

At that time the public had no railways, telegraphs or electric appliances, and the students had no societies, reading room, &c. Yet both parties lived and enjoyed life about as well as people do now. The venerable *Concursus* was not yet in being, and its terrors were therefore no restraint on the wilful freshie; but perhaps in these good old times evil propensities were not so rife as in the times of modern license. No societies, religious, secular, athletic or otherwise had yet emerged; not even the *Alma Mater*. During the Summer of 1842 we felt that there was need of some society for the promotion of literary culture, public speaking, &c., so we met and discussed the matter and appointed a Committee of four (Bell, Wardrope, Mowat and Bonner), to draft a Constitution to be reported at a meeting of all the students at the opening of the Session. The minutes stated that at a meeting of the students, then in Kingston, these were appointed a Committee, &c. A technical objection was made to this, on the ground that the said meeting consisted of the said four students. But if four was a suitable number for a Committee, and these were proper persons, why should not "We, the students of Queen's," appoint them? At the opening of the Session the draft was submitted, discussed, amended and adopted. Various names had been proposed, Diagnostic, Debating, Philosophical, &c., but finally, "The Dialectic Society of the University of Queen's College" was adopted. We met fortnightly, and at each meeting had an Essay read and criticised, and a date—the question and leaders having been named at the preceding meeting. When our diffidence had, by practice in debate, somewhat worn off, we invited our friends and had some debates in the presence of a good number of ladies and gentlemen. In debate, one student, whose eloquence was constantly in danger of running away with his perception of the lapse of time, used to orate with his watch in his hand to keep himself within the required fifteen minutes. Another, a brilliant Soph., would forget that the presiding officer in a debate was a Chairman and address him as "Mr. Speaker!"

(To be continued.)

THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS.

Church theologians have never agreed on the subject of the date of the nativity. An Eastern tradition places it in the latter part of December, but Western arguments oppose the view. According to St. Luke (ii. 8), they say, that the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night, would hardly have been possible on the assumption of the December date, as that would be the rainy season in Palestine and the flocks would be under shelter. Some Biblical chronologists place the nativity in the Autumn others in the Summer.

Many learned and pious men look upon our Christian Christmas festival as an adaptation of a previously existing Jewish or Pagan festival. Some view it as a continuation of the Jewish Feast of the Dedication, a festival of eight days duration, beginning December 17th; others derive it from the Roman *Saturnalia Sigillaria* or *Guventia*. But the most plausible view is that which connects Christmas with the return of the Sun to the Northern hemisphere at the Winter Solstice. With the rise of the Sun comes longer and warmer days, hope springs up anew in the human heart when it feels the unfriendly winter season passing away. Theologically it is Christ the Sun of Righteousness dawning upon the world. The ancient Sun-god symbolizes the new Sun of Righteousness. This view is supported by much evidence and curious lore. Several of the church fathers such as Ambrose and Chrysostom held it. The Christian poets Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola sang about it.

In the northern part of Europe the old Norsemen celebrated a feast to Trega, the goddess of love, at about our Christmas time. The Yule-tide to them represented the descent of love to the Under-world for the delivery of the imprisoned germs of Life. It was the period of the earliest perceptible signs of rejuvenescence of Nature.

Christmas is an old miracle play of Nature in which the deadly power of Winter are brought to a tragic end and "Spring" is born anew or liberated from Hela (Hell).

A PHILOSOPHIC STUDENT IN LOVE.

The question is simply this: Is my present attachment to Maria to be termed friendship or is it love? Is the fact that the last conversation I had with her mingles in my mind with the sublime thoughts of Plato and Aristotle, accidental or significant. Am I or am I not to attach importance to the fact that her eyes gaze into mine from every page of Emerson and Lecky? Was it on account of Maria that I conceived a violent dislike to Rollins when I heard him reciting with evident sincerity:—

"Women are all a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given;
Her smiles of joy, her tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,—
There's nothing true but heaven!"

This is an important problem. My future course of action will certainly depend to a great extent upon its solution, and I cannot afford to leave such a matter in doubt. Should I conclude that my feeling is one of friendship I must decide how far my brotherly regard may be permitted to show itself without compromising myself and raising false hopes in her breast. On the other hand, should my reason and my heart convince me that I am in love, I must first investigate the nature of love to ascertain how far such a state of mind is desirable or permissible,