

them may interest some of your readers, such events are fortunately of rare occurrence.

If the students of McGill take interest in random sketches of German life, more especially of standard habits and customs, I may trespass again on your columns.

Believe me,

Your sincere well-wisher,

J. FRASER TORRANCE.

FREEBURG, SAXONY, 3rd Nov., 1873.

To the Editor of the UNIVERSITY GAZETTE.

MR. EDITOR,—

In your report of the formation of the Rifle Companies, the impression was conveyed that it was the first attempt that had been made to form a corps in McGill. In the Session of 1871, a then member of the present Senior Class, made an unsuccessful attempt to form a Military Company. The students then appeared to think with Buckle that the fool of the family always went into the army. Now it appears that our students continue to play at soldiers for some years after they have discarded their other infantile amusements. Trusting you will notice this correction, I remain,

A STUDENT.

The Bounge at McGill.

SOUND PAPER.

THE FOUNDER'S FESTIVAL.

A great American humorist, in a dissertation upon mankind, remarked apologetically, "that after all, most men have a good deal of human nature about them." We own, that like the majority of our fellow-creatures, we are not free from this weakness. We are aware that in the present utilitarian age, it is thought by many that it is altogether foreign to the subject to clothe the classic and rigid outlines of education with any extraneous though graceful adornment. It is considered that the acquirement of social training should not be combined with that of mental discipline, and at a University established for the purpose of classic and scientific instruction, the intercourse and amenities of society deserve no recognized place; and, perhaps, in our own Alma Mater these theories, up till a short time ago, have been pushed to their furthest development. Unlike most other American Universities, we have had no class societies, and we fear, but little class feeling, whilst on the other hand the intercourse between the different Faculties has heretofore been of the most meagre and formal description, and signalized by a painful absence of *esprit de corps*. Now, we are happy to write, this state of things has been to a great extent changed, and we may say it without egotism, for we have not yet arrived at that dignity, that change is due in a great measure to the efforts of the present senior years. Taking it all in all, there is much in the result of their efforts to look upon with pleasure. A strong interest in Athletic Sports has been excited, which we expect to see increase yearly, and our athletes have already achieved more than a local reputation; class suppers and graduating dinners have drawn the students closer together; the Literary Society has, in bringing the best of native and foreign lecturing talent face to face with Montreal audiences, done a great work, not only for the members of the University, but for the citizens as well; and lastly, though by no means of the least benefit, the present session has seen a long-felt vacancy filled by the publication of the GAZETTE. But while hailing with delight those evidences of a vigorous and sustained effort on the part of our undergraduates to bind themselves with new social ties more closely to one another, and to our Alma Mater, we regret to see that one of our most ancient institutions is being allowed to pass unhonored. We refer, as our readers have doubtless already learned from the heading of this paper, to the Founder's Festival. We might, if necessary, enter into elaborate arguments to show the folly of this course; but we trust that none such will be needed, and believe that the omission of the usual gathering this autumn has arisen more from pre-occupation than from wilful neglect—a neglect, however, of which we hereby venture to remind our readers.

But though, as we have just said, we must be exceedingly sorry to see the old and time-honored custom pass this year without notice, in looking back to the days when the festival was observed in the most rigid manner, we can find no great thrill of excitement in the reminiscence. It certainly never was of any very

festive character, and partook always more of a solemn and decorous offering on the altar of Propriety, than of a Terpsichorean festival of the Graces. The viands were unsubstantial and ethereal, never rising to the dignity of the Western "square meal," and instead of ruby Burgundy or sparkling champagne, the libations were of tea, coffee, or lemonade; cups which, while they certainly did not inebriate, could not be said in any very marked sense of the word to cheer. The songs, however, were deeply imbued with the Bacchanal spirit, and it was rather amusing to note the difference between the real and the poetical nature of the fluids. A chorus of mild youths, looking eminently clerical in their white chokers, black gowns and swallow-tails, and who had probably drank naught but water from the brook from their youth up, would be heard demanding in stentorian tones that the flowing bowl (which, from the character of theakers, might be fairly presumed to be of gruel) should be heaped up to repletion; while the soloist, a great temperance agitator at present, and a Methodist minister *in futuro*, loudly chanted the praises of the rake Horace, or declared his intention of remaining in the convivial assemblage until the appearance of daylight; and immediately afterwards, to show that they did violence to their finer feelings only in obedience to musical exigency, they took a drink of coffee all round.

But if stimulants were tabooed, the loss was more than made up by the more exciting presence of the fairer sex. More exciting, for while no man of sense would, on an occasion of the kind, lose his head from a too great indulgence in alcoholic beverages, Beauty, under any circumstances, is apt to fire the heart of the susceptible undergraduate. But Beauty, though she was deeply adored, was in most cases adored from a distance. Occasionally some senior, whose years and experience in the warfare of Cupid had imbued him with more than ordinary confidence in his own powers, might be seen half hidden in a secluded alcove in the library, whispering his vows in the ear of his fair companion; or a freshman, in whom an incipient moustache and first swallow-tail had aroused an unwonted dignity led, to supper a wise virgin some ten years his senior, and grinned in triumph at his companions in a manner from which respect for the years of his partner, if nothing else, should have deterred him. But the majority of men, if our recollection serves us rightly, felt constrained to pay their devotions in silence, and congregated in little coterie, in which the feminine element was conspicuous by its absence.

But perhaps, after all, our judgment should not be credited as impartial. At the only festival which it was ever our good fortune to attend, we held but the verdant and contemptuous position of a Freshman. Our short residence at college had not yet inspired us with that obtrusive self-confidence which the first few months generally gives to the first-year student; and we were content to take ourselves at the valuation of our seniors rather than at our own. And so it happens, perhaps, that our reminiscences are tinged rather with the recollection of our own conduct than with that of others, and for all our *badinage*, we would by no means have our newly arrived students pronounce the Founder's Festival "dull" on any opinion derived from our dictum, for slow it was not. And as we said at the beginning of this paper, we would regret exceedingly to see that it was not celebrated this year. It is, in one sense, the first of our collegiate gatherings. In all the long years during which McGill has climbed to her present high position, the Founder's Festival has served to bind the students more closely to their University, and the news of its abolition would cause a pang in the breasts of many now far away from us, as they thought of the times long gone by. In celebrating it, too, we pay a just debt of gratitude to the man who made Montreal the seat of the foremost University in our country—a debt which, while our University bears the name of its founder, we are not likely to forget. And so we again beg to urge upon the students of the several Faculties the advisability, as soon as the vacation is over, of electing the usual committee, and taking all measures necessary for the observance of the annual Founder's Festival.

We see by the Yale *Potpourri* that C. H. Ferry, an old High School boy, is Commodore of the Yale Navy. He is, we understand, the first undergraduate who has enjoyed the honour of being commodore.

Our readers will be pleased to learn that Mr. D. F. H. Wilkins, B. A. (Toronto), and one of our first graduating class in Practical Science (Mining) has been appointed Science Master in Hellmuth College, London, Ont. We congratulate Hellmuth on the choice they have made.