

THE GUILFORDIAN

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Literary Societies

It seems a coincidence that while one literary society was debating, Resolved: That literary societies should be discontinued, another one was undergoing a radical innovation in policy by turning itself into a legislative-parliamentary body. We do not contend that the literary societies should be abolished. They have too much value as political and fraternal organizations to be abolished. They lend themselves admirably to the formation of political factions and fraternal bodies but as a literary success it is nearly universally conceded that they have been, and are, a flat failure. The constantly increasing number of empty chairs at the Friday night meetings gives eloquent testimony in regard to the literary success of the societies.

However, despite the truth of the above, we believe there is much value to be derived from these fraternal bodies if they will break the shackles of convention and custom and modernize their programs.

The Henry Clay Society has taken a progressive step in the right direction. No one will deny that the plan of making a legislative body out of the society is vastly more instructive and interesting than the present cut and dried debate, or talks on art, or the rendition of some simple music. The plan being tried by the Clay Society not only gives more people a chance to participate but it also places a greater responsibility on every society member for the success of the program. In addition it gives every one a knowledge of the principles of parliamentary law and tends to create an interest in state and national affairs, thus making the society members better fitted to carry out their obligations as intelligent citizens.

THE GUILFORDIAN congratulates the Henry Clay Society on its progressive action and it would like to see the other societies follow suit. This would not mean that the societies would lose their primary

purpose—that of being political and fraternal organizations, but in addition they might have some forensic value.

Debating

What is there in debating that recommends it to Guilford students? The first thing one thinks of is that debating means a lot of hard, earnest work with small hope of any form of recognition or credit. Guilford's debating record for the past three years is not one of which we can be proud. It is in this realm that our college has scored the greatest number of "moral victories"—in fact, its record is perfect.

It is not hard to account for this state of affairs when one turns to examine the system employed by the schools that have been defeating Guilford's debating teams with monotonous regularity. Practically all of them have organized, scheduled classes in debating and credit is offered for the work done and the query for the intercollegiate debates is the central theme of the course.

We wonder why such a procedure could not be tried at Guilford.

However, despite the above mentioned drawbacks, there is much in debating to commend itself to students. A good debater learns facts, and how to weigh and balance these facts against each other. He learns to think quickly and express himself clearly and accurately. The debater learns to appreciate the evidence on both sides of any question.

Debating in itself is worth while and we would like to see more people out backing and helping Dean Trueblood, who is doing all in his power to raise the standards of the college along this line.

A Further Suggestion

A. B. HAZARD

Being fully convinced that theoretically, at least, everything is done for a purpose, college students should revolt against holding an empty cask for the sake of custom. The literary society has had a place in history since the first preparatory schools and colleges. With some Greek name, the meaning of which was understood and revered, and their forcefulness of oratory, together with their deep and intellectual study in the fields of literature and art, they were indeed places of inspiration. Unlike most institutions which have come out of the past, they have not changed to fulfill the needs of modern times. Instead, they stand as changeless landmarks of a classical age, still chartered under the Greek name, neither understood nor honored, holding regular meetings in which the members attempt to force upon each other polite self-control; and with an assumed look of intense interest listen to efforts to reproduce a long lost art of oratory, or to imitate some ultra-modern production of drama or dancing.

At present, in our own college, we hold to these relics of the past, debating each year as to the advisability of rejoining our respective societies, then handing the treasurer the sum of three dollars, which is rather subconsciously checked up to loss. It is to be realized, however, that each year

there are fewer society enthusiasts. Those who remain are interested in the fellowship of the society, or the fact that custom demands recognition of it, or possibly by the idea that in order to be connected with the college paper one must have a society name for a background.

The purpose here is not to spread propaganda for a Publication Board. Although having for some time been connected with the GUILFORDIAN, I am absolutely convinced that an organization of this kind, removing the paper from society control, would be extremely beneficial, both in reportorial and financial matters. Should the establishment of such a board be effected, it would be very likely to have its effect upon society membership.

The question inevitably rises, What can be done to raise the standard of literary societies, or to renew interest in them? Already there have been in the columns of the GUILFORDIAN features discussing pro and con the possibility of making the men's societies into forum groups. This hardly seems to be a solution for the ladies' side of affairs. More strict program regulations do not seem to present a way out. Sororities, if not discouraged by Quaker colleges, might be the means of providing the desired fellowship.

The solution appears to be securely hidden, but it is apparent that when scarcely more than half of the women of the college have membership in either of the literary societies, and when it is practically impossible, either by means of draft or bribe, to secure three participants for an oratorical contest, this age must find a substitute in something extremely new, a complete expression of the twentieth century, or in an absolute return to classicism. The writer suggests that until a new order is devised, it would be wise to discontinue these innocuous and insipid society meetings, rather than to allow them to bring suicide upon themselves.

SPRING FESTIVAL IS TO BE GIVEN HERE

(Continued from Page One)

is to be hoped that Miss Gilbert can find time to superintend the track work. There will be challenge ladders in tennis, May 19, or thereabouts, is the date set for Field Day, on which will be held the finals of inter-class contests in volley ball, baseball, tennis, and track. Class and individual awards will be given for athletic achievement.

On May 3, the gym meet will take place. The judges are to be some instructors from N. C. C. W. There will be some marching but for the most part the performance is to consist of floor-work and drill and aesthetic gymnastics. The latter consists in a goodly number of folk dances which the classes have been working on for some time.

A CORRECTION

Some time ago this paper made the statement that Guilford had more flunk-outs than usual this year. On further investigation, however, the editor found that there are not more, but fewer, students who failed to pass nine hours' work than there have been in several years.

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FROM OTHER CAMPUSES

Greensboro, N. C., Feb. 19.—(CP)—At a recent mass meeting of the students of N. C. College, it was decided to try a new proctor system in the dormitories.

By the old system, two proctors were elected for every hall at the beginning of each semester, working with a house committee composed of the house president, vice house president, and all the proctors.

The new plan which has been suggested and is to be used is to have every girl except members of the senate serve as proctors for a length of time which will be determined by each house president according to the number of girls in her dormitory. Under this system, the house committee will be composed of house president, vice house president, and three proctors.

This proctor system will go into effect as soon as schedules can be made out and posted.

The student council government at Amherst College recently tendered their resignations in a body to the faculty. This action was taken as a result of the manner of administering punishment for infractions of college rules and the habit of the college in employing a watchman to spy on students while an honor system was supposedly in effect.—Goucher College Weekly.

ALUMNI NEWS

'08
 Ovid W. Jones holds a judgeship with the Internal Revenue Department of the United States. He has held this position over eight years. His office is in the Federal Building, Brooklyn, N. Y. He has been married for two years and his home address is Puritan Avenue, Forest Hills, N. Y.

'11
 A. K. Moore, president of the Guilford Alumni Association, has recently been honored by the National Association of Real Estate Boards by an appointment as a member of the committee on federal legislative matters. The appointment comes from the president of the association. Mr. Moore is the only North Carolina man on the committee. The body is composed of leading real estate men all over the country. The committee to which Mr. Moore was appointed is one of the most important of the association. It is one of the aims of the association to secure appropriate legislation to do the necessary work for preventing the recurrence of disastrous floods.

Guilford students know already of Mr. Moore's plans for improvements at Guilford. It was their privilege to hear him recently in a chapel speech concerning real estate. He has a real estate business in Greensboro and is closely associated with the affairs of Guilford College.

Mr. Steele: What does b plus b plus b plus b equal?
 Jelly Brents: A hive.—E.x.

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