

The National Educational Association of the United States meets at Saratoga on July 14-18, and the session promises to be both interesting and profitable. Arrangements have been completed already, and board can be had at from \$2 to \$3 per day. The headquarters of the association are at Congress Hall.

Two noteworthy facts in connection with the recent examinations in the University of Toronto, are the graduation of five young ladies, and the very high honors carried off by them, and by other ladies. Miss M. N. Brown took first-class honors in English Etymology, French, German and Italian, and secured the Gold Medal in Modern Languages; Miss C. E. Brown, 1st class honors in Italian, and 2nd class Honors in English Etymology, French and German; Miss M. B. Bald, 2nd class Honors in Classics; Miss E. Gardiner, 1st class Honors in English and Italian, and in Etymology, and 2nd class in French and German; and Miss M. Langley, 1st class in Italian and 2nd class in English, French and German, and in Etymology. In the third year Miss E. Balmer took 1st class in English, History, French, German, Italian and Constitutional History, carrying off the Lansdowne Gold Medal. Miss Balmer also stood highest for the Blake Scholarship, which was not awarded.

Literary Chit-Chat.

The American public are awaiting with a good deal of interest the appearance of a volume of Essays on Historical, Ethical and Theological subjects, from the pen of Miss Cleveland, sister of the President, to be issued towards the end of June by Funk & Wagnalls, New York. Miss Cleveland is probably the first who has invited the judgment of the public on a literary venture, while occupying that exalted position. This young lady has considerable reputation both for cleverness and for independence of character. Charles A. Dana, in the *New York Sun*, says in reference to the forthcoming work:—"Miss Cleveland's literary style is characterized by vigor of expression, abundance of imagery, and a certain rhythmic quality that makes passages here and there read almost like blank verse. Although the essays are critical and expository rather than imaginative, her frequent use of figurative language, often in metaphors original in conception, elaborately wrought out, shows the power and scope of a fancy which a somewhat severe intellectual habit has not wholly restrained."

Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett has been trying the mind-cure treatment in Boston, for nervous prostration, and is said to endorse it heartily.

Leopold von Ranke is still engaged in historical work in his 90th year, and hopes to continue writing and study until he is 100. There is said to be no similar instance of mental vigour in old age in Europe, or in the world.

Fords, Howard & Hulbert are soon to issue an American edition of "The Book of Psalms." It will be published separately and also incorporated in a new edition of their Revised New Testament.

The *Peterboro Examiner* has commenced publication as a daily. It has long been one of the best of our weekly exchanges, and we wish the enterprising proprietors every success in their new venture. The town and time seem ripe for the advance step.

Question Drawer.

To the Editor of THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL.

SIR.—Kindly give your opinion on the following moot passages in "The Lady of the Lake." They all occur in canto V.

- (1.) "These fertile plains, that softened vale." (VII)
What is the force of "softened"?
- (2.) "And showered his blows like wintry rain." (XV.)
Like rain in what respect?
- (3.) "Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that Faith and Valour give." (XVII.)
The exact meaning?
- (4.) "A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung." (XIX.)
Does this mean that De Vaux instantly sprang to Fitz-James' side, or that he rose in his own stirrup to advance quickly?

- (5.) "Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye?" (XIX.)
What ground had De Vaux for fear and for jealousy?
- (6.) "The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang." (XXIV.)
Is this a reverberation, or do the ladies applaud?
- (7.) "The dark gray man." (XXIV.)
What do the adjectives mean?
- (8.) "The old men marked and shook the head." (XXIV.)
Why shake the head?
- (9.) "His strength surpassing nature's law." (XXIV.)
What is nature's law? That old men grow feeble?
- (10.) "Needs but a buffet and no more." (XXV.)
Is needs impersonal? or is buffet its subject?
- (11.) "With trailing arms and drooping head." (XXIX.)
Does this line go with the preceding or with the following line? Does trailing arms indicate that his hands were by his sides, or does the phrase mean trailing pikes? Would the "rough soldier" have more than one weapon to trail? If not, how could one weapon be "arms"?

All of these passages have been subjects for argument in the class-room. I have an opinion of my own regarding each of them, but an opinion not so stubborn as to reject wiser counsels. Oh, that Sir Walter's spirit could whisper into our ears and dispel our doubts. Not having intercourse with the spirit of the dead bard, one must turn to some wise interpreter.

Yours,

QUAESITOR.

ANSWERS.

While by no means assuming to speak *ex cathedra*, we have no objection to comply with *Quaesitor's* request and give our opinion on the "moot passages," with reasons, for what they are worth, and subject to correction or criticism by English Masters or others who have made a closer study of the canto. We may promise that *Quaesitor's* questions are clearly of the right sort, showing that he makes it of the first importance to have his pupils study to get the exact thought of the author.

(1.) "Softened" may refer either to color, denoting the effect of the verdure, as painters speak of softening the coloring of a picture, or to form, contrasting the "gentle slopes" and "fertile plains" with the rude swell of the crags and fells of the "savage hill" on which Roderick's band is now forced to dwell. We prefer the former as simpler and less far-fetched.

(2.) "Like wintry rain," in respect to their quick succession, or the violence of their descent. We should say both, as the poet had probably in mind the whole effect resulting from these two causes, of the furious dash of the high rain drops in the wintry blast.

(3.) A tribute to the conquered Chieftain. Whether Roderick recovers, or dies, he has earned the praise due to valour by the brave fight he has fought, and to good faith, by the noble way in which he has kept his pledge to guide Fitz-James, "Till past Clan-Alpin's outmost guard." Compare last stanza of Canto IV, with stanzas 9 and 10 of Canto V.

(4.) Difficult to decide. The use of the word "flung" would favour the latter and it would be natural for De Vaux to rise in his stirrup to gaze intently or urge on his horse. But as the riders were already "straining" at full speed, it is perhaps preferable to suppose that Fitz-James checked his steed and the squire at a signal dashed up close beside him.

(5.) This passage is obscure. It would seem to refer to some previous relations between De Vaux and the Douglas. Perhaps some of our readers can explain the allusion. It may possibly mean the Esquire's fear and jealousy for the King's safety, but that is hardly satisfactory.

(6.) The use of the word "clang" would be more appropriate to denote the reverberation or echo of a shout with which the din of metallic armour was mingled. But as Scott was not always happy in the choice of words, and occasionally sacrifices nicety to rhyme, and as the idea of the ladies joining in the applause gives a much more forcible meaning, we prefer the latter of *Quaesitor's* alternatives. The Ladies' Rock could not have been far distant and to say that it echoed the applause would have little force.

(7.) It is pretty clear from XIX, 5, that gray must refer to the color of Douglas's clothing, as contrasting with the "pageants' quaint attire." According to the punctuation which *Quaesitor* adopts, "dark," would simply modify "gray." It strikes us that a more forcible meaning is given by putting a comma after "dark," and understanding it to refer to the complexion, or, perhaps better, "dark lowering brow and visage stern," of the Douglas.