

IT was customary some years ago for each member of the Senior Class to write a thesis to be read before the Faculty and students of the College and afterwards deposited in the college archives. This custom, for some time abandoned, has recently been revived, and the present class, in addition to the large amount of work already expected of them, have received the cheering announcement that they will be required to prepare papers on important subjects to be ready early in the year. A satisfactory explanation of this departure just at the present time, might not be easily given. That the general interests of the class were consulted cannot be denied, still the wisdom of making increased demands upon their time, already sufficiently limited, may be questioned. But waiving objections, the possible benefits may be briefly considered.

We believe that few institutions in the Dominion provide better opportunities for acquiring proficiency in the art of English composition than Acadia. The students, during their Freshman year are required to write weekly essays on assigned subjects. These essays are carefully* examined and criticised not only with regard to the more obvious errors in orthography, but also with a view to the proper choice of words and skill in the construction and arrangement of sentences. These are followed in the Sophomore and Junior years by monthly essays prepared with greater care. Here more attention is paid to originality, and consecutiveness in thought, and clearness and force in language. In all these compositions however the tendency is to diffuseness and rhetorical effect rather than pointedness and logical connection. This is more especially true of essays prepared for declamation. In this case the author is too often complimented for the richness of his vocabulary and the harmonious roll of his sentences, rather than for the breadth of his thought and the combined dignity and simplicity of his language. To cor-

rect this tendency to mannerism and cultivate a taste for more chaste and subdued methods of expression and a more mature and scholarly style, is no unimportant part of a student's training. A thesis prepared under the critical eye of an efficient instructor would go far toward securing this object. It might not be sufficient to alter a habit or supply a deficiency, but it would reveal to the student his own literary weaknesses, and put him in possession of means by which they might, in time, be remedied.

ANOTHER year, with its record of events both tragic and historical, with its burden of cares, joys and sorrows has departed, leaving us standing upon the brink of a new and untried period where the crowding associations of the past and the unknown possibilities and bright visions of the future meet and mingle like messengers from distant realms each bearing tidings of varied import. The one exhibits the page of life disfigured by many a tear-drop, darkened by many a stain—"resolves and re-resolves" written in trembling but hopeful characters suggestive of stern conflict and lofty purpose; the other proudly unrolls the unwritten record of life and exhibits it all radiant, all sparkling, all aglow with ideal loveliness. Here eager fancy traces in glittering capitals a life emancipated from the cares, relieved from the sorrows and toils which experience whispers are the heritage of mortals. The picture is all too fair. Its golden coloring should be modified by reflections from a darker past. Experience ought to teach us that however beautiful the perspective may seem, a nearer view will reveal many a bold and rugged outline, so the years—those solemn monitors—should convince the reflective that what has happened once may, perchance, occur again, and that the life of the individual is, in many respects, analogous to the life of the nation in which history