SOUND.

(Read Before St. Thomas' Academy).



HILOSOPHY, the learned tell us, is Queen of the Sciences. They prove this by the argument, that, as Philosophy treats matter in its two great subdivisions,—organic and inorganic; and, as she goes further and extends beyond the sensible world, the natural conclusion follows, that, being a science, she must of the others be Queen. But while we grant this, the place of prince Consort, we maintain, must be yielded

to Physics. The task intrusted to me on this festival day of St. Thomas Aquinas, the true master of Christian Philosophy, has been-time considered diligently performed; the responsibility attending the writing of an essay on any of the matters taken up in our course of Physics is, I trust, realized, and therefore, with your kind indulgence, I read you this paper on that particular branch upon which the two senior classes are experimenting,—Sound.

In Physics three theories are universally accepted—that of Electricity has yet to be clearly defined—namely, the theory of light, the theory of heat, and the theory of sound. To treat sound exhaustively our time will not permit, nor is it our intention. But with an endeavor to tell you of its importance, the standpoint from which it is viewed among the natural sciences and its position therein, its interest aside from its practicability and to give you the results of class-lectures and experiments was this paper prepared, which will, we hope, communicate as much pleasure to our auditory as was derived in the preparation.

Sound, generally defined, is that peculiar sensation excited in the organ of hearing by the vibratory motion of hodies, when the motion is transmitted to the ear through an elastic medium. Hence we see that a vibratory impulse must be given to an elastic body, which is communi-