Essay
Read at
Semi-Centennial Union
of
Alumnae of
McLennan Female College
Wednesday, June 1885

By
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nee Blaison
My first appearance in public as a reader was in Adelaide at the Higher Powers. After the lapse of 20 years, with the burden of years pressing heavily upon me, I am again called before you as the last resort; at the very last moment. Custom would have me add an apology for shortcoming, but custom compels me to pay for something else. The 20th of Jan. 1839 was one of the most memorable days in the history of Glacon. On that day the matriculation book was opened, and all girls from near and abroad were registered as pupils of Glacon's Female College.
College boys were no novelty for Athens, Penfield, Oxford & Midway of our own state & Randolph Hall of Virginia was well represented in our midst. But College girls! The idea that woman could compete with strong minded man in the pursuit of knowledge had never until that late date taken possession of the public mind. It was enough education for a woman, if she could calculate the cost of 27 1/2 yards of cloth at 33 1/3 cents per yard or 6 1/2 lbs. of butter at 18 cents per lb. - Now I say they were wrong in their opinions has been fully demonstrated in the number of cultured women who have left these halls while no one has attained celebrity as advocate for woman's rights in legislative & electoral halls. They have exercised the great prerogative of woman to rule in her own province - home - a home trained sons & daughters who have gone forth to bless the world as
Statesmen, ministers of the Gospel, missionaries & citizens of whom any people might be proud, a old Wesleyan, jollily sang "These are my jewels." The college was devoted to examination & classification of pupils - the highest class was Jun half advanced & consisted of seventeen members - 10 of whom graduated.

Rev Geo. F. Pierce was Pres. & had charge of the moral sciences - which office he held until July 1840. At that time he resigned, feeling it his higher duty to continue preaching the Gospel. He was so long & so prominently before the people, we're useless for me to attempt a eulogy. Even kind & gentle his memory is lovingly embalmed in the hearts of all who were under his guidance - his life "bright as a star when only one is shining in the sky was translated to a higher, happier sphere - Eph 3: 10, 1884. And his farewell
A word which makes us linger, yet, Farewell still echoes in our hearts as loudly as when he uttered it in 1840—Rev. Wm. H. Ellerson had charge of the mathematical dept. No one knew him but to love him—I shall never relate a little incident which will show how wisely & effectively he governed. On a rainy afternoon the class members of the Jun. class, finding it monotonous in the study room decided to adjourn to the room of one of the teachers to study the lesson. (You all know how girls perform that duty when at least a dozen are present.) Upon entering the room (we saw the items of the dog clay pipes in the warm ashes in the fireplace) "What are you for?" we asked—"We are going to cut our foret hair—true to Romano.
mature, a desire for personal improvement, we decided to have this ended also. Time sped rapidly to us and we were aware, the bell summoned us to our recitation in 'English.' We marched into the school room recitation room, feeling that to be seen was to be admired. A few questions were asked and correctly answered. Miss Martha, please take Rep. 71 VII. A peep into the book revealed the figure but alas! The demonstration was wanting. The next young lady will go to the board. "Mr. Ellison, please excuse me I am not prepared on the lesson." "The next." "I don't know the lesson, Mr. Ellison." This was too much for his patience, quietly folding his book, he said with a voice filled with tenderness, "Young ladies had you devoted the hour to study instead of making work."
screws, you would have found it more profitable. What a crushing
how to bite pretty curbs! The lesson
was salutary, lasting a year after we reached "Pons Asinorum." Comic
sections on logarithms we passed
safely over, leaving our cork screws
plundering in their ashes until
by a process of Earthlight they have
baked with the present classes as
well as the present classes as
as well-developed boys. In 1840 he
assumed the presidency of the
College and continued until 1857.
Last year he left the Academies of
Earth and entered the University of the
Universe with the still Wise as his
teacher. The new fees clearly postulate
the cost increase here, he pays with confidence
and pleasure, unknown in this preparatory
school.

Dread, erat demonstrandum
Rev. Thomas B. Wade, of precious memory, was our teacher in Natural Science & Botany. When the call was made for a Botanical walk, we cheerfully responded & were never happier than when seated around him on the bank of the Ocmulgee, analyzing the flowers we had gathered while passing through the woods which is now 'Beautiful Rose Hill' - the spot of Central Avenue, being our favorite resting place. As he led us through nature up to nature's God, we lived to linger there & often felt how power it would be could we at last lie there beside its low, poet murmurs. Two of that happy number are resting there - one of tender moments, Mrs. Griswold - one in pure nature years, Mr. David Blount. He too has crossed the Chrsytal River.
to where the fields are ever green
and flowers bloom in perpetual
beauty.

Adolphus Maussanck our teacher
in languages was a man of stelring
merit and few words, unless, the recita-
tion in French was unusually good.
Then, his gratification knew no
bound. I'd required my every effort to
master the plain English - and even
he made the best at the close of
one of my exercises, I knew it was
meant. I he returned to pine
alone France and died, where
Dans Le 'Espoir' repose now.
The rules governing the pupils were very strict but all did not extend to the "day scholars." For we were allowed to see the toys once a week. One of our worthy Trustees was then on the market (H. L. Jones) and he can tell you the evening allowed us for once that particular one - his brother Joe - always knew where to find him - if he does not recognize the picture I will not betray him - all were required to dress very plainly - 8 yds of any material being sufficient for a full dress. After the graduation dresses were made, we were strictly led by the information that "Julia's brother's dress has come in - it is so fine - has two flounces in the skirt - it is trimmed with lace - it is - it has lace and - it was too late in our part to make changes, so we made a picture of necessity & tore it bare it quietly.
We can, we admired the fine dress, but felt no envy, for when that left us our beloved classmate would go with it to her happy home on the gulf. So there, some of the present class explains, how could you dress so plainly? you could never catch me on the stage in so plain a dress. The answer is simply this, our mothers made our dresses & we knew they were just as they should be.

Our examinations were justic a oral, & we were at the mercy of a strict Examining Committee. We had this advantage however— we did not see a half day reporters sitting with pencils ready to chronicle our failings to the world. Our failures. Young ladies, be thankful that the lines
have fallen to you in many pleasant places. You ask, was it not embarrassing? indeed it was. To be on the stage in such persons as Longstreet, Means, Pierce, Andrew, and many others was no slight affair. Hon. C. J. McDowall, Gov. of Geo., was also present, and was the only acting Executive ever present until our honored Gov. of this day. I remember the class was being examined in Chemistry, subject calorics. Judge Longstreet, Pres. of Emory College, astounded us by asking “is there any light without heat?” That was not a part of our program, and we were plunged into such thick mental darkness we did not know there was any kind of light, much
more light with or without heat.

The jaw one chime in a kindly

came to the rescue after which we

were prepared for any and all

questions proposed.

Honor were not given for a

number of years. Excelsior was

our motto & we asked no higher

honor than to see “Distinguished”

written on our monthly reports to

feel that we were in the faith

ful discharge of duty.

A few days before our graduation

one of the girls exclaimed: “Girls

what do you think! Those Randolph

men must smile at you & they will

just criticize us, till we will

be scared we won’t know a word.”

True enough on the morning of
July 17th— as we walked on to the stage directly in front of us sat (with all due respect to their present honorable positions) Dave Clopton, Bot. Ladies “Fip” Dowdell Harrigan & Jim Field. But their august presence did not in the least intimidate us— for if they were college boys we were college girls, the first in the world as good as any boy. Young ladies of the present class the past 50 years with its burden of joys & sorrows has quickly passed as a dream that is told. The succeeding 50, to you seems an interminable length of time— As you go forth
remember "Into each life some rain must fall. Keep in view, behind the cloud, the sun still shining." Demands will be made upon you that have not been made upon us by your training, if true to it, will amply qualify you to meet these demands. No praises hinging could I make for you than that you may be true to every God-appointed work. In conclusion, should any one of you live to participate in the Centennial anniversary your thoughts will naturally revert to this happy occasion—then will you think of this friend who welcomed it too, and forget her own griefs to be happy with you?"
Dr. Haygood,

When you left your alma mater you little thought you never would receive from the hand of a woman. This is a progressive age; we know not what the future may develop. This is not a 'Testimonial of Scholarship,' but a memento of the past. After 48 years it returns to its home asking love and protection. To you as the representative of the Trustees I commit it for safe keeping. Cherish it for the sake of the giver who trusts you long to enter that higher kingdom of learning where the reunion of Teachers and Students will be eternal.
When I handed Dr. R. the "clipper," I kissed it "goodbye" to many remarkable it was one of thepkidstee spires. Hey and saw...