

CHANCELLOR BURWASH'S LECTURE.

The second lecture in the series of weekly lectures was delivered last Saturday afternoon, when Chancellor Burwash discussed the "Moral and Religious Spirit of the Greek Drama." The lecturer dealt with his subject in an able manner and showed with great clearness the similarity in the outbursts of the Hebrews and Greeks at particular periods.

Dr. Burwash began his lecture by drawing attention to the fact that the Greeks had no religious books. The fact that knowledge was not limited to religious teachers gave it therefore a wider and a freer range. Homer and Hesiod were the first writers of Greece. In Homer the key-note is his martial spirit. If religious ceremonies of any kind are introduced they simply aid in the business of war and by themselves are of no importance. In Hesiod his theogony is one of pure speculative curiosity.

The great changes of the year were times of religious festivals with the Greeks. Spring and autumn were celebrated with offerings to the various Gods, of whom the principal was Bacchus. At these periods the Greek spirit showed itself in dramatic form; and since the drama holds up the mirror to human thought, we shall, by studying it, see the heart of the Greek in all its aspects. The Greek drama was in its origin religious, being performed at the great religious festivals, when but a single performance was given. There were two elements in the Greek drama, the actors and the choruses. The actors announced the text of the play and played also a prophetic part; the choruses on the other hand were the exhorters and the moralists. They commented upon the texts of the actors. About B. C. 500 the Greek drama was at its height so that the best period to consider extends from about the fifth to the seventh century.

The first dramatist in the period is Aeschylus. His was an age of heroism and bravery, and age which saw Marathon and Plataea and this spirit was consequently reflected in his dramas. The principal idea of "Prometheus" is heroic endurance sustained by the work of kindly love. This was a time in which the advanced thought of the world was struggling against suffering, and the same idea is seen in Job and in the 53rd chap. of Isaiah.

In the trilogy of Aeschylus, which is composed of Agamemnon, Orestes and the Eumenides we see retributive justice giving her decree. The sins of the father are visited upon the children. The manner of atoning for the sin is important; this is accomplished by Minerva and the Furies together receiving the sacrifice, and the Furies become the Eumenides. This same idea breaks forth among the Hebrews when Job exclaims: "Mercy and truth are met together."

The next dramatist, Sophocles, shows a milder tone in his delineation of destiny. In him appear the moral spirit of filial love, constancy, conscientiousness and virtue. The religious duty of Antigone and the rending of conscience of Oedipus shew feelings of a deep religious order. The similarity between the following: "May wretched fate overtake him who does not respect justice," of Sophocles, and the words of Solomon: "A haughty spirit before a fall," proves to us again that the highest thought of both Greeks and Hebrews was advancing at a similar rate. In "Oedipus at Colonus" it is the spotless daughter who pours out the sacrifice in the grove of the Furies, which shews us the value placed on the spirit of love and innocence by the Greeks. Again in the "Antigone" we see the grand Greek ideal of noble womanhood; her unflinching constancy to religious duty, and her great love for her brother are both good traits.

After Sophocles there came a change in the spirit of the Greeks. A spirit of philosophical criticism broke up the existing order without establishing a new one. The Greeks had not enough depth to keep out the sophistry of the Stoics and Epicureans, but that the change was slow is seen in the fact that Euripides was not at first popular.

The Gods were still loved, but the increase of wealth hastened the decline.

That the people were content to hear their ancient beliefs characterized as "the idle fables of your bards," clearly shows us the state of morality. From the fifth to the seventh century had been a period of profound religious relief, but after that there came this decline. Two causes aided it: the wealth which produced luxury and broke up the home life, and the inherent weakness of a natural religion of morals. Religious faith built on falsehood is superstition and therefore the system could not last.

In conclusion the lecturer drew attention to the fact that the system of the Greeks failed in failing to account for the presence of evil.

REPORT FROM THE W. R. C.

The Women's Residence Committee beg to report as follows:—

The ladies who had consented to form a Committee for the purpose of raising funds for a residence for women students, held their first meeting on Saturday, January 21st, 1893, in the Ladies Reading Room, at 10 o'clock a. m.

Miss Lye, President of the Women's Literary Society, occupied the chair.

A brief statement of the circumstances which led to the calling of the Committee was given, and the motion read on the conditions of which it was formed.

The following officers were elected: Chairman, Mrs. Jas. Loudon; Treasurer, Mrs. J. M. Baldwin; Secretary, Charlotte Ross.

It was decided that the Committee should be enlarged at the next meeting and measures taken to extend the interest in the scheme.

The Committee met again Wed. Feb. 1st, at 4 o'clock p. m., Mrs. Loudon in the chair.

After the reading of the minutes, Mrs. Loudon addressed the meeting and stated that she considered it advisable that the Committee should be re-organized on a different basis, and that for that purpose a general meeting should be called, special invitations to which should be sent to certain ladies enumerated and a general invitation extended through the daily papers to all who were interested, this meeting to choose a Nominating Committee.

The question being asked whether the same result might not be attained by enlarging the present Committee, and holding a general meeting, if desirable, at its call, without a complete re-organization, it was responded that greater interest would probably be aroused if the movement were placed on a different basis, that is, to invite to the honor of inaugurating and controlling the movement, those who can best secure its success, namely the Ladies of Toronto.

It was then stated on behalf of the Literary Society, that in forming the present organization, the Society had acted throughout with the concurrence of the President and the Chancellor of the University, but if the Committee deemed a new organization better calculated to attain the end in view, no difficulties would be offered by the Literary Society.

On a suggestion that a motion for the dissolution of the present Committee be brought in, it was moved by Mrs. Baldwin, seconded by Mrs. Balmer and carried, that this Committee be dissolved and the Ladies present go into conference concerning the steps to be taken.

The Women's Literary Society have thus no further responsibility in the matter.

We consider that the Women students have reason to be gratified at the interest shown by the Ladies connected with the faculty, and that it would be in the interests of a scheme, which this Society has much at heart, if the members would continue as individuals, to use their efforts for its promotion, although, as a body, it has passed from their hands. All of which we respectfully submit.

CHARLOTTE ROSS, Secretary