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## The Acadia Athenæum.

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## TO THE PLIOCENE SKULL.

BY BRET HARTE.

"Speak, O man, less recent! Fragmentary fossil!  
Primal pioneer of pliocene formation,  
Hid in lowest drifts below the earliest stratum  
Of volcanic tufa!

"Older than the beasts, the oldest Palæotherium;  
Older than the trees, the oldest Cryptogami;  
Older than the hills, those infantile eruptions  
Of earth's epidermis!

"*Eo-mio-Plig*—whatsoe're the "cene" was  
That these vacant sockets filled with awe and wonder,  
Whether shores Devonian or Silurian beaches,—  
Tell us thy strange story!

"Or has the professor slightly antedated  
By some thousand years thy advent on this planet,  
Giving thee an air that's somewhat better fitted  
For cold-blooded creatures?

"Wert thou true spectator of that mighty forest  
When above thy head the stately Sigillaria  
Reared its columned trunks in that remote and distant  
Carboniferous epoch?

' Tell us of that scene,—the dim and watery woodland  
Songless, silent, hushed, with never bird or insect  
Veiled with spreading fronds and screened with tall club  
Lycopodiaceæ,— [mosses,

"When beside thee walked the solemn Plesiosaurus,  
And around thee crept the festive Ichthyosaurus  
While from time to time above thee flew and circled  
Cheerful Pterodactyls.

"Tell us of thy food,—those half-marine reflections,  
Crinoids on the shell and Brachipods *au naturel*,—  
Cuttle-fish to which the *pieuvre* Victor Hugo  
Seems a periwinkle.

"Speak, thou awful vestige of the earth's creation,—  
Solitary fragment of remains organic!  
Tell the wondrous secret of thy past existence,—  
Speak! thou oldest primate!"

Even as I gazed, a thrill of the maxilla,  
And a lateral movement of the condyloid process,  
With post-pliocene sounds of healthy mastication,  
Ground the teeth together.

And, from that imperfect dental exhibition,  
Stained with the expressed juices of the weed Nicotian,  
Came these hollow accents, blent with softer murmurs  
Of expectoration;

"Which my name is Bowers, and my crust was busted  
Falling down a shaft in Calaveras County,  
But I'd take it kindly if you'd send the pieces  
Home to old Missouri!"

SUBSCRIBERS who are in arrears will greatly oblige by remitting the amounts due to the Secretary-Treasurer. We are in urgent need of funds.

MANY students have been suffering severely from colds. This is not strange. The boarding house and college are about as ill-adapted to hygienic purposes in the winter months, as could well be imagined.

THE department in the dining hall this year has been for the most part satisfactory. Lately, however, we have observed a tendency to disorder at some of the tables, which should be