

A banquet followed this crowning ceremonial. The apartment destined for the library furnished the banquet hall; for Convocation Hall was not then built. Sir Edmund Head presided,—an unwonted proceeding, strikingly marking the deep interest he took in the work. In proposing his health the Vice-Chancellor, after referring to the services rendered by Sir Peregrine Maitland and Lord Elgin, added: "But no one had shown such special care concerning it as His Excellency. In reference to the building, from the smallest details to the most important matters, his interest had been manifest; and, indeed, had it not been for his unfaltering aid, it was doubtful if it would ever have been built. It was a gratification to have the privilege, as chairman of the building committee, to present the silver trowel with which His Excellency had that day laid the topmost stone."

It fell to Dr. Wilson, as another member of the building committee, to propose the health of the architect; and one little passage in his speech is historical. He said: "In the choice of this day for the inauguration of our new building, the Building Committee were guided by the fact that upon the same day, two years ago, we laid the foundation of this structure. We did not then invite Your Excellency to aid us in that work. We rather proceeded in it somewhat like the returned captive Jews of old, with the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. Secretly, as though it had been a deed of shame, we laid that stone; full of hope; yet not without apprehension. Perhaps it were well and wisely that it were so done." The justice of this, we may add, became abundantly manifest. When, too late, it was discovered that the long-coveted surplus was invested beyond recall in this substantial security for the permanence of the institution. The expenditure has since been criticised; but the investigations of a hostile commission showed that the building had been most economically executed; and experience has proved that instead of being on too large a scale, the opposite fault may rather be suggested. The demand already is for a greatly larger Convocation and Examination Hall. It was not till the following October that the College moved into its new home. The students of to-day know what Moss Hall is. They can imagine the change for the men of that olden time, from the small, low-ceiled, ill-lighted rooms, which had for years furnished the whole accommodation to the University and College, to the present lecture rooms, library, and Hall of their Alma Mater.

VIDI.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FARCE.

The optimist and the pessimist both get a certain satisfaction out of their systems, but their philosophies alike contain within themselves their own refutation. The most, long-suffering optimist must here and there find his theory fail, and be driven to doubt its universality. Schopenhauer preaches his doctrine by day, and by night—! The optimist will remark, "What a beastly day," and the pessimist must sometimes exclaim, "What charming weather."

And consider the grave seriousness with which it is necessary to regard life in order to steadfastly maintain either of these *roles*,—to affirm consistently that everything is constituted to the end that the human animal may derive therefrom the greatest amount of happiness or misery. None but a sober soul can hope to imbue itself with principles so desperate. The majority of mankind must have a philosophy that sits more easily.

The Philosophy of the Farce! Here is one within reach of any individual who will spend some slight pains on self-cultivation, and what a never-ending harvest of mirth it ensures! Life is then neither a tragedy nor a comedy, nor even a melodrama, but an irresistible screaming farce, with an infinite variety of characters and unparalleled scenic attractions. What a magnificent humour runs through the plot! What side-splitting scenes pursue one another over the boards,—not always boisterous and noisy and within the comprehension of the pit. Some of the touches are so fine, some of the conceits are so delicate that perhaps only one or two in the audience suspect the humour. But follow the action patiently, and the true spirit of the play will appear.

Half the theatre weeps when Love leads across the stage a train that sighs, and moans, and makes piteous plaint. But

what a quip is here! The clever actors humbug one another (themselves even) in a perfect good faith. Playing the part with so keen an imagination of its proprieties that they refuse to be undeceived. Attempt it, and they smile at you in superior fashion. Wait but a little while, and they will sheepishly join in the laugh.

The credulity of man to his fellow-man is a beautiful sight to the philosopher of this school, because he knows that the next scene will show how artistically it is abused. Governments, professions, trades act their part to the people, who are deceived with the utmost good humour. The people in turn play their little part to one another, nor do they ever weary or lose interest.

Well, while we are here let us make the best of it,—laugh our fill and get our share of the jollity; for when we are carried feet foremost off into the wings our friends will have the laugh on us, and we won't be able to laugh back!

TABAC.

A TALE OF TWO IDOLS.

IN TEN SHORT CHAPTERS, AND WITHOUT A MORAL.

IX

Curteys sche was, discret, and debonaire,
And compainable, and bare hire self ful faire;
And nevere was there no word hem bitweene
Of jelousye, or any other teene.

Canterbury Ta'es.

On a certain day not many weeks later, a youth and a maiden passed through the eastern gate of the University grounds, and strolled together along one of the northward paths in the park. It was a beautiful afternoon; for though now late in September, the sky was bright and clear as though it were over a spring day; and against it the long, loose boughs, from which the wind, warm and dry, was scattering yellow leaves over the grass, showed with the softness of an etching, as the mellow sunlight streamed through them and over all,—slanting on the drives and grassy slopes, where the withered leaves, by fits and starts, were whisking about breezily: and striking on the sides of the little hollows, where they were blown into windrows, here and there.

Elsie Fraine's mood was bright and merry, and she seemed to catch and transform some of the rare, elusive beauty of the brown, golden, pensive afternoon; but Evans looked ill at ease, and rather puzzled. He found himself still wondering how it had come about that he was once again taken into Elsie's favour with the same frankness as of old. He had been telling her the story of the idols, and all that had passed between Wiley and himself,—though with some discreet reservations, you may be sure, and not a little judicious remodelling; and harping still on the misfortunes the idols had brought upon him, he seemed to feel himself more and more ill-used at the hands of the world at large.

"And you descended," she was saying, "to a degrading fetish-worship!—you, Frederic Evans, that perfect, faultless, highest development of time, that heir of all the ages, a student in Residence! Let me see,

'Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees gods in—in—'

what *does* he see gods in, Fred?"

"Can't say off-hand," answered Evans; "my early religious education was sadly neglected. But with Wiley to tutor his mind, he'd be pretty apt to see gods in those two images, anyway. Why, there was one thing, now," he continued, still justifying himself, "that I didn't speak of to Wiley; and you must acknowledge that it,—well, you remember you had the idols only one afternoon,—the afternoon of your History paper."

"Yes, but how could they have prevailed on the examiner to ask questions I couldn't answer?"

"It was exceedingly mean of the examiner, then, if he did it of his own accord."

"It's a great pity you're not an examiner, Fred. I had a very blunt pen, too, that afternoon,—a very annoying pen, when you have to write *S-y-z-y-g-y* at the top of each sheet of paper. So there's the whole explanation, and why can't you be reasonable like that?"