

REMINISCENCES AND MEMOIRS

OF

NORTH CAROLINA

AND

EMINENT NORTH CAROLINIANS,

BY

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" 'Tis well that a State should often be reminded of her great citizens."

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country, and was beginning to rival the old, time-honored establishments of Yale and Harvard. In the year 1858 its catalogue showed a larger number of under graduates than that of any other college in the United States, except Yale. All this success was accomplished in a very short time. A glance at the rapidly increasing ratio of its graduates will illustrate the truth of my remark. For the first ten years after the date in which degrees were conferred by the University, the number of students who received the Baccalaureate was 53; for the second decade it was 110; for the third 259; for the fourth 146; for the fifth 308; for the sixth 448; and for the seventh the annual number was going on at a rate which would have produced 882, nearly the double of that which immediately preceded it.

Another striking manifestation of the growing fame and the wide-spreading influence of the University was afforded by the honor of having had among the visitors at each of the commencements of 1847 and 1859 the then President of the United States and a part of his cabinet. On the first of these occasions one of her own sons came to greet his fair mother, and on the second a stranger from a distant State came to do her honor.

The editor deems that no apology to the reader is needed for completing this sketch of the history of the University from the pen of an illustrious father, by adding the following from the pen of his illustrious son.

Hon. Kemp P. Battle, the President, on University day 1883, in Gerrard Hall, gave a most interesting History of the Buildings of the University of North Carolina:

This anniversary day commemorates the laying of the corner stone of the Old East Building, on the 12th of October, 1793. I have already recounted at length the celebration of that momentous event, when Wm. Richardson Davie, in stately dignity, arrayed in his Grand

Master's Regalia, with his silver trowel in the hand which had wielded the warrior's sword, surrounded by Alfred Moore, W. H. Hill, Treasurer John Haywood, Alexander Mebane, John Williams, Thomas Blount, Frederick Hargett, and other eminent men of that day, including the generous donors of our land, Benjamin Yergain, Colonel John Hogan, Matthew McCauley, Christopher Barbee, Alexander Piper, James Craig, Edward Jones, John Daniel, Mark Morgan and Hardy Morgan, gave tangible form to the institution, for which he had labored with such persistent energy and wisdom, while Dr. Samuel E. McCorkle invoked the blessing of Heaven on the enterprise.

The building was of humble size, only two stories high, with 16 rooms, designed for the occupancy of four students each, but it sheltered many able young men struggling hard and struggling successfully for the inestimable benefits of disciplined minds—such men as Judge Archibald Murphey, Governor John Branch and Francis L. Dancy, John L. Hawkins, Wm. Hardy Murfree, Judge John Cameron, Judge James Martin, Judge John R. Donnell, Gavin Hogg and Chancellor Williams of Tennessee, of the earlier students, not to mention the names of great men who inhabited it in succeeding years.

The Old East was intended only as the South wing of a grander structure looking to the East, to front a wide avenue, nearly a mile long, leading through the forests eastwardly to the conspicuous eminence of which Gen. Davie speaks: "This peak," he says, "is called Point Prospect. The flat country spreads out below like the ocean, giving an immense hemisphere, in which the eye seems to be lost in the extent of space." The name has by the mutation of time become singularly inappropriate. The growth of trees and brushwood has shut out the "prospect" and the irreverent successors of Davie, not being able to see the