

## HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.

We present to our readers a sketch of the history of our *University*, which, by every lover of literature and of the future prosperity of this State, will be read with intense interest.—Its constitution has hitherto been imperfectly known; and therefore, as it is an anomaly among institutions of the kind, we have ventured to prefix a synopsis of it, as first established under the auspices of Abraham Baldwin.—It consisted in this:—

1. That a board of visitors, to be composed of the Governor, Chief Justice of the State, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, denominated the *Senatus Academicus* of the University of Georgia, should have the general superintendance of the literature of the State; and, of another board, to be called the Board of Trustees.

2. That, the President of the University should be appointed by the two boards jointly, and removed in like manner.

3. That, there should be a stated annual meeting of the *Senatus Academicus*, &c.

4. That the *Senatus Academicus* should consult not only on the affairs of the University, but also the interests of literature throughout the State. Wherefore, it was enjoined upon the members, that they should endeavor to obtain an acquaintance with the condition of the several places of education in their respective counties; so that they might be better able to counsel and assist one another in their system of literary legislation. Upon the basis of these reports from the several senators, it was made the duty of the *Senatus Academicus* to recommend the kind of schools to be instituted in the several parts of the State; and to prescribe the different modes of instruction and branches of learning to be inculcated therein; not only so, but likewise to examine and recommend the instructors to be employed in them, or to appoint persons for that purpose. Moreover, the Charter of the University makes it imperative on the President, and some of the members of the *Senatus Academicus*, so often as the duties of the former will permit, to visit the different Academies in the State, at least once a year, and examine into their order and condition.

5. The Charter declares, that all public schools, instituted or to be supported by funds or public monies in the State, shall be considered as parts or members of the University: and, further, that the Trustees shall, from time to time, lay before the legislature, whatsoever public measures they may deem necessary for the accomplishment of the great and important designs contemplated by it.

All these features of the original charter have not been preserved from the ravages of annual legislation; but, yet, the foundation and outward structure of the system remain entire.

We believe, that the first commencement took place in 1804; and, as far as our own recollection extends, of College anecdote, the following persons graduated in that year; Gib-

son Clark, Wm. H. Jackson, A. S. Clayton, James Jackson, Williams Rutherford, and Jared Irwin.

Whilst upon this subject, we feel ourselves called upon in a peculiar manner to notice the services of Dr. Jackson to that institution. Whilst professor of Natural Philosophy there, he received the appointment of Secretary of the Legation, at Paris; and, during his residence there, employed his time with a single eye to the important trust which he has since resumed, with so much satisfaction to himself and benefit to his country.—An example which a distinguished individual in Europe, when apprised of all the facts, once likened to the conduct of Cincinnatus.

In the year 1788—9, the Legislature of Georgia made an endowment for the establishment of the University, by grant, or donation, of 30,000 acres of land, in different parts of the then located territories thereof, and vested the management of it, together with the organization of the institution, with Trustees, 17 in number, with power to rent or lease the lands, but not to sell, and to select a proper site for the "University of Georgia."

Propositions were received and efforts were made to locate the University in the counties of Hancock, Columbia, Wilkes, Green, and what was originally Franklin, now Clark county, and after much discussion thereon the latter was selected, and a donation of 500 acres of land was liberally made by the late Governor Milledge, as a proper site for the University, situated on the Western bank of the North Oconee River, which place was called and now bears the name of Athens. In the year 1801, and before a suitable building had been erected, the Trustees appointed to the Presidency of the Franklin College, Mr. Josiah Meigs, a graduate and at that time instructor in Yale College, a gentleman of the highest attainments in science and literature, who accepted the appointment, and forthwith repaired to this State, and under his superintendence the College at Athens went into operation.

During the Presidency of Mr. Meigs, the prosperity of the College was not great, owing to circumstances beyond the control of those to whose care it was committed.

Among these circumstances may be enumerated, the newness of the country, the frontier situation of the College, being at that time only 15 miles from the Indian boundary, the prejudice of the people against education generally, and against institutions of this kind particularly, and what was more embarrassing than any other cause, the want of funds and public patronage, without which institutions of this kind never flourish. The lands were rented annually for very little, and such was the deficiency of funds, that at no time, during Mr. Meigs' continuance in office, was there ever brought to his aid more than two, and seldom more than one assistant to the arduous duties of his station. The institution was also destitute of apparatus and Library, those indispensable appendages to literary Seminaries. Yet, under all these discouraging circumstances, it is admitted that many of the Alumni of the College, for the period of which we speak, have exercised their talents and acquirements, with much advantage to the country and credit to themselves, and the "alma mater;" while on the Bench, at the Bar, in the Medical Arts, in Congress Hall and State Legislature.

Mr. Meigs resigned the office of President in 1808—9, and the appointment was conferred on the Rev. Doctor Kollock, of Savannah, who did not, however, accept it. The office was next conferred on the Rev. Doctor Brown, at that time a professor in South Carolina College, who presided over this institution for nine years.

The principal cause which hitherto operated to keep the College in obscurity, continued for the greater part of Doct. Brown's administration viz: the want of funds. In 1816 the Trustees asked and obtained leave to sell the lands belonging to the University, and that at a most unfavourable time. It is necessary here to remark, that the College did not retain all the lands originally granted—a tract was lost in settling the boundary between this State and South Carolina, towards the head of Tugalo or Seneca Rivers, and another tract was lost, by law suit, in Jackson county—other portions of the landed property having been previously sold to defray the expense of building, &c. there remained to be sold, in 1816, not exceeding 25,000 acres, which was sold on a credit of four annual instalments, and produced the sum of \$125,000.

The sales having been made on time, the Legislature very judiciously, and liberally, agreed to receive the Bonds, and vest in Stock of the State Bank, the amount of \$100,000 for the use of the University, as a permanent endowment, the interest only of which could be drawn or used.

From and after this period the prospects of the College began to brighten, and the Trustees were enabled to establish a Professorship of Languages and Natural Philosophy, and filled them with suitable Professors, and also to employ one or more tutors for the instruction of the lower classes.

Doct. Brown continued in office until 1817, when he resigned the appointment which was conferred on the Rev. Doct. Finley, of Baskingridge, New Jersey.

Doct. Finley repaired immediately, with his family, to Athens, and entered upon the duties of his office, with zeal and much ability, and with as fair prospects of extensive usefulness as any man could have possessed. The talents and reputation of Dr. Finley eminently qualified him to preside over a literary institution. To a mind well stored with scientific attainments, was added long experience in the instruction and management of youth, a tempered mind and conciliating deportment.—With advantages such as we have enumerated, the University of Georgia was regarded as about to assume a stand among the literary institutions of the United States, and under the superintendence of this gentleman had he lived; the most sanguine expectations of its

friends would have been realized, but by a mysterious dispensation of Divine Providence, he was removed by death in the month of Sept. having filled the office of President only from the April preceding.

Dr. Finley determined that nothing should remain undone, in his power to accomplish, which might advance the interest of the College, and finding it destitute of a Library, he devised the laudable design of endeavouring to raise, by subscription, a sum for the purpose of purchasing books, and laying the formation of a College Library; with this in view, and also with the desire to become acquainted with the southern men and manners, in the month of July he made a tour through the middle and southern sections of the State, and being unaccustomed to the climate, the excessive heat of the season added to the fatigue of traveling, produced a bilious attack, which, in August or September 1818, terminated his short, but useful term of service as President of Franklin College. A considerable amount of money was, however, subscribed, and although Dr. Finley lived not to see the fruit of his labours, yet the money was collected, and the foundation of a College Library was laid, which has since become respectable. Collections were also made for the benefit of the Apparatus, and the liberality of one gentleman (Mr. John Marks, of Jasper county) deserves particular mention, who gave the sum of one thousand dollars to the apparatus fund.

The lamented death of Doctor Finley, obscured for a time the brightening prospects of the University. The Trustees next elected the Rev. N. S. S. Beeman to fill the vacancy, which he accepted, but who from some cause or other, resigned the appointment before he entered on its duties, which as may be supposed, embarrassed the Trustees, and thereby the College remained longer without a head than was for its good. In March, 1818, the board elected to the Presidency, the Rev. Dr. Moses Waddel, who has from that time to the present period, presided over it with great advantage to the Institution and much credit to himself. From this period may be dated the permanent and almost uninterrupted prosperity of the College.

Dr. Waddel had taught a large Academy in Abbeville, (S. C.) with unparalleled success, for a number of years, under whose tuition, a number of the most distinguished men in Georgia and South Carolina, had received, in whole or in part, their education, and who from long and successful experience had acquired a reputation for the government and instruction of youths, which qualified him, perhaps above any man living, to give character and reputation, as subsequent events have abundantly proved.

The number of Students began to increase, and very soon the College family numbered 100, and it has since been frequently more, but never less than that number.

The College soon acquired reputation abroad and gained favour with the Legislature and the people.

The sources of the College revenue were the dividends on Bank Stock, and the proceeds of Tuition, and having no other, the pecuniary concerns of the Institution must have suffered greatly, during the pressure of times which prevented the Bank from making dividends but to a small amount, but for a most salutary provision by the Legislature of 1822, which declared that when the Bank failed to declare 8 per cent. annually, the deficiency should be made up to the College out of any appropriated monies in the State Treasury—which secures to the College the sum of \$8,000 annually, which added to the Tuition, (\$3,500) makes an annual income of \$11,500.—The excess of revenue over the expenditure, for some years, enabled the Board to appropriate considerable sums for the purchase of a Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus, and for the gradual increase of the College Library, which, although it is far from being extensive, is nevertheless respectable; consisting at this time, (1828) of about three thousand well selected volumes. The Chemical and Philosophical apparatus are sufficiently extensive for a College course.

At the same session of the Legislature, the sum of \$25,000 was appropriated for the purpose of erecting an additional Collegiate Edifice, a building of brick, 120 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 4 stories high, which, as well as the old building, is divided into suitable studies and dormitories; and in the two buildings there can be conveniently accommodated 150 or 200 Students.

In each of these buildings, is an apartment for the Library and recitation rooms. In addition to those already mentioned, there is also a convenient Brick Building for a Chemical Laboratory and Philosophical hall, and Lecture rooms for the Professors presiding over these apartments.

There is attached to the College a Grammar or preparatory School, in which boys preparing to enter College, are taught free of any charge for Tuition; which School is found to be a very useful nursery for the College, in supplying Students for the under classes. The teachers of this Academy are paid their salaries from the College funds.

The present organization of Franklin College may be stated thus:

A President with a salary per. ann. of	\$2200
A Professor of Natural Philosophy and Botany,	1400
A Pro. Chemistry and Mineralogy,	1400
A Pro. of Mathematics and Astronomy,	1400
A Pro. of Belles Lettre, and Ethics,	1400
Two Tutors in College, each \$700,	1400
Two do. in Grammar School, \$800,	1600
A Treasurer and Secretary,	650

The income of the College being no greater than its expenditure, the Trustees will not be able to make any further additions to the Library, or affect any future improvement in the Institution, without Legislative aid.

Very important appendages to the College, are the Demosthenian and Phi-Kappa Societies, two literary associations formed by the

Students—and any history of the College, which omitted to notice them, would be imperfect.

The object of these Societies, is the mutual improvement of its members, in Eloquence Composition, morals, &c.

A most laudable emulation is excited in each, that its members should excel in every thing that adorns the human character; and they are found to exert an influence over the Students, which no other restraints or incentives could produce, and it has become a matter of importance to have ones name enrolled on the lists of either of those rival Institutions; and there is scarcely a distinguished man in the State who is not an honorary member of one or the other.

The Demosthenian was founded as early as the year 1802, and has now for its accommodation a handsome Brick Building, with a beautiful hall, and other apartments, and is in a flourishing condition—its annual meetings are on the 19th February in each year.

The Phi-Kappa, though of more recent establishment, has numbered its 8th anniversary, on the 22d February, 1828. It has likewise a suitable hall for its use, and is also in a flourishing condition.

To each of these Societies belong select Libraries of about 1000 volumes each.

They meet weekly for the transaction of the ordinary business of the Society, and on Commencement day of College; and thus have their annual meetings, at which the honorary members who may be in Athens, are invited particularly to attend, and at any other of their meetings if they choose.