

University, to Professor Hutton in particular, to his fellow-Professors Pike and Ramsay Wright, and to the actors, chorus, and musicians who took part in the play. The large sum it has cost cannot be regarded as wasted, for every student of the classics who has witnessed it has received a living lesson in classical art of a kind which it is impossible to realize from books or lectures. We much regret that an additional representation was not given, say on the Saturday of Easter week, and every High School Classical Master in the Province enabled to attend, at the expense of the Education Department.

As we have said, the chief drawback to the success of the "Antigone" was caused by its being presented in a building in all respects unfitted for the purpose. This was the result, we are informed, of scruples which, while content to permit a theatrical exhibition, refused to allow its being given in the only proper place—a regular theatre. This nice distinction may, we fear, in the eyes of some, savour of that pietism which strains at a gnat. But we are forced to note, with very grave censure, the terrible risk to human life caused by this representation

being given in a building without any means of egress except a very small door at the distant end of a long and narrow hall. The audience, representing the highest culture of Toronto, was so densely packed that when the play was over it took half an hour of slow and difficult extrication to clear the room. Had fire broken out; had the white dresses of the chorus caught the blaze from the tripod, as they danced round it; had a panic seized the audience, what frightful results would have followed! The floor and the stage were a mass of fresh lumber, honey-combed with gas pipes; it would have kindled in a moment. The windows were out of reach. That a horrible holocaust did not result is in no degree due to the wisdom that chose such a place for a dramatic representation, which should never have been held there, both for artistic reasons and from a rational regard to the risk of so many valuable lives. We have reason to thank Providence, and not the *University authorities*, that this most commendable effort to illustrate classical art has passed off successfully, pleasantly, and above all, safely.

C. P. M.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE NEW SCHOOL READERS.

"QUID RIDES?"—Not because a certain firm of Toronto publishers, consumed by the ever-gnawing fire of ambition, has given a new series of School Readers to the cause of education in Ontario, do we laugh, but that the enterprising firm when it had accomplished its high mission of producing them had not thought it worth its while to make the books fulfil the purpose for which they were manufactured. It is no discredit to the house in question that it has published these outwardly beautiful books, but it is a matter of regret that having produced them it didn't at once consign them to the limbo of abortive enterprises. It is true that their appearing, like a new circus, was grandly heralded, and that the press, carried away by momentary enthusiasm, gave them "a good send-off." A few of the profession, too, lost their heads over them, and a School Board out west

made haste to "take them in." But this flow of favour was the not-unexpected result of "the first look" at a new thing. Like the child with a toy, the first hour was rapture; but soon on went the "thinking-cap," and reason returned with the spectacles.

The disesteem in which our criticism is held by Messrs. Gage & Co. will no doubt prevent them from profiting by anything we may say of their Reading Books, but we assure the firm that we would have been honestly glad if we could have truthfully commended them. There was need for a new series of School Readers, and the mechanical facilities for good book-making have been advantageous to their production. The requisites were "brains," competent professional skill, good literary workmanship, and an active Canadian sentiment. A critical examination of the series will scarcely warrant one in saying that these requisites,