



**LITERARY.**

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## The Rise of the Literary Spirit at the University of Georgia.



TO look upon the PANDORA issues of the last two years makes it difficult to recall the time when there was no literary spirit at the University of Georgia. And yet that period ended not so very long ago. The first PANDORA was issued in 1886. It appeared as the precursor of the approaching change; it was a voice sent into the wilderness, a generalized type between barbarism and culture, an Archæopteryx of the Jurassic period. It was a prehistoric man of the Stone Age; it had to struggle for existence with wild beasts. But it was the ancestor of our four College publications; it was the first of the line of publications which has not perished of inanition, neglect and contumely.

It is hard to realize, I repeat, that only thirteen years ago the University was a different thing from its present self. Its environment was different. Its dominating spirit was different. A Junior or Senior of this commencement, were he by some Merlinic enchantment transported to the corresponding class of the festive season

when appeared Volume I. of our Annual, would feel like a Gulliver in a new Lilliput, a Connecticut Yankee in a still more archaic court.

The State institution was a university only in name. It had no literary atmosphere, it had no athletics, it had no glee club, no dramatic club, no magazine, no weekly, no engineering society, no science club, no literary circle—it had none, in short, of the essentials going to constitute that broadening and elevating influence which to-day is so potent within our gates.

The softening artistic motives were absent. For instruction, as well as amusement, PANDORA readers should look over this first volume, with its crude illustrations, its childish effusions, its Bœotian wit. They should try to get hold of a copy of the old University magazine, which, terrifically ponderous and fearsomely oratorical, was published for awhile before 1859, when it lay down to sleep the sleep which knows no waking.

In the University library are the files of the *Athens Banner-Watchman* and the *Athens Guardian*, of our literary Stone Age, in whose columns often appeared poems by bright ante-

bellum Franklin College men. The poems are decidedly peculiar. The wit of Bill Durham is compressed within the Alexandrines of Pope. The measures will not bear scansion, nor could the wit, by a lady.

What was the trouble? Only this: Lack of literary taste, due to the absence of a prevailing refining literary spirit in College. Literature, as Voltaire says, rectifies the soul, makes the crooked way straight. The absence of a literary spirit in a community hampers and contracts almost as much as the lack of the reasoning faculty in the individual.

So it was really as a civilizer that the PANDORA came. However, the first issue gave little promise of the future. It was an execrable little pamphlet, and its general appearance was that of a college catalogue adorned with notes by a Freshman.

But at the time of its appearance a general movement in the direction of literature appeared to have started. Several abortive attempts had preceded this, but now at last the hour had come. Soon after the 1886 commencement a University magazine was inaugurated. The evolution of the University had begun.

The evolution continued. It kept step with a similar growth on the other side. The College authorities began adding to the number of departments, strengthening each department. The whole complexion of the College was changing. Additions to the Faculty brought in new ideas. The scientific courses were enlarged, the number of options granted increased, and the curriculum annually raised. Year after year the deepening, broadening forces came one by one into play that were at last to make the University one in fact. So fast went this progress—in several instances too fast, it must be admitted—that all the various branches of student activity had three years ago arisen, except one.

Until 1896 there was yet much to do in developing the literary spirit. It was still amœbic, still embryonic. All the PANDORA issues, including the volume of the presidential election year, showed this. There was not much of the literary about them. The best of them, however attractive they might be, were little more than illustrated catalogues adorned with student humor.

But the next step came. In the fall of the above-mentioned year appeared the first issue of a University literary magazine, *The Georgian*. From the first our magazine has had comparatively smooth sailing. It is now a fixture in the College system. To the student-body as much as to its board of editors be the praise that in so short a time it has attained a high place among college periodicals. It immediately developed and extended the literary spirit of the College. Its influence and power for good were well illustrated in the success that has since attended *The Georgian's* sister production, PANDORA.

Amid the new surroundings the University stands to-day. But even this is not her *ne plus ultra*. She has yet much to do, much to plan for, much to hope for, much to get. Her students must practice a wise conservatism, a manly view of things, and must push on along the lines laid out. Too much must not be done at once; the results of each change should be care-

fully studied before the idea be entertained of moving on to another change. In twelve years we have attained many blessings. In another twelve temperance will double the store. In half twelve years, rashness and haste will take from us what we have.

Now, some men who proudly boast that they are self-educated, and others who attended college in the old days of "classical courses" and militant debating societies, may sneer at this catalogue of blessings, and say, possibly, that a college is better without such things. Well, the simple truth is, such things are essential to a modern university. It is a condition, not a theory, that the modern institution of learning must have such features.

They are necessary because they tend to the greater development of the man. They extend his reach of power along practical as well as theoretical lines. The modern university is not so much a place of absorption as of action. It should be a miniature world, with many different opportunities for advance and many different rewards of labor. Only in this way can a university make among its graduates the well-rounded men outnumber the long-haired pedants, "orators" (*soi-disant*), and cranks.

Hard as it may be to realize, before this expansion our University was, compared to its present state, crude and raw. Lacking all the incentives to a comprehensive development of the student's faculties, it received them as half-grown boys and sent them out as overgrown boys. Habits of executive work, of economy, of dynamic culture, found no inducements to develop. No student of those days bore upon his shoulders the responsibility now so easily sustained by a college business manager or editor. The great truth was woefully neglected that as necessity is the mother of invention, so responsibility is the progenitor of common sense.

This brings us back to the present—from every view-point a glorious present for our institution. She is now vibrating with the new life-force that has been given her, and is well worthy of all the homage the young and old of our State can pay. Like the rejuvenated South of today, the University of Georgia also has arisen to a high plane of usefulness and is possessed of new ambition and new hope.

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