BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ephraim Simanton was born on February 26, 1822 in Richmond, Pennsylvania. In 1842, he entered Lafayette College where he succeeded academically, earning membership in the Franklin Literary Society and graduating as valedictorian with an AB degree in 1846. That same year, Simanton entered Princeton Theological Seminary. He graduated in 1849 and was ordained in the Newton Presbytery in 1851. He became a pastor in Danville, New Jersey in 1850 where he remained for 17 years before becoming a teacher in Vienna, New Jersey in 1867. Simanton lived in Vienna from 1867-1880. His son, Thomas, graduated from Lafayette in 1896. Simanton died in Hackettstown, New Jersey on January 24, 1905.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Ephraim Simanton collection (1842-1845) consists of 27 compositions, 3 translations (of works by Horace), one original poem (“The Sabbath”), and one letter home (in English and German). Ephraim Simanton was a student at Lafayette College from 1842-1846. During his time at Lafayette, Simanton focused on religious studies before moving on to Princeton Theological Seminary. Most of his compositions center on religion with titles such as “Time, and the transientness of earthly cares,” “Evidence of the Existence of a God,” and “The Creation.” However, some of his works centered on famous figures such as Christopher Columbus and George Washington and social causes such as charity and the oppression of slaves and Native Americans. His work also contains one poem entitled “The Sabbath.” There is also a letter from Simanton to his father, John Simanton, inviting him to attend his essay competition for the Franklin Literary Society. Some of Simanton’s works were rough drafts with corrections marked in pencil on top of his exquisite penmanship, while others appear to be final copies submitted to professors for grading. Some of his works were criticized by Professor Yeomans, the President of Lafayette.

INVENTORY
(folder filed in College Archives, IX.1, Box 3)

1. Letter home to father requesting his and his brothers’ presence at the Literary Societies contest for which he was entered, (Feb. 21, 184[?])
2. “Christopher Columbus,” first composition
5. “Time, and the transientness of earthly cares,” (Sept. 4, 1842)
6. “Industry, the Way to Prosperity and High Attainments; Idleness, to Want and Degradation,” with corrections of text and critique on the back in pencil (Nov. 18, 1842)
8. “Education,” with corrections in pencil (Jan. 6, 1843)
9. “Superstition,” with corrections in pencil (Feb. 20, 1843)
10. “America,” with corrections in pencil (Feb. 24, 1843)
12. “Book First of the Odes of Quintus Horatius Flaccus / Ode XXIV to Iccius” on verso is “Ode XXVI to Apollo,” with corrections in pencil (Jun. 8, 1843)
14. “The Soul is the most valuable Treasure of Man,” with corrections in ink (Jul. 28, 1843)
16. “The Desire of Acquisition; but the Neglect of Improvement,” with critique and corrections in ink (Sept. 8, 1843)
17. “Man is a fallen Being,” with corrections in ink (Dec. 9, 1843)
18. “Man is a fallen Being. (continued),” with corrections in ink (Jan. 18, 1844)
19. “The Culture of the Soul,” with corrections in pencil (Feb. 9, 1844)
22. “Can a Man be Known by his Doings?” (May 31, 1844)
23. “Life is a Pilgrimage,” with corrections in ink and pencil (Jun. 27, 1844)
24. “On a Plurality of Worlds,” with corrections in pencil (Sept. 5, 1844)
25. “On Virgil’s IV. Eclogue,” with corrections and comments in pencil (Jun. 7, 1845)
26. “Virgilii Ecloga De Quarta,” with corrections in pencil (Jun. 27, 1845)
27. “Which deserves the most honor; Christopher Columbus for discovering America, or George Washington for redeeming it.” On verso is “Which excites the greatest curiosity the works of Nature or the works Art.”
29. “Which is the best calculated to the condition of the colored race colonization or abolition.”
30. “Which has the greatest reason to complain of the oppression of the whites the Indians or Negroes.”