

who wilfully, or even thoughtlessly injure, the influence of their College by causeless fault finding. When graduates, or undergraduates, put no curb upon their tongues, but on all occasions, and before all persons, speak disparagingly of the college where they have been, or are, taught, they advertise themselves in a manner which should not increase their self-complacency; for people in general know pretty accurately what estimate to place upon a young man who ever rails at his *Alma Mater*.

Of course judicious criticism is often needed, and should not be withheld when the purpose is right. There are times in the history of every institution of learning when faults are committed. Sometimes measures are adopted whose influence is deleterious, or laxity in regard to things of moment is suffered to exist. In such cases the principle of loyalty to *Alma Mater* forbids indifference, or inaction, if the power to effect any change is under our control. But when we start out as reformers, motives should be carefully weighed, and personal feeling, together with every inclination to carp aimlessly, should be carefully excluded. Conviction should constrain to action, and impartial judgment should measure every word of complaint before it is uttered. When such regard as this is shown for any college, it will rapidly gain prestige and power, for a constantly increasing army defends, and a growing company exhibits, its merits, and, by their influence and means, turn streams of advantage in its direction.

OMEGA.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH.

Whoever realizes the desirability of a thorough acquaintance with our own language, and knows what amount of attention is given to its study in our schools, primary and advanced, must be impressed with the fact that its importance as a branch of English education is practically underrated. The study of so-called higher branches in the common schools is well if pupils have

attained proficiency in elementary work; but one may safely affirm that the majority enter upon these studies without having laid the foundation of an intelligent knowledge of their mother tongue. They give proof of this by numerous gross errors in conversation, and their inability to write a grammatical letter. If there is any one thing which should receive *especial* prominence in primary schools it is the English language. A knowledge of the meaning of ordinary words, a full acquaintance with grammatical construction, and ability to write an exercise in composition with a good degree of perspicuity and correctness, should at least be expected of the older pupils. Let children who have studied history until they are able to recite it so as to surprise and delight spectators at a public examination, be asked to define the more uncommon words which they have repeated possibly with frequency, and more than likely they will show themselves to be ignorant of what the majority of these words mean. Nor is this to be wondered at, since school children are seldom taught to consult a dictionary. And let the school boy when he breaks a rule of syntax, be requested to state his error and make the correction, and ten to one he will be brought to a stand-still. Probably it has never occurred to him that grammar is a study eminently practical. Children ought to be taught to look up the meaning of all new words they meet, and be taught that while they learn grammar they should immediately and constantly appropriate their knowledge to the acquirement of correct speaking and writing.

Then in the common school the study of the English language only begins, no matter how great the proficiency there achieved. If the study under teachers goes no further the youth should become his own teacher, and improve himself by subsequent reading. If he enters College he should not do so with a feeling that he has outgrown this study, but that he has simply laid its foundation, and that it is for