

"What time, she chanted snatches of old times;
As one incapable of her own distress;" &c.

But the fate of Shakespeare, that seems to work such woe, is no blind destiny, no pagan nemesis taking vengeance even upon unintentional wrongs. The passions of humanity works out their own destiny. Man's criminality involves suffering. It is the uncontrolled jealousy of Othello that brings about the tragic death of Desdemona, and the perverse selfishness of Lear that is the cause of his suffering as he does

"Upon the rack of this tough world."

But real as such tragedy is, the witnesses of it in real life could receive nothing, but pain from it, unless indeed there could be a possibility of relieving it. How is it then, that, in the drama, it should be the source of pleasure? It is because there is exquisite pleasure from the poetic language of the emotions, and from the idealization, the moral element, and the lighter shades which the true artist will interweave with his darker tints, but the whole should become oppressively painful. Were it possible to discuss all the elements of tragedy introduced by Shakespeare into his dramas, what wonderful power and comprehensiveness we should discover. That drama of Coriolanus, for instance depicts a noble national spirit, set apart from all the men of his time, and the perennial struggle between two extremes of society, always a source of perplexity and trouble.

The tragedy of Shakespeare's later vision was steeped in deeper dyes of sin and crime, as those of Brutus, Macbeth, Hamlet and Lear. Of King Lear the lecturer gave a masterly analysis, tracing the folly, madness and misery of the unhappy King. In King Lear, Shakespeare touches the extreme of misery. Lehiyal expresses wonder at its comprehensiveness and impressiveness, while Shelley gives it the preference to Greek tragedy. Like the Constance of King John, Lear is a foolish old man, whose characteristics are chiefly obstinacy and a desire for affection, undervaluing and misconceiving his own true hearted daughter, and preferring her more loudly professing sisters, till their ingratitude drives him into exile and misery, and he comes to value Cordelia in the extremity of his need, and just where she is to be snatched from him forever. The character of Cordelia is finely drawn, her proud reserve mingled with a little waywardness, a touch of human frailty adding effect to her after-conduct, wounded pride, a touch of pettishness in her refusal to be with Goneril. The extremes of character in sisters are not beyond the limits of probability, and so indeed we might run through the whole range of Shakespeare's female characters, finding in each a distinct real being, full of the inconsistencies as well as the consistencies of reality, and so giving us the subtle but unmistakable elements of *personality*, the greatest triumph of any artist's skill.

REMINISCENCES OF A B.A. OF '56.

This only a little more than 29 years hence since I began to grind for the matriculation examination in Queen's College. And yet what changes have taken place in the interval! First, how much greater are the facilities enjoyed by the youth who are now looking forward to a University course! There were then in Upper Canada a few of what were known as *District* schools, but they were beyond the reach of the sons of any except a wealthy man here and there. They corresponded to the Collegiate Institutes of to-day, as links in the educational chain; but while they were the best intermediate schools the country could furnish at that time, in themselves they were quite inferior to many of the present *Common* schools. And if such was the character of the best grammar schools, it is easy to conceive how poorly equipped

the lower grade of schools was. Occasionally, indeed, trustees made a strike in the matter of running upon an efficient teacher, a man who had received a classical education in "the Old Country." Persons of this description were, however, of doubtful character or antecedents. Educationally speaking, it was my good fortune to have been placed under the tuition of an Irishman, "fresh from the soil," when I was between 14 and 16 years of age, who, whatever defects he had, was at least well read in Latin, Greek and mathematics. He introduced me into a new world of fact and fancy just at the critical and plastic period of life; and it is amusing to recall the enthusiasm which he displayed in helping forward the only two advanced pupils he had—spending hours over their lessons—while the other scholars were utterly neglected, or, which was nearly the same thing, turned over to the care of my fellow-student and myself during the shreds of the time that we were not engaged in our own work. With him we had all read *Corderii Colloquia*, part of *Ovid* and the whole of the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* of *Virgil*, and were thoroughly well drilled in Latin, syntax, prosody and mythology. We had also mastered the Edinburgh Academy Greek Grammar, and the *Extracts* which formed the sequel to it; while in mathematics we had gone hurriedly over the first six books of *Euclid*, which we knew intellectually, although we were not expected to charge our memories with carrying all details of the numbers of the propositions or problems, or definitions. All that we were required to do was to cite the references made in any problem to parts we had already overtaken. We had in the same somewhat loose yet intellectual manner gone through the whole of *Davies' algebra*. This was a good deal of ground to cover in a couple of seasons—not years—for farmers' sons had always to stay at home during seed time and harvest. One result, however, of the rapidity with which we had travelled over our Latin, Greek and mathematics was that in a year or two, during which I had paid them no attention, I had forgotten most of what I had learned. The mental discipline remained, but the technicalities of knowledge had escaped my memory. Up till this time no special end was had in view in my education. Neither on my own part, nor on the part of those who were responsible for my up-bringing was there a dream entertained of my ever going to college. That was an exalted privilege to which few then aspired. Besides, I had no ambition for it. The very *acme* of distinction in my eyes was to be a dry goods' or grocer's clerk. A short trial of it dispelled the delusion, and next I stumbled into being a knight of the tawse. I had received no training for the teaching profession, and, further, I had no taste for it. On a certain morning it was as far from my thoughts to become a schoolmaster as it was to go on a voyage to the moon; and yet, before I slept, I was engaged to "teach the young ideas how to shoot," at the rate of £40 a year. This fact illustrates the state of education at the time. Any one who pretended to be able to teach, and could pass a very easy examination in the three Rs before a local superintendent, was sure of an engagement, no matter whether he had any experience or not, or any aptitude for the business, provided he did not ask too large a salary. My demands were modest enough in that particular. I had happened across a farmer who was in quest of a teacher for the section in which he lived, and of which he was a trustee. His most serious objection was to my youth, when he found out that I might be regarded as qualified for the position so far as attainments were concerned; but, perhaps, I may allowed to score one to my credit when I add that the trustees of that section never afterwards rejected a candidate on account of his youth. I was working away in the summer of '52, striving to admit light into the minds of my agricultural pupils, when the incidents occurred which directed my