REPORT

TO THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

ALBEMARLE FEMALE INSTITUTE,

SETTING FORTH THE

History, Organization and Prospects

OF THE SCHOOL.

Published by Order of the Board.

CHARLOTTESVILLE:
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1858.

TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

ALBEMARLE FEMALE INSTITUTE.

GENTLEMEN:

It is now near two years since, by your appointment, I assumed the position of Principal of this Institution. Your body having now an acknowledged legal existence, it becomes my duty, as it is a pleasure, to make to you a report of the progress of your School for these two years, and of its present condition and prospects.

The most important matters will be presented in succession.

(1.) The Amount of Patronage.

The first session begun on the 22d September, 1856. There were present, for the first few days of the session, only about thirty pupils, of whom some fourteen were boarders. The recitations were held in the basement of the Baptist Church.—Any one conversant with such matters, can see the great disadvantage of this arrangement. Still, the number of students constantly increased, until the whole number connected with the School during this session, as exhibited in the Catalogue therefor, was sixty-one.

On the 1st March, 1857, the School was moved to the property now occupied, a few repairs having been made to adapt it to the purpose. The session just ended begun 15th Septem-

ber, 1857. The whole number of students for this session has been ninety-one, of whom forty-nine have been boarders. This is certainly as large increase as the friends of the School had right to expect. The facts of the case altogether encourage us to expect a steadily increasing patronage.

The School, however, cannot be a great deal larger, without enlargement of the capacity of the property.

It is further matter of encouragement, that so large a proportion of the students have been young ladies of more than common capacity, and of excellent habits of study. These will give character to the School abroad.

(2.) Course of Study, Mode of Instruction, &c.

No instructions as to these were given by the Board when the School was organized. The matter was left to be settled mainly by the President of the Board and myself. The subject presented difficulties. Without experience in the management of a Female School, neither of us could determine how far the system of the University of Virginia could be applied in such a School. Consequently, for the first three months of the first session, there was not that precision and harmony of arrangement which has been since attained. But the experience of these three months satisfied us that the University system could be, and ought to be, applied fully. Accordingly, as is seen in the Catalogue of the past session, the regular graduating course has been arranged into seven distinct and independent Schools, viz:

(1.) The School of Ancient Languages;
(2.) The School of Modern Languages;
(3.) The School of Mathematics;
(4.) The School of Natural Sciences;
(5.) The School of Moral Philosophy;
(6.) The School of History and Literature;
(7.) The School of English Language and Composition;

These seven Schools comprise what has seemed to us essential to a wide and thorough cultivation of mind, and, at the same time, afford a large mass of practically useful information. But, besides the subjects contained in these Schools, provision is made for a variety of other useful and entertaining matters, when students desire to study them.

I think this arrangement is now well nigh complete, leaving very little to be desired; at least, very little which is attainable under existing conditions. It is but just that I here acknowledge the obligations of the School to my associate of the first session, Mr. C. H. Toy, for valuable suggestions in regard to the

course of study, and other important matters, while the whole thing was yet in its incipient stage.

We have found great advantage in having lectures and recitations regularly on Saturdays as on other days, and this may be regarded now as one of the fixed features of the School.

The instruction is by lectures in connection with text-books. This, better than any other method, leads students to habits of independent thought and of careful reading.

The studies of the Preparatory Department are selected and arranged primarily with reference to preparation for the Collegiate Department. It may be enough here to say, that they are those which make up what is called a common English education. The studies of this Department have been directed, for the past session, mainly by Miss M. G. Saunders, who has performed the duties of her position creditably to herself and to the School.

Mr. Edmund Taylor, a gentleman of successful experience as a teacher of these subjects, will be employed in this Department the next session. Furthermore, in consequence of the very satisfactory arrangement for instruction in the Collegiate Department, whereby I shall be released from some of my hitherto laborious duties therein, I shall be in condition, I think, to do in person, a large amount of teaching in the preparatory classes. Any further assistance which may be needful will be promptly provided.

Department of Music.

This has been for these two years under the management of Mr. J. M. Deems. This fact is guarantee that it has been conducted with ability and fidelity. Mr. Deems having determined to leave Charlottesville, an arrangement has been made with Mr. Vincent Czurda, recently of Eatonton, Ga., by which he will have charge of the music next session. Judging from the recommendation of Mr. Deems and others, I am confident that Mr. C. will make an efficient instructor.

Ornamental Department, Drawing, Painting.

These subjects have been, for the last session, under the care of Mrs. E. Grubb, who has proven herself in all respects well fitted to manage them. Mrs. G. will remain in the same position next session.

Examinations, Degrees, &c.

The course of study for graduation, as seen above, is extensive. We also endeavour to make it thorough. The Diploma,

from this School shall be evidence of a scholarship of wider range and higher grade than usual. To secure this, students are made to pass written examinations in all their subjects. These are so prepared both as to nature and extent of questions, and the standard is fixed so high, that nothing short of a really accurate knowledge of the subject of examination can ever secure success. The element of time does not enter at all into the determination of a question of graduation. The student must have the necessary amount of knowledge, and that of the right kind. We do not ask how long or how short a time she has been about acquiring it.

Certificates of Proficiency are conferred on those who give satisfactory results in the examinations in the separate Schools. The diploma, the highest honor of the Institute, is conferred on those who have graduated in the seven schools mentioned above. Certificates of Distinction are awarded those who pass satisfactory examinations in the Intermediate, Junior and Preparatory Classes—and on those in the Senior classes who attain thereto, but do not obtain the Certificate of Proficiency.

I confess that at one time I had doubts whether it would be possible to maintain this high standard of graduation in certain subjects. I have no such doubts now. Not the least gratifying result of my two years experience is the knowledge that not a few young ladies can be found ready to grapple earnestly and successfully with the real difficulties encountered in an extended course of study. Our girls are capable of doing and eager to do better things than they have always been allowed to do.

Philosophical Apparatus.

The apparatus with which, by your liberality the Institute was provided two years ago, has proved to be very good. It is however not so extensive as is desirable. I ask your attention to this matter, in the hope, that so soon as circumstances will permit, some additions to it may be made.

Associate Teachers in Collegiate Department.

Messrs Crawford H. Toy and William N. Bronaugh—both Masters of Arts of the University of Virginia—have been associated with me during the past session. I should not do justice to my own feelings, nor to you as interested in the school, were I to fail to bear testimony, in this report, to the ability and enlightened regard to the interests of the school, with which they have performed the duties assigned them. I am happy to be able to state that an arrangement has been made, by which these two gentlemen will retain their present positions for the next session.

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY

In addition to these, Mr. J. Baker Thompson, also a Master of Arts of the University of Virginia, and a gentleman in all respects admirably well fitted for such position, has been appointed a teacher in the Collegiate Department.

The Collegiate Faculty as thus composed will meet the increasing demands of several sessions.

Improvements in the Property.

Early last summer the executive committee of your Board invested me with authority to have made such alterations and repairs as would best fit the property for the accommodation of the school. Acting under this authority I succeeded, in spite of many disadvantages, in getting the building in condition for use by the opening of the session. As it now stands it is well suited to its purpose. It affords good rooms for about sixty boarders, with very good lecture rooms and rooms for music practice, nearly all lighted by gas.

Without direct authority from the Board, I proceeded last spring to have built a house for exercise. This must be of great value, if it can be made the means of inducing students to take regular exercise, a thing impossible out of doors in this climate.

Rent.

The contract made with the executive committee of your Board makes the amount of rent for the property depend on the number of pupils.

The precise amount to be paid on each pupil was determined so as to make the aggregate, something over six per cent on the estimated cost of the property after the needed repairs were made, supposing that there should be 100 students. The number of students falling under this, the rent for the last session is somewhat less than six per cent—really, I think about $5\frac{1}{4}$. Should the same contract stand for the next session, I am able to say that with one hundred students, the amount thus paid will be about seven per cent on the value of the property. This ought to be satisfactory, I think, to stockholders in a Female School. The facts of the case prove the wisdom of the policy you pursued of investing, at the start, no larger amount of money than the necessities of the school demanded.

Health of the School.

We have been peculiarly blessed in this respect. There hat been no severe case of sickness among the students the pass session. Measles prevailed at one time, but of mild form.

Condition of the School Religiously.

I cannot close this report without adverting to the gratifying fact, that in each of the past sessions there has been much of religious interest among the students and many have become professors of religion during their residence here. The school for large part of the last session, presented the rather unusual spectacle of a family of over fifty persons, all of whom, except six or eight were professed christians.

Altogether I know of no like enterprise which promises better results than this, if it shall be managed with prudent liberality. With you, more than with others, it rests to determine whether it shall be worked out to the fulfilment of that promise.

I conclusion, I beg to render you my hearty thanks for the uniform kindness and confidence which you have manifested towards me.

Respectfully,

JOHN HART.

JULY 1, 1858.