

be printed. As it is, the student attends these lectures and works diligently to jot down as much of the discourse as he possibly can. After he comes home, he opens his note-book and endeavours to thread out some plain facts. He gives up in disgust, finding his notes chaos. None but the stenographer (and it often puzzles him) can make anything like a complete set of notes. The lectures in themselves are a pleasure to the student who merely listens without attempting to reproduce on paper the words of the lecturer. But, no matter how closely or attentively the student may listen to the remarks of the professor, he will find it impossible to retain them in his memory any length of time; and in this case, he will be similarly situated to that in which he had taken notes.

The only objection which can be raised, is that it would tend to irregularity of attendance on the part of the students. We would answer this by saying that those students who follow the lectures for the benefit to be derived from them (in lieu of necessity to obtain their degree), would feel more than amply repaid by the references to reported cases and practical illustrations of the principles expounded. The experiment, moreover, has been tried in the Faculties of Arts and Medicine, and meets with the universal approval of both professor and student. Why, then, should not this plan be introduced into the Faculty of Law? Should not the Law student be allowed the full benefit of the *research*, wisdom and experience of his professor, instead of being obliged to roam through the vast field of legal science and reported cases in search of knowledge?

This method of imparting instruction would operate gradually and be followed by consequences most beneficial.

We cannot congratulate the members of the Arts class of '83 upon their choice of a valedictorian. The gentleman whom they have chosen may be well fitted, so far as talents go, for the position; but he cannot in any sense be said to represent the students either of the fourth year or of the Faculty, inasmuch as he is comparatively unknown to most of them. The year in our opinion has established a bad precedent by selecting a man who has only been two years in their class to read their valedictory.

The students in the Faculty of Arts have a grievance. It appears that, although willing to make any deposit required, some of them have been refused books belonging to the library of the Faculty of Medicine, which they desired to read. This is not as it should be. The Arts student pays a library fee of four dollars a year, and in justice this should entitle him to the same privileges as the medical student, who, though paying no fee, is permitted to take books out of both the University library and that connected with his own Faculty. We certainly fail to see any reason for this distinction between the students of the two Faculties, and believe it is only necessary to draw attention to it to have it done away with altogether.

Contributions.

(We are not responsible for any opinions expressed in this column.—ED.)

"COLLOQUIAL EMPHASIS."

Molière in one of his comedies has admirably hit off the affectation that had found its way into the private life of his own times. The ladies, "persons of quality who know everything without having ever learned anything," go into ecstasies on all occasions. Madelon is "furiusement pour les portraits." Lathos loves riddles "terriblement." Even Mascarille's ribbon is "furiusement bien choisi," his gloves small "terriblement bons," and his feathers are "effroyablement belles." Shakespeare caricatures a similar foible in Love's Labour Lost where Heloïses and the rest despising "plain kersey yea and nay" vie with one another in

Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise.

Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,

Figures pedantical.

When Mrs. Malaprop claims for herself a "nice derangement of epithets" she shows a delicate perception of what good talk should be. The person who can supply the right epithet on every occasion has not much to learn in the art of expression: taste and discrimination have received their last polish. We wonder what she would have said to the modern practice on this head which substitutes hyperbole for all nicety of definition. Hyperbole has indeed from time immemorial been the one great colloquial resource where this grace has been wanting. People who cannot define with any approach to accuracy have lived and died in ignorance of the defect by indulging in wild exaggeration. There has always been a common stock of extreme terms which it is thought lively and clever to misapply, and which youth and vivacity have, in

fact, turned to very amusing purpose. The beauty of every date has enjoyed calling herself *hildious* as she affects to see the least cloud over her charms, and she *dies* about every trifle with a pretty grace. Sensibility has always been lavish in the expression of its joys and sorrows. Things are shocking, terrible, excruciating, enchanting at a sort of hazard as to which it is. Energy has dealt in high numbers and been profuse in myriads; and affection, playful or affected, ever talked in egregious superlatives and contraries. All this is so natural, so inevitable, while men's animal spirits and ambition to produce a sensation are in advance of their perceptive and inventive faculties, that society would not know itself if by any ordinance its members were restricted to a literal meaning or an exact adjustment of adverbs and adjectives. Half the world must hold their tongues altogether. But what we note as the modern innovation in this direction is not so much a tendency to ambitious spread-eagleism, but rather a growing baldness in social emphasis. Never were niceties of opinion compressed into so small a compass as by the youth of the present day. There appears to be a great disposition to reduce all definition to the use of two or three terms. All that affects the girl agreeably is *nice, jolly, lovely*,—all that annoys her is *horrid*—all that she finds or pretends to find irksome, troublesome, or oppressive is *awful*, while every shade and degree of satisfaction from ease up to rapture is expressed by a compound of two of these terms—*awfully jolly* and *perfectly lovely* being the measure of supreme bliss to whose climax nothing can be added.

We can understand the convenience of this economy of mental effort. A word that will do for all occasions, and like the bark of a dog, depends for its meaning upon intonation upon force or vivacity of utterance, saves trouble and reduces the intellectual expense of conversation to a minimum. But this is not the view of the case taken by the fair speaker, who has the air of doing something clever and expressing herself with spirit—as if she were urged to these eccentricities by an uncommonly vivid enjoyment of life. And sometimes from soft and ruddy lips, under the conciliatory charm of a musical utterance, the thing is effective enough, and at the first hearing these barbarous formulas may surprise almost like wit—but unfortunately the repetition carries with it no repetition of agreeable surprise—but the hearer is rather apt to fall into the reflective vein. It occurs to him, if these young folks habitually relieve themselves from the difficulty of selection, what are they to do when youth is past. A time will come when "jolly" and "awful" and "horrid" will cease to be graceful. In middle age we are not amused by blind indiscriminate disgust or jollity. There must be a reason why. When one of these airy talkers nerts go, who has hitherto made two or three adjectives and adverbs serve her turn, we can scarcely picture to ourselves a more hopeless case. She has taste enough to feel that such high pressure terms are no longer for her—they strike upon her own as well as the listener's ear as being painfully at variance with the subdued level of her spirits. Yet what is she to do? She is not willing to give up emphasis which is the spice of conversation—yet where is she to find it? We are satisfied that many fluent talkers among our youth will be stranded to years hence, and will have to retire into social obscurity, their style pointless, the right word never presenting itself, simply because a few obtrusive but inadmissible expressions will always keep to the front of memory and put every fitting, select epithet out of reach, till the moment that called for it is past.

E. W. A.

THE GROUND-TONE OF "MEASURE FOR MEASURE."

Read before the Shakespeare Club, Montreal.

BY R. W. BOODLE.

The tragi-comedy, Measure for Measure, occupies an important place in the history of Shakespeare's mind. It is curious that though we know so little of the facts of his life, of his mental development we can speak with a certain amount of authority. Our evidence for this is wholly internal, gathered from the plays themselves, dependent upon niceties of criticism and sometimes upon the turn of Shakespeare's style; but it is, none the less for this, evidence upon which we can surely rely in tracing the growth and development of this master mind. External and internal evidence alike points to the year 1603, as the approximate date of the production of Measure for Measure, and this would place it almost upon the threshold of that period of Shakespeare's life, during which he was engaged in writing those terrible tragedies which give the best indications of his almost superhuman powers. Measure for Measure stands just outside the gates "with dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms," within which we see Hamlet and Macbeth, Othello and Lear.

Occupying this position in Shakespeare's mental development, when the vein of "sweetness and light" seems for a time to have been worked out, we should expect to find this misnamed "Comedy" more in agreement with what follows than with what precedes it. Nor are our expectations disappointed. "This play, which is Shakespeare throughout," writes Coleridge, "is to me the most painful—say rather, the only painful part of his genuine works. The comic and tragic parts equally border on the *horrible*, the one being disgusting, the other horrible; and the pardon and marriage of Angelo not merely baffles the strong indignant claim of justice, but it is likewise degrading to the character of woman." Nor is Coleridge