

John B. Stetson University

Transcribed from an undated handwritten document by Stetson President (1885-1903) John F. Forbes. Date is circa 1890.

This institution under the name of "DeLand Academy" was the first, we believe, established in Florida in which could be obtained under directly Christian auspices not only a thorough Academic Education in the proper sense of that term, but also a complete preparation for any college in the country. It certainly was the first educational institution under the general control of a religious Denomination to be chartered by the state Legislature. Its charter is a broad and liberal one admitting of the organization of every kind of special and professional school as well as a college, Academy & Normal School for both sexes. This charter has constituted the basis for the charters of several other denominational schools in the state.

The central and controlling idea involved in its foundation history and present administration is to give in Florida, especially to the young men and women of Florida a Christian education and as broad, as liberal and as thorough as can be obtained in any part of our country and at the same time, by a low rate of tuition, by scholarships and other assistance to students needing it, to bring such education within the reach of every young man or woman who really desires it. The question has been asked, and very properly, too, how are we to keep our bright young men and women in Florida when there are such magnificent educational facilities in the other states. The men in control of John B. Stetson University have recognized the fact that there is but one answer to this question and that is "by making this institution equal to the best in the country and thus commanding patronage by the character of the work done." This is a very high aim, but the University is willing to aim at nothing lower than this. The real power and value of any school, of any grade, is in its teachers. Buildings, libraries and apparatus are good and give added power, where there is already power to use them aright, but they can never, no matter how extensive, constitute a University.

"Mark Hopkins at one end of a log and the student at the other end" is a better ideal of a University than all the buildings, libraries and apparatuses in the world can, of themselves, afford. The vital contact of the students with vigorous and stimulating mind and heart – this is the sine qua non of a successful education. It is in line with this principle that teachers have been selected for John B. Stetson University. The trustees for this Institution have not neglected to provide beautiful and elegantly furnished buildings, extensive and expensive apparatuses and illustrative material, the most complete general and reference library in the state and yet they have felt that the primary – the most important thing was to find men and women of large heart and mind, apt to teach and full of enthusiasm and stimulating power. And so they have gone to the University of Rochester, the University of Michigan, Wesleyan Univ., Shurtleff College, Vassar College, Wellesley College, and many others of the best institutions in this country as well as abroad and asked for the best in scholarship, character and experience. In this respect they have not spared expense, as is indicated by the fact that during the last year they expended nearly \$10000.00 more than they received from students in the salaries of faculty – and other current expenses and in assisting students who needed and deserved assistance. This outlay, for these purposes, will increase rather than diminish and is made possible by endowments and direct gifts – of noble-hearted, philanthropic men and women, directly interested in Christian education.

External Equipment

John B. Stetson University has, at present, three buildings – Stetson Hall – a beautiful, three storied building, with veranda across the entire front, containing, on the first floor, reception and Music rooms, suite of five rooms for the President and family, matron's rooms and dining room, with a broad ample hall running from front to rear. The second and third stories contain the students' rooms and rooms for three members of the Faculty who reside in the building. The entire building is elegantly furnished and the rooms are large – each with ample closet adjoining and heated by steam. Pure water, in abundance, is supplied to each floor and arrangements are

being made to light the building throughout by electricity. Attached to the main building is a two story wing containing kitchen, storage rooms & laundry and rooms for servants. No expense has been spared to make this building perfect as a refined and elegant home for both students and teachers.

DeLand Hall – a commodious and beautiful two story building, with porch & side porches, containing of the first floor, chapel, office, and two visitation rooms, with broad halls & on the second floor, library, laboratory, and six visitation rooms. This building is supplied throughout with the very best school furniture obtainable.

A Brick Building with fifty-foot brick stack, containing the extensive and admirable steam-heating plant for both the buildings already mentioned. This plant is simply perfect, was put in by a Boston firm at an expense of about \$4000.00. It stands entirely separately from the other buildings and makes it unnecessary to have any fire for heating purposes in or near them, while at the same time every room in both buildings, together with all the halls are supplied with radiators, and thus a perfectly uniform temperature can be obtained throughout in cold or damp weather. The hearing of this fact on the health of students and teachers is readily understood and has been demonstrated by almost perfect freedom from sickness of every kind.

These buildings all stand on a campus of four acres, over looking the beautiful city of DeLand. This campus is all graded and set to Bermuda grass, with the pines left standing, while opposite it is the beautiful University Place Orange Grove, of eight acres, the property of Mr. Stetson and reserved by him as a part of the campus. Healthful recreation is provided for by tennis grounds, ball grounds & horizontal bar.

The Sampson Library is one of the special features of the University. It consists of about 3000 volumes – all recently purchased, and selected with special reference to the needs of the students and faculty. It contains all of the principal encyclopedias, both general and special, with a large number of general books of reference, together with full departments in History, Science, Philosophy, Pedagogy, General Literature & Fiction, Political Economy & Music & Art. The Institution has also been made a Depository for U.S. Government Publications and has already received about 600 volumes, many of them of rare value, from this source. Additions are constantly being made to this library and recently a Department of Periodical Literature has been established and complete sets in bound volumes of many leading American magazines and Reviews have been purchased at an expense of nearly \$1000.00. The Library contains Pooles Index of Periodical Literature, which makes every article in these journals accessible to the students. The Library is also supplied with the current numbers of 25 of the leading home and foreign magazines and journals such as Harpers, The Century, Scribner's, The Atlantic, The North American Review, The Forum, The Fortnightly, Contemporary, Nineteenth Century, Westminster Reviews, and many others. These are all made easily accessible to the students.

Space forbids us to mention in detail the Chemical Laboratory, fitted up with eight separate desks – each supplied with a complete set of apparatus, the Physical Apparatus – sufficient to illustrate every principle in the text book in Physics, including air pump, microscope, porte lumiere, spectroscope and a beautiful Transit Telescope for surveying. The Physiological Illustrative Material, including [?illegible] chart, and other charts & models, the classical maps & views of the Acropolis, etc. all specially imported for the University and the excellent equipment of Models & Casts and furniture for the Art Dept. The mere mention of these indicates the attention given to every department, and yet we have not included the beautiful globes and outline maps, charts for classes in Penmanship and much other illustrative material.

Three Departments are already organized – The College , with two complete four-year courses of study, viz the classical course and the scientific course, with the same general requirements for admission as are made in the best New England colleges; -

The Academy, with a classical and a Latin scientific course, each requiring four years and constituting of preparation for the classical or scientific course in college; a Higher English course, of three years, and a commercial or Business course of one year.

The Normal School, with a full three year course, or a special professional course of one year. For details, as for all general or special information, reference must be had to the Catalogue which will be furnished to any one sending for it.

During the last school year the Institution had students from ten counties of this state and from twelve states of the Union and its influence and patronage are constantly extending. Plans are now being formed for the erection of an elegant new college building – which will be of brick and the finest building for educational purposes south of Washington.