

with the reflection that history, past and present, presents us with innumerable examples of wretched illustrious writers—I mean illustrious wretched writers. Montaigne, the essayist, could not read his own writing. His epistles strongly resembled Sam Weller's famous Valentine, indited with sublime confidence in the pretty housemaid's powers of interpretation. Lord Eldon told George IV. that the greatest lawyer in England could neither walk, speak nor write. This legal luminary was a Mr. Bell. Napoleon I. had so little mastery of his pen that his letters from Germany to Josephine were at first sight taken to be rough maps of the seat of war. Douglas Jerrold and Capt. Marryat wrote very imperfectly. Marryat's manuscript had to be copied in a fashion adapted for ordinary eyesight before it could be handed to the printer, and the copyist, whenever he rested from the labor, was obliged to stick a pin where he left off, lest he should not find his place again. Horace Greeley's copy was a continuous string of riddles for the unfortunate compositors engaged on the paper of which he was proprietor—riddles they often solved in a way not exactly conducive to the propounder's serenity. This sage once "popped the question" unwittingly. He wrote to a lady, entreating her to abstain from sending poetical contributions to the *Tribune*. The lady submitted the letter to a family council and, after much debate, the mysterious missive was pronounced to be a proposal of marriage, and forthwith accepted. Although H. W. Beecher was a popular preacher, he can hardly be considered a model scribe. His daughter has confessed that her leading rule in copying his manuscript was: That letters that were crossed were not t's, those that were dotted were not i's, and if a word began with a capital it did not begin a sentence. Some one says that those who insist upon the privilege of writing illegibly should adopt the plan of the polite Frenchman, who, sensible of his faultiness, always forwarded his letters duplicated with this explanation: "Out of respect I write to you with my own hand, but to facilitate the reading I send you a copy which I have instructed my amanuensis to make."

The Societies.

THE members of the Senior Literary Society assembled January 16th and elected new officers for the ensuing term. The result was as follows:

President, Esther Keagey.
Vice-President, Marion Burns.
Secretary, May Sutherland.
Treasurer, Jessie Watson.

Some interesting and profitable work was done last year, and those who took an active part reaped the benefits, which are always the fruits of literary work. We spent several afternoons with the poets, had a question box and spelling bee, and have succeeded in giving a pleasing variety to our programmes. We expect more and better work this year, and hope each member will take a personal interest and feel a personal responsibility in the welfare of the society.

THE Junior Literary Society met on January 16th, 1891, electing new officers, the result being as follows:

President, B. Speers.
Vice-President, M. Pool.
Secretary, G. McDougall.
Treasurer, E. Speers.

A programme is being made out for the purpose of studying different authors, discussing their lives and works. New books will be bought for the library with the funds in the treasury.

Genius unexerted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns is a forest of oaks. There may be epic in men's brains, just as there are oaks in acorns, but the tree and book must come before we can measure them. How many men would fain go to bed dunces and wake up Solomons? You reap what you have sown. Those who sow dunce seed, vice seed, laziness seed, usually get a crop. They that sow wind reap a whirlwind. A man of mere "capacity" undeveloped is only an organized day dream with no skin on it. A flint and a genius that will not strike fire are no better than wet junk-wood.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*