



VOL. XXX.

FEBRUARY 6, 1903.

No. 6.

THE COLLEGE PAPER SHORT STORY.

IN the last issue of the JOURNAL the editor of Arts discusses the difficulty of making the paper interesting without lowering its tone. The JOURNAL, he very properly says, is "above all else a students' paper, published by them and in a large degree read by them, and as such it should contain more particularly that which is of direct interest to the student body." Frankly acknowledging that the JOURNAL "should at all times stand forth as the champion of right, justice and order," he contends that it "should not pose as a mere literary paper" and that in abjuring the levity and frivolity of earlier years (I think Mr. McLean judges the youthful JOURNAL too harshly) it has perhaps gone to the other extreme of publishing too much "dry indigestible material." I quite agree with Mr. McLean in his main contention. The JOURNAL is the students' paper. Its existence depends on their support. To induce them to buy and read it, it must be made interesting. Can that be done while maintaining a reasonably high standard both of thought and of literary workmanship? I think so, and wish to draw attention to the possibilities of the short story as a means both of add-

ing interest to the JOURNAL and of calling into exercise latent powers of artistic narration at present unsuspected perhaps by their owners.

No form of literary art is more popular than the story. It is essentially democratic. It is the earliest form of literature and it promises to survive all others. Before the age of books or theatres, the arrival of a traveller at the village inn was an event. "Traveller at the inn to-night—has some good stories," said the villagers to one another, and if he could tell a good story he was sure of a friendly welcome, an eager audience, and plenty of applause. The traveller was thus nearly always a story teller. He would go out of the way to hear a good story for the purpose of telling it afterwards himself. He got up his stories with all the art he was master of. He studied his audiences, learned what interested them, what touched their emotions, and so became an adept in the art of playing on the feelings of his fellows. The type persists in the *reconteur* who makes a point of picking up all the good anecdotes he hears and who tells them, though they be but bar-room yarns, more effectively than anyone else. The palmy days of oral narrative, however, are long past. It is now relegated to the nurs-