

**“The Literary Societies,” History of the University of North Carolina
Volume I. p.72-85 & 565-569**

Kemp Plummer Battle

The Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies have been such a large part of our university life that I must give their origin.

It was doubtless through the influence of Tutor Harris, who had seen the benefits of the renowned Whig Society of Princeton, of which he was a member, that the first literary society of the University was formed, as his name is the first on the list of signers to the preliminary articles. It was organized on the 3d day of June, 1795, under the name of “The Debating Society.” The first President was James Mebane, of Orange, afterwards of Caswell; the first Clerk or Secretary was John Taylor, of Orange; the first Treasurer was Lawrence Toole, who changed his name to Henry Irwin Toole, of Edgecombe, grandfather of Bishop Joseph B. Cheshire; the first Censor Morum, Richard Sims, of Warren, afterwards Principal of The Grammar School.

The objects of the society were expressed to be the cultivation of a lasting friendship and the promotion of useful knowledge. The members pledged themselves under hands and seals to obedience to the laws of the society and due performance of the regular exercises. I give the names of those fathers of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies.

Charles Wilson Harris	Cabarrus
Adam Haywood	Edgecombe
Robert Smith	Cabarrus
Alexander Osborne	Iredell
Edwin Jay Osborne	Rowan
William Houston	Iredell
William Dickson	Burke
James Mebane	Orange
John Pettigrew	Tyrrell
Richard Eagles	New Hanover
Hinton James	New Hanover
Haywood Ruffin	Greene
Richard Sims	Warren
Lawrence Toole	Edgecombe
Henry Kinchen	Franklin
William Morgan Sneed	Granville
Ebenezer Pettigrew	Tyrrell
William C. Alston	Halifax
Hutchins G. Burton, Sr.	Granville
Evan Jones	New Hanover
John Taylor	Orange
Maurice Moore	Brunswick
Alfred Moore	Brunswick

Thomas Davis Bennehan	Orange
Francis Nash Williams Burton	Granville
Allen Green	South Carolina
Allen Jones Davie	Halifax
Hyder Ali Davie	Halifax
Nicholas Long	Franklin
George Washington Long	Halifax

There was no constitution *eo nomine*, but there were “Laws and Regulations,” some of which are worthy of mention. The officers were a President, Censor Morum, two Correctors, a Clerk, and Treasurer. The President and Treasurer held office for three weeks, the other officers for six weeks.

The Censor Morum was clothed with powers and duties which would not be tolerated in this generation, “to inspect the conduct and morals of the members and report to the society those who preserve inattention to the studies of the University, in neglect of their duties as members, or in acting in such a manner as to reflect disgrace on their fellow-members.” This making the society responsible for attention to University exercises has been long ago abandoned, after the effort came near breaking it into fragments. This powerful officer, evidently modeled after the august Censors of Rome, presided in the absence of the President.

The Society met on Thursday evenings only. The members were divided into three classes. These read, spoke and composed alternatively. There was a debate at each session, two opposing members previously appointed opening, and then the other members had a right to discuss the question, but were not compelled to do so.

It was the duty of each member of the class whose turn it was to “read” to hand in a query,” then called “subject of debate,” and out of these one was chosen for the next meeting by the Society.

It must be noticed that the “reading” mentioned above meant the reading aloud of an extract of some author. Of the other two classes one declaimed memorized extracts, and the other read aloud short essays of their own composition.

Two votes were sufficient to negative an application for membership. The term “black-ball” was not then in vogue. The new members when admitted were required to “promise not to divulge any of the secrets of the Society.” The stringency of this provision has been since materially modified.

It was made dangerous to “take umbrage at being fined,” and to denote it by word or action,” because, if the fine should be found to be legal, the accused must pay a quarter of a dollar for his squirming. There was mercifully no penalty for showing umbrage by a gloomy countenance unless the gloom was evidenced by frowning or other facial action.

There seems to have been no fine for laughing or talking, unless a speaker was interrupted.

The practice of wearing hats in the society, as is permitted in the English Parliament, was forbidden. The President, however, of at least one Society, the Dialectic, was after some years required to preside with hat on, often a high-crowned beaver borrowed for the purpose.

The admission fee was one quarter of a dollar. If a member absented himself for three months, without obtaining a diploma of dismission, he must seek a new admission.

A member could not leave the society without asking its consent, nor was any student compelled to join it. But having once left there could be no re-admission.

It shows the high purpose of the founders of the society that the first motion made after the admission of members, at the first meeting on June 3d, 1795, was for the purchase of books. It passed unanimously. The mover was Tutor Harris.

The first speech made in this parent of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies was by James Mebane who sustained the affirmative of the first query ever debated, "Is the Study of Ancient Authors Useful?" He was answered by Robert Smith. I am proud to say that the classics won the day..

At the second meeting, on June 11, 1795, it was agreed to admit no more new members. A great moral question was then discussed, the names of the speakers being omitted. This was "Is the truth always to be adhered to? The decision being "that breaches of faith are sometimes proper." It is gratifying to observe that the decisions of the queries debated were as a rule conservative and sensible.

On 25th of June, 1795, Maurice Moore moved that the society be divided. The motion was laid over for one week and on July 2^d taken up and carried. The new organization was called "The Concord Society." We can only conjecture the cause of the new movement, as no reason appears on the journal. It is possible that there was in it an element of party feeling. Jeffersonian Democracy claimed to be the peculiar advocate of the "Rights of Man." The name Concord, and the substituted Philanthropic, and the addition of the word Liberty to the motto of the other society, look in this direction.

Another reason for the division was probably to have the number so small as to allow and require every member to perform some duty at each weekly meeting. The prohibition of further addition to the membership of the first society seems to show this.

A third reason for the change was, I think, hostility to the extensive powers and duties of the Censor Morum, heretofore described. I make this conjecture because the officer was omitted in the new body, and when it was restored after many months his duties were carefully confined to behavior of members in society. Even this however proved unsatisfactory and the name was changed to Vice-President. It will now be admitted that the seceding students were right in their attitude. The Dialectic Society eventually came to the same conclusion.

For some weeks it was allowable to belong to both societies, which was practicable as they met on different nights in order to have the use of the same room. The first student, Hinton James,

and Maurice and Alfred Moore were for a while active members of both. When the duplicate membership was forbidden, they elected the new.

I cannot find an official list of the “Fathers” of the Concord or Philanthropic Society, but after carefully examining the journal I think the following can be relied on:

Hinton James	New Hanover
Richard Eagles	New Hanover
George Washington Long	Halifax
John Taylor	Chapel Hill
William McKenzie Clark	Martin
David Gillespie	Duplin
Edwin Jay Osborne	Wilmington
Evan Jones	Wilmington
Nicholas Jones	Franklin
James Paine	Unknown
Alexander McCulloch	Halifax
David Evans	Edgecombe
Henry Kearney	Warren
Thomas Hunt	Granville
Lewis Dickson	Duplin
John Bryan	Sampson
Lawrence Ashe Dorsey	Wilmington
Joseph Gillespie	Duplin

In all, 18.

The residence of James Paine does not appear further than that he was from North Carolina.

The records of the Dialectic Society state that the following remained in the Debating Society at the time of the division, their full names and residences having already been given, viz.: Messrs. Harris, Houston Toole, H. and F. Burton, R. Smith, Bennehan, Kinchen, Sims, Haywood, Ruffin, James, Green, A. Osborne, W. Dickson, Sneed, J. and E. Pettigrew, Davie, Mebane, M. and A. Moore. Of these, as was said, James and the two Moores soon became members of the other, and John Pettigrew followed a year afterwards.

The first meeting of the Concord Society was August 10, 1795. David Gillespie was the first President, Evan Jones the first Treasurer, Henry Kearney the first Clerk. The first debaters were George W. Long and Henry Kearney, on the question “Which is best—an Education or a Fortune?” It is consistent with the honorable career of the society that the decision was in favor of education.

The first President, son of James Gillespie, of Duplin, member of Congress for eight years, was evidently a most promising student. By the courtesy of David S. Nicholson, I give a copy of the certificate granted him on his leaving the University, the first document in the nature of a diploma ever granted.

We, the undersigned Professors of the University of North Carolina, have had under our particular care Mr. David Gillespie of this state. He has studied Greek and Latin and the elementary Mathematics in their application to Surveying, Navigation, etc. He has also read under our care Natural Philosophy and Astronomy. His behavior, while at this place, has met with our warmest approbation. Mr. Gillespie, being about to leave the University to attend Mr. Ellicott in determining the Southern boundary of the United States, we have thought proper to give him this certificate.

Chas. W. Harris

Professor of Math. And N. Phil.

W. L. Richards

Teacher of French and English

University, N.C. September 22, 1796

To this was attached the certificate of Sam. Ashe, Governor, attested by Roger Moore, Private Secretary, with the great seal of the State, that the above-named were professors of the University as alleged.

After working for about a year it occurred to the members of both societies that English names were not of sufficient dignity. Accordingly on the 25th of August, 1796, in pursuance of a motion made by James Webb, of Hillsboro, a week preceding, the name Debating was changed into its Greek equivalent, Dialectic. And four days afterward, on the 29th of August, 1796, the Greek Philanthropic took the place of Concord, on motion of David Gillespie. I have no information as to whether, when this name was adopted the pronunciation was wrongly Phi-lanthropic instead of Phil-anthropic. Johnston's Dictionary, then the standard, gives no countenance to it, and I am inclined to think that the mispronunciation, prevalent here for many decades, arose from the custom of universal among students of abbreviating names in common use, and from the euphonic wish to have the nickname sound like Di. Those familiar with university life know well that undergraduates would smash every dictionary in the land before they would be called Phils., or as it soon would have become, Phillies.

The Fundamental Laws, afterwards called Constitution, and the course of proceedings of the two societies were much alike.

In the Concord for a short while new members could be admitted by a majority vote. The first restriction was the requirement of two-thirds in case the applicant was under fifteen years of age. I notice no other material differences, and I make no further distinction between the two in endeavoring to reproduce their action.

In the declamations, then called "speaking," we miss Patrick Henry's "give me liberty or give me death," because that speech was written by Wirt long afterwards, nor of course do we find Emmett's, "Let no man write my epitaph." In their places were Cicero's denunciations of Verres,

and Demosthenes' thunderings against Philip, Micipsa's plea against Jugurtha, Brutus over the body of Lucretia, Catalines' speech to his soldiers, and the like.

It is surprising that the stock utterances of our Revolutionary sires, such as Otis, Adams, Henry, Rutledge, R.H. Lee, were not reproduced in our halls. It is in accord with the hatred of Great Britain which has not all waned that there were no selections from the great English orators.

The readings were extracts from history, poetry, the Spectator, and the like literature. They were generally serious: occasionally comic, for example, "The stuttering Soldier," "The Bald-headed Cove," "Anecdote of Miss Bush." It shows the difference in the habit of matutinal sleeping that one of the essays was in ridicule of "The Boy Who Lay in Bed After Sunrise." The extract chosen by David Gillespie from the preface to Murray's Grammar, just out of press, was of sufficient gravity.

Not many of the subjects of composition are given. Among them I notice "Oratory," "Eloquence," "Unpoliteness," "Industry."

But the subjects chosen for debates, and the votes taken thereon, throw much greater light on the intellectual attitude of the students. I therefore cull from the records of both societies such of those subjects as will show the tastes and opinions of the members during the first two years of the university life.

I have already shown that the decision was that education is better than riches. It was likewise decided that public education is of more advantage than private, and *horrible dictu*, that the schoolmaster is of more advantage to society than the preacher. The members were of the opinion that wisdom tends to happiness; that modern history is of more value to students than ancient; that a liberal education is more conducive to happiness than a savage life. The theory of Rousseau, that savage is on the whole happier than civilized life, was at one time affirmed; at another, negated. It was voted that the French language is of more value than the Latin.

In an unguarded moment one of the Societies agreed to discuss whether travelling improves the mind, whereupon there is the following curious entry, "As the question intended for debate is not "thinkable," the opponents coincided in opinion. The debate was therefore not a good one, but, after, the regular business was over, we debated on this question, "Does a man with competency, or he who is in a very affluent station, enjoy most happiness?" The admirers of Solomon will be gratified to know that competency was successful.

This incident reminds me that Mrs. Delphinia E. Mendenhall, of Guilford, a Quakeress, presented to the Dialectic Society Dymonds Essays, advocating universal peace. When a student I induced the Query Committee to report the question, taken from the essays, "Is War Ever Justifiable?" The great debaters in the society declared that it was altogether one-sided, refused to discuss it, and censured the committee for adopting a query on one side of which nothing could be said. As it was not my turn to speak, I had not crammed on the subject from Dymond and was unable to bring forward a single Quaker argument in order to avert the displeasure of the house.

The last educational topic will astonish readers of this generation. It was however discussed seriously in a literary society of an American university, "Shall Corporal Punishment be Introduced Into the University." The memory of smarting backs and knuckles produced an emphatic No! I must explain that small boys in the institution had not then been separated from the rest and placed in a preparatory department.

The members were fairly orthodox, although infidelity and lawless theories were so prevalent throughout the world. It was decided that Religion makes mankind happy, that Self-Conceit does not produce happiness, that the Bible is to be believed, that the Profligate is more unhappy than the Moralist, that Polygamy is not consistent with the will of God, that temporary marriages would not conduce to the good of society, that Suicide can never be justifiable. Even on the concrete question, whether Lucretia was justifiable in killing herself, it was voted that the poor lady was culpable, although by her martyrdom she inaugurated popular government in Rome.

On what is called the Jesuitical doctrine of Pious Frauds, it was noted that they are wrong, although on the similar question whether it is ever allowable to tell lies the members agreed with military men, statesmen and others that occasion may arise to justify them. As to which is most despicable the Thief or the Liar, the decision was that the Thief was the worst. Indeed on another occasion it was solemnly voted that he ought to be hung instead of receiving the milder punishment of forty stripes save one. On the question, "Is Debauchery or Drunkenness most prejudicial," drunkenness was pronounced the lesser evil. The miser was considered an unworthy character evidently, because it was discussed whether we have the right to kill him and distribute his property. He was spared. A blow was struck at the Sermon on the Mount when it was decided that it is not consistent with reason to love one's enemies. It is gratifying that they thought that actions cannot be politically right and morally wrong. Whether dueling is ever justifiable was discussed several times. Twice it was sustained and once the decision was adverse, though it is significant that Tutor Harris then opened the debate. Salaried ministers of the gospel should breathe more freely on learning that the students of 1796 deemed it conformable to the Christian religion for preachers to get wages. Fun-lovers should be comforted in knowing their opinion, that "moderate fortune and good humor are preferable to a large estate and bad disposition."

Other decisions were that: Health is better than Riches; that love of mankind is more prevalent than love of money; that Flattery is sometimes useful; that the pursuit of an object gives greater happiness than the enjoyment; that Pride is essential to happiness; that a man is happier in seeking his own approbation than in seeking that of other; that a state of nature is a state of war; that the Immortality of the soul is not deducible from reason; that beasts have no souls. It is surprisingly that young men in the last decade of the 18th century, with the war spirit hot throughout the world debated with warmth, but could not be brought to a decision, the question, "It is justifiable to kill one who is threatening one's life?"

Among the moral and religious questions it should perhaps be mentioned that the opponents of such amusements as dancing, fox hunting, horse racing, and the like, had the strength to bring forward the query, "Is it politic for the Trustees to permit a Dancing School at the University?" They were outvoted.

During the first years of the University the students were totally debarred from society of ladies of their own age, as the village was merely on paper. It is to be noted, however, that none the less was their interest in all questions of a social nature. "Does a matrimonial or single life confer most happiness" was gravely decided in favor of marriage. "Are Talents or Riches greater recommendations to the ladies?" was asked, and the society honored the fair sex by answering "Talents." "Are ladies or wine most deleterious to students?" Was another question, the palm for deleteriousness being awarded, I grieve to say, to the ladies. Greater gratitude was shown, however, in the decision of the next, "Is female modesty natural or affected?" nature getting the credit. The members wrestled with this rather nebulous speculation, "Is love without hope, or malice without revenge, most injurious," but never came to a conclusion. I presume this was one of the non-thinkable" subjects. The members knew their own minds however on this question, "Should a man marry for gold or for beauty?", the preference being given to the red metal.

Of course, questions of public policy were frequently debated. Indeed one enthusiastic member proposed that the Constitution of the United States should be discussed clause by clause, but this was too great a task. The extent of the powers granted by the Constitution, the unconstitutionality of acts of Congress, seem not to have attracted attention. I find only questions of expediency or the reverse. For example, "Is an excise tax consistent with principles of Liberty?" answered in the affirmative. "Are standing armies useful?" answered No. "Are salaries of the United States officers too great?" answered Yes. "Is the neutrality of the United States in the French-British War consistent with gratitude?" answer, Yes. "Should the United States pay the British debts?" answer, No. "Which is the best a pure Democracy or a mixed government?" answer, Mixed. "Should foreigners be allowed to hold offices in the United States?" answer at one time, Yes; and another, No. "Should army officers be appointed by the executive or the Legislature?" answer, by the executive. "Should our diplomatic intercourse be diminished?" answer, No. "Is there just cause of war by the United States against France?" (February, 1797), decision, No. In April the same discussion arose and the war spirit gained the vote. "Should our Navy be increased?" decision, Yes. "Should the United States further negotiate with Algiers?" Decision, No. "Is it equitable and politic to confiscate private property in war?" decision, Yes. "Is Spain blameable for obstructing the navigation of the Mississippi?" Decision, Yes. "Are treaties contrary to the Law of Nations binding?" decision, Yes. "Should the United States adopt Sumptuary Laws?" decision, Yes.

It is remarkable that the question should have been debated, "Is the Constitution of England or the United States preferable?" The decision, as might be expected, was in favor of the United States. The members pronounced themselves in favor of a protective tariff. They anticipated the action of this State sixty-one years in declaring for free suffrage for both branches of the General Assembly. This shows the preponderance of Western members. They likewise voted against the use of paper money. When this question was called, Robert Burton, afterwards a North Carolina judge, and Nathaniel Williams, afterwards a Tennessee judge, who had been appointed to open the debate, declined to speak for the reason that they knew nothing of the subject. This excuse was unanimously disallowed and they were promptly fined.

When it was argued "Is peace or war most useful?" it is honestly recorded that the vote was in favor of war "from the arguments." That commerce is useful to nations only passed by a majority vote. As to the relative advantageousness of Commerce and Agriculture, the preference was

given to commerce. Was not this the old contest between Poseidon against Athena, Neptune against Minerva?

On the slavery question the members on the whole took the Southern view, yet there was evident a want of enthusiasm, if not positive doubt. It is likely that the decision on the query, "Whether Africans have not as much right to enslave Americans as Americans to enslave Africans?" viz: that "Africans have as good right, if not better," was in a jocular spirit. But there was no joking in the declaration that Death is preferable to Slavery, but it is probable that they meant slavery to white people. The fact, however, that the members discussed the question, "Whether Slaves are advantageous to the United States," and "Whether the importation of African slaves is of advantage to the United States?" shows that there was difference of opinion, although the majority was in the affirmative in both cases. A spirit of doubt as to the beneficence of the institution seems to be implied in the question "Should slavery be abolished at this time?", notwithstanding that the members answered no.

I give a few miscellaneous questions perhaps worthy to be recorded. The right of the Legislature of the United States to instruct members of Congress was debated but not decided. It is noticeable that a serious was had as to whether public offices should be venal, i.e. at liberty to be bought and sold. The decision was adverse. It is in affirmance of what political economists say of the abominable evils of the poor laws of England at this time that a debate was had as to the propriety of making any provision for paupers, although the conclusion was favorable. The members voted that the fathers should retain the power of disinheriting altogether their children, although admirers of French ways contended otherwise. The latter, however, succeeded in obtaining a majority vote that Louis XVI, as justly beheaded. The members showed their jealousy of the Federal Government by voting on one occasion that official salaries were too high, and on another that members of Congress should be paid less wages than soldiers. They voted at one time that bodily strength is better than valor in war, and at another that ingenuity is superior to bodily strength. It seems that the vegetarian theory, one of the first modern absurd "isms," had penetrated to our wilds, because the prohibition of animal food was discussed, but it was too much to expect our keen-stomached students with visions of ham and roast beef, or the savory fried chicken at to-morrow's dinner, to vote against their consumption.

In the spring of 1796, both societies voted to substitute a play for all other exercises, and the members made preparations with enthusiasm. This action was probably stimulated by the advent of a tutor, Mr. Richards, who had been an actor. The scenery was purchased at Williamsboro, but it does not appear why such apparatus was in that village. Such was the zeal of the amateur Thespians that one of the members who agreed to take two parts and failed without excuse was incontinently expelled from one of the societies. I regret that I can find no description of this great dramatic performance.

As showing the contrast between the reading room of 1796 and that of one hundred years later I state that a motion was made in one of the societies that the *Halifax Journal* be subscribed for in behalf of the members; whereupon Alexander McCulloch, brother-in-law of William Boylan, one of the editors, generously offered the use of his copy, and the motion was withdrawn. A subsequent motion to buy the *Fayetteville Minerva* was defeated, as one paper was deemed

sufficient. The following is the first list of books ever purchased by either society. It shows taste for solid reading—not a novel among them.

Locke on Human Understanding
Woolstonecraft's Rights of Women
Gillie's Greece
Sully's Memoirs
Beccaria on Crimes and Punishments
Brown on Equality
Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History
Goldsmith's History of England, 4 volumes
Gibbon's Decline and Fall
Helvetius on the Human Mind
Porcupine's Bloody Buoy
Porcupine's Political Censor
Love and Patriotism
The Federalist
Smith's Constitutions

The most active of the earliest members of the Debating Society were, in order of their names, Wm. Houston, Lawrence Toole, Robert Smith, Francis Burton, James Webb, Richard Simms, Alexander Osborne, Wm. M. Sneed, Hutchins G. Burton, Wm. Dickson and Samuel Hinton. In the Concord Society the leaders were David Gillespie, E. J. Osborne, George W. Long, Hinton James, Evan Jones, Henry Kearney, Nicholas Long, Wm. Alston, David Cook, Lawrence A. Dorsey, Joseph Gillespie. Of these David Gillespie, E.J. Osborne and George W. Long were most prominent.

The professors of the University were admitted to be active members of one or the other society, but do not often appear in the debates.

The Two Societies

Until 1848 the two Societies held their meetings in their library rooms, which were in the third story of the South building, the Dialectic occupying the central hall on the South, the Philanthropic being opposite. These halls were considered attractive. The students were proud to show them. The books, the portraits of eminent members, and the chairs for members in session were all in the same room. Conversations with ladies, after introductions, were not on the hackneyed theme of the past or prospective state of the weather.

The first question was, "Is this your first visit to the Hill?" The second was, "Have you visited the halls?" The third, "Are you a Di or a Phi?" It was then fair sailing. If the lady claimed to be of a different society from the questioner, a mock quarrel followed; if of the same a sweet bond

of sympathy was established. From these beginnings there ensued hundreds of pleasant acquaintances and many ardent loves.

Commencements were famous for making matches. This was aided by the non-accessibility of Chapel Hill by railroad or water. Scores of gentlemen and ladies came in carriages and buggies drawn by noble trotters. These were extensively used in the intervals of the exercises for flirtation purposes. They led often to life-long unions.

The order and decorum of the meetings of the two Societies were worthy of all praise. Not only was parliamentary law learned, but the power of extempore speaking and writing compositions, as well as gracefulness in delivery were acquired. The members were proud of their society and afraid of its censure. The habit of self-government, of using their own liberty so as not to interfere with the liberties of others, was inculcated. Many young men who neglected text-books obtained here a valuable education, while those who were candidates for offices learned here what they could not learn in the class room—how to manage men. Indeed, men who attained distinction in after life as Senators, Governors, Judges, and the like, have been known to date their beginning of success from their forensic exercises in the Society Halls. The chief debaters studied their subjects well and argued them with intelligent zeal and often eloquence. Of course these questions were generally those discussed in Congress, in the journals and on the hustings, but sometimes the time-honored historical disputes about the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots; whether the civilization of Greece or Rome was most beneficial to the world, whether the United States was bound by treaty to aid France in her Revolutionary wars, and the like, were fought over again.

Of course, among a number of members of verdant hue, there were ludicrous sayings. For example, a Freshman, who had undoubted talent, though untrained, denounced the argument of his opponent as a “tissue of unintel-ligible jar-goon.” When he saw that he had caused merriment, he explained, “I know that there is some tautology in the expression, but it is true.” He rose to be a very successful trial lawyer. Another, now a most reputable physician, whose duty it was to prosecute Warren Hastings for his conduct in India, contended that it was “atrocious robbery in him to despoil the Princess of the Oude of their bee-hives (begums). But such mistakes were rare.

It was praiseworthy that the President and other officers were voted for, not on account of personal popularity, but for the substantial reason of attention to Society duties and attaining high marks in the class room. The members, too, listened with interest to the written theses, or compositions which were read on each alternate Saturday, and one deemed of sufficient excellence was on motion, by a vote of Dr. Theodore Kingsbury were repeatedly so honored. The Presidents were required to deliver inaugural addresses, which were bound in books and preserved in the archives, as a matter of course.

The relations between the Societies were, as a rule, harmonious. Once there was danger when two leaders had a fight in front of the Chapel and the “Dis” supposed that two or three “Phis” were parting the combatants and hostile feelings vanished. Once when the *sarcoptes Scabei* had affected certain individuals of both Societies, so that the authorities quarantined them at Craig’s, a farm house a mile from town, in sulphurous loneliness, the other students were merry over the

incident. "Phis" posted handbills warning all to avoid the dormitories inhabited by Dis. I heard an eloquent speech from a "Di" on the enormity of thus displaying "black-guards," as he called placards. The "Dis" retaliated by inventing a story that the "Phis" had a scratching post in their Society Hall; that a member was overheard to say, "Mr. President! May I scratch?" "No sir!" was the reply, "not at present, Mr. Koontz has the post."

There was much emulation at Commencement. The "Di" color, blue, was worn by the Marshals, Ball Managers and Speakers of that Society, while the Representatives of the other Society wore white. Emulation was shown in inducing distinguished visitors to become honorary members. Committees were appointed to wait on them. The Eastern and Western dividing line was not recognized until after about 1850, so that there was a great zeal, sometimes leading to bad feelings, in procuring recruits from the new members. Old students sometimes rode miles in the country to meet the incoming Freshman. The electioneering, although bad, was not an unmixed evil. It often led to protection from hazing.

As such books as they desired were not purchased for the University Library, the two Societies levied a tax for supplying their own needs. Dr. William Hooper, in his "Fifty Years Since," States of course with some exaggeration, that in his day, whenever one Society bought a new book, the other duplicated it. This was by no means the case in "the forties" but there was duplication of most reference books. The two libraries together had probably the best collection in the state. They were not accessible to the public, except for a few hours per week, so that continuous research was impossible. Certain costly works were marked "prohibited," especially those with engravings placed on tables for the inspection of all comers. All the others could be borrowed for two weeks. Covers of cloth of various sizes were provided, to be fitted on by the borrower, but eventually the practice was discontinued because of injury to the backs of volumes. Fielding, Scott, James, Bulwer, Cooper, Irving and Dickens were the favorite authors. Shakespeare was much read. The "Dis" had quite a collection of antiques and curios, the larger part given by Lieutenant Boudinot, of the Navy, retired, but it has come to nothing.

If the law against Fraternities was violated, the secret was well kept. Occasionally a few students would associate together in such manner as to incur suspicion.

Sometimes the Society seemed to have power than the Faculty. A youth of well-known and honorable family stole ten dollars from his roommate, a poor boy—all he had. He was not prosecuted in the courts, but of course was dismissed from the University. He met this brazen effrontery, but when his Literary Society, after a fair trial, convicted and expelled him, his spirit was broken. The piteous appeal of his mother, his only parent, for his restoration, moved every heart, but it was impossible to grant it.

I witnessed prior to 1849 a trial on impeachment for slander in one of the Societies. The proceedings were as orderly, and as carefully secured to the accused the provisions guaranteed by our Declaration of Rights for a fair trial, as may be seen in our Superior Courts. The members of the Society voted viva voce and there was a large majority for acquittal. Very rarely a course analagous to the Lynch law was adopted outside the Societies. When a student perpetrated an act that made him unworthy to associate longer with gentlemen, a number of his fellows would give him notice to leave the institution at once, which order was obeyed. For example one -----

slandered a virtuous young lady and was glad to be allowed to depart by the next train. This was deemed better than a formal trial. If he had denied his guilt a trial in his Society would have been promptly held.