

SCHOOL SPIRIT OR ST. AUGUSTINE'S SPIRIT?

(Reprint)

In this, the seventieth year of the existence of our Alma Mater, THE PEN finds infinite pleasure in greeting you. In seventy years this institution has undergone a great many changes. It has advanced from a Normal and Collegiate Institute to an accredited four-year College in affiliation with a nurses' training school, a school of social work for graduate students, and a separate college preparatory department, and it has added some twenty-odd buildings to the campus. In short we are possessed of an institution which materially has kept up with the changing times.

But has the personnel of the institution kept up with these changes? Do we have here an instrument too modern for us to handle properly? Does the St. Aug. Spirit still mean an adolescent lethargy rather than a good college spirit?

A host of evidence for both the good and bad sides of these questions is certain to raise doubt in the mind of the reader. The passive, lazy attitude on the part of the bulk of our students, our tendency to let golden opportunity slip through our fingers, our attempts to break laws often merely for the sake of breaking them, the emphasized social problem and the sometimes ludicrous attempts of a faculty to keep peace, law, and order between 300 students somehow seem to belong to that period when the institution was young and traditions were none at all. On the other hand, the organization of a recognized and approved Student Council, the continuation of such extracurricular activities as the Ferguson Club with its Open Forums, the College newspaper, organized cheering sections, student participation in dormitory discipline, the offering of prizes for outstanding achievements, seem to show that we are at least making an attempt towards self modernization.

An astounding amount of doubt-producing evidence is revealed above. Just how old is the personnel of St. Aug.? One couldn't say exactly; but the fact is obvious that we're not as fully developed as our 70 years and our material background would warrant. We have yet to cultivate a high respect for law and order, for the property and feelings of others, and for ourselves and our abilities. Increased scholastic attainment may perhaps be brought about by offering additional class cuts to members of the honor roll, or by giving them extended vacation privileges; but, as pointed out before, the fact that we are not all scholastically up to par is not our only failing. The solution to our problem lies in our mental adjustment—or rather readjustment. The sooner we realize that the whole, since it is greater, should receive more attention than any of its parts, that it is an absolute necessity for each part to be a good one in order to make up a good unity, the sooner we will catch up with our times. When one does his best to make his institution a good one, real school spirit—the desire to defend his labors—must of necessity follow, as must all other real scholastic virtues. So let's each of us find something constructive he wants to do and do it as well as he can for the duration of his academic life!