

## CADET LITERARY SOCIETIES -- 1883

In the days before intercollegiate athletic contests at The Citadel, cadets vented their inherent spirit of rivalry and youthful enthusiasm in debates and oratorical contests between the two literary societies in the Corps. Rivalry between members of the Calliopean and Polytechnic societies was so bitter that debaters sometimes resorted to the manly art of self-defense.

This scene from a debate in 1883 is characteristic of the times. The debate has waxed so loud that Superintendent J. P. Thomas, whose image is painted from a photograph of him, is entering the room to investigate. So engrossed are the young contestants that only three have noticed his presence, and the artist has imaginatively captured their youthful reactions.

The debating room portrayed here was a northwest corner room on the first gallery of the Old Citadel.