opinions concerning the founding of a
similar establishment here.

Peter A. Browne to List, Philadelphia, Pa., February 12, 1828, List,
op. cit., II, 362.

Ibid.
versity of Tübingen. At the Franklin Institute he would be in the center of things in Philadelphia rather than off in remote and rural Easton. It would also be a vindication for him. One of the background causes for List’s exile from Württemberg had been his difficulties with the faculty at the University of Tübingen. He had not made a clear enough distinction between education and indoctrination. The Tübingen faculty had registered several complaints about his misuse of the teacher’s lectern. He also felt, it would seem, that his failure to obtain a doctorate had stood in the way of his advancement at Tübingen. Just before he left for America he had attempted to get an honorary degree based on his writings, but his efforts had been to no avail. He had to content himself in America with the title of Professor rather than Doctor List.

The proposed chair failed to materialize. The Franklin High School served the purpose of technical training as understood by the majority of the members of the Institute, the Pennsylvania Society, and the Philosophical Society. List had hoped to use Charles Jared Ingersoll’s influence to create the chair. Ingersoll turned to the President of the American Philosophical Society, Peter S. Duponceau, who was singularly unimpressed. “We cannot understand what you expect to do with a Professorship of Political Economy . . .” he complained to List. Sympathetic though these influential Philadelphians were with the promotion of the mechanic arts, they still considered higher education to be something apart. Dedicated though they may have been to high tariffs and the American System, they did not want to attempt to influence public opinion by using the college campus as a forum.

List could still have turned to Lafayette College, where the position of President remained vacant until 1832. However, he continued to think in national terms. In May, 1828, he attempted to

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22 Hirst, Margaret E., *Life of Friedrich List* (New York: Scribner, 1909), 28. List had been indicted for sedition because of liberal and nationalistic views expressed not merely in the classroom but on the floor of the Württemberg Diet, and for the German Commercial and Manufacturing Association.


persuade Secretary of the Treasury Richard Rush to use his influence to convert West Point Academy into a National Polytechnic Institute—or at least to create a chair of political economy to teach future warriors the intricacies of his political and economic theories. This second effort to create a special chair for himself also failed. By the end of 1828 he was homesick for his native Germany and was seeking to be rewarded for his help in the Jackson campaign by appointment to a consular post there.

When Lafayette College finally opened its doors in 1832, it was a denominational college, after all. The first President, the Reverend George Junkin was installed as “President and Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric and the Evidences of Christianity”—a far cry from political economy. At his insistence the state legislature had amended the charter so that the College could “dispense with the maintenance and observance of military discipline and with the teaching of military science and tactics and civil and military engineering.” President Junkin was opposed to military training. Civil engineering, an innocent bystander, fell by the wayside. Manual labor was to be a part of the program at Lafayette, but it was not intended to promote the mechanic arts so much as to keep the Devil at bay!

Lafayette College and Friedrich List failed, either individually or in co-operation, to foster any new departure in collegiate education in the 1820's. Engineering did not come to Lafayette until 1837. By that time, through the teaching of the traditional classical course and under denominational auspices, Lafayette College had established certain principles of academic freedom which might never have blossomed under Friedrich List’s care.


List was at heart a German nationalist. Had he received some type of academic appointment in the United States, there is ground to suspect that he would sooner or later have gone back to Germany anyway. He returned to Germany in December 1830, visiting the United States again briefly in the spring of 1832. He held several consular posts in Germany for the United States from 1834 until his suicide in 1846. In these posts, as American consul, he did his most productive and significant work and exercised his greatest influence on the German national economy.

Skillman, op. cit., I, 54, and Appendix C, II, 308-309, the amendment approved April 7, 1832.