

## REMARKS ON SHAKESPEARE.

No one has ever been able to discover how to spell Shakespeare's name right. Whole volumes, quarto, have been written upon the subject, but yet his name is spelt in a thousand different ways. We, for our part, have "consulted Webster on this point," and spell as above.

Little is absolutely known about Shakespeare, and so it is mere conjecture which asserts that he was the son of old Shakespeare, and a false and deliberate lie which states that his mother's name was Mary Jane. He was christened at the early age of four years by the classic name of William Goodfrey. We assert this on the authority of several modern poets, who call him poetically "Immortal Bill" and "Glorious Geoff." He early displayed signs of great genius, and while yet a youth composed the touching ballad, "When sparrows build;" music by Karl Wöllinger, price 50 cents; and in later days, when stricken by adversity had laid her fingers upon his ingenuous brow, taught by trouble, he produced that three volume sensation, which so goes to the heart of the human sympathiser "Uncle Tom's Cabin." So much for his ballads and novels. He never wrote anything more of that sort. He found it didn't pay. Then as now, plays were the thing and he soon turned his attentions to plays.

There are strange stories about his early life. Some say that he stole sheep when a boy, and others that he used to go to houses and deliver letters, and while he was waiting for an answer, possess himself of the overcoats and stage-horns which used to decorate the halls, and quietly march off without the answer. But those we utterly discredit, as well as the one which accuses him of picking his teeth with a fork, and wearing a dirty shirt on Sunday, for we have it on the very best authority that he at an early period of his life invented the tooth-pick, and when the stern hand of time had streaked his auburn locks with silver wire that he invented the needle-gun and the marking system, two great benefits of the present age. Thus we find that Shakespeare's genius took many a form besides the dramatic one. We all know that he wrote "Othello" (introducing his celebrated character of Mr. Iago), "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and many other works, but ought not we in this age of poetry and light literature more justly to venerate the genius which produced that greatest of English heroes, "Poor Dog Tray," and the marvellous adventures of Jack Falstaff. (We wish it to be well understood that this is not an advertisement for the sale of Shakespeare's works, but simply a moral essay on his life, etc.)

Shakespeare was a genius, as his friend and contemporary Milton observed in blank verse, "We shall never see his like again." Alas, no! Whether we take the tender sublimity of some of his plays, the mournful dirge o'er the tomb of "Poor Dog Tray," or the towering tragedy of Othello, but one impression deepens as we read, namely, that he beat Homer all to nothing, and we can only regret, that he ever departed this life regretted by a numerous and respectable circle of friends and relatives, and can ferretly say, with the poet.

"Alas, for man if this were all,  
And might beyond the earth."

(THEODORE ALONSO BECKLEY)

Wm. Geoffrey Shakespeare, Esquire, was born in the classic precincts of Stratford on the Avon. He was born with two teeth and moreover, the "night owl screeched when he was born," as he makes King Dick say, but it really meant himself. For the owl is a wise bird, and thus foretold his greatness. Shakespeare may have been said to have mirrored himself in all his works, especially in the quarrel of Messrs. Brutus and Cassius in "Julius Cæsar." This quarrel was typical of that between himself and "O rare Ben Jonson."

But we are straying away from his life, which at present ought to occupy our attention, because as Keith Johnson observed, a man is best known by the life he leads, and we will get an index to Shakespeare if we learn all about him. He contracted two friendships early in life. One was with the celebrated G. Chaucer, who was somewhat the senior of our friend Bill. The other was with young Jack Milton, whom Shakespeare once pulled out of a cistern, and saved from drowning. (Somehow that is always the way friendships spring up.) The friendship between the three thus pristinely begun ended only with life. The triumvirate continued fast friends for years. They are said to have been of great use to each other in their writings. In fact Milton is said to have formed his conception, which is a grand one, of the character of the devil in "Paradise Lost," by a close study of his friend Bill's nature and habits. We, in our day, cannot but wonder at the great genius and knowledge of Shakespeare, as he had no Mr. Liddell and Scott to write dictionaries for him; no great Premier, whose speeches he could study; no classical master to tell him "nice things," and no advantages, in short, such as the youth of the present day enjoy. In his history great gaps are here and there, and we cannot trace him through all the scenes of his shaded career. We know that about his forty-fifth year he retired from active life, and settled down in his native shire to complete his works. He lived happily there for many years, but one day he indulged strongly in the *rosy*, at a meeting between Ben Jonson and himself. The "Quadrimum" was his death. He bequeathed a large property to his heirs whoever they were. He died as he had lived, and the traveller may still find this over his tomb, written it is thought by himself:

William Shakespeare.

(Neat, not gaudy. It is one of the most remarkable epitaphs on record.) D. Y. N.

## U. C. COLLEGE LITERARY SOCIETY.

## TWELFTH MEETING.

The Society met in the Prayer-room, March 1st—the President in the chair. After the roll was called, the Secretary said that he had communicated with F. M. Treadwell and J. L. C. Cronyn, on account of their absence from three consecutive meetings, and had received no reason from either. The Society decided that they should be retained among the members of the Society.

A motion to the effect that the laws of the Society be not printed, as there was no provision for the expense, was lost.

W. A. Wright's motion that any member of the fifth form who was a member of the Society should be considered an honorary member of the Society when he left College, was introduced by the seconder, J. A. Paterson. He said that this should be passed, as it was but a step in the right direction, preparing the way for the admission of members of lower forms as honorary members. R. D. Richardson proposed, in amendment, "That fifth form boys, members of the U. C. Literary Society, after leaving College, be constituted honorary members, when those boys who were in the fifth form at the same time with them have been promoted to the sixth form; and that until their comrades are promoted, they be considered members of the Literary Society." This was agreed to, and the amendment was carried.

F. E. Hodgins said that as this would include the members of last year's fifth form, he would withdraw names he had proposed last week.

W. N. Ponton was then appointed chairman for the readings and debate. E. B. Brown read "Lady Clara," by Tennyson, and J. A. Paterson gave "Helen the Leper," by Willis. The debate on the subject, "Is the warrior a more useful member of society than the

merchant?" was then proceeded with. The leader on the affirmative was J. G. McKeown, and on the negative W. A. Langton, supported respectively by W. H. Biggar and R. D. Richardson. After a spirited debate, the chairman decided in favour of the affirmative. The President then took the chair, and the Secretary made the following announcement for next meeting:

Subject for debate: "Does Poetry afford higher entertainment than History?" On the affirmative: E. A. Bowes (leader), E. Spragge, and H. Ridout; and on the negative W. N. Ponton (leader), J. C. Harstone, and E. Proctor. Readers, G. Brooke, and R. D. Richardson.

The Society then adjourned.

## THIRTEENTH MEETING.

The Society met in the Prayer-room, March 8th, the Vice-President, J. A. Paterson, in the chair. After the roll was called and the minutes of last meeting read and adopted, the Secretary read a communication from J. L. Cronyn, explaining his absence from the Society, which excuse was regarded as sufficient. The Vice President then left the chair and introduced a motion to apply the funds of the Society to printing the Laws and By-Laws. After some discussion this was withdrawn.

R. D. Richardson moved, seconded by E. B. Brown, that the Treasurer of last year's Committee for the Christmas Entertainment be instructed to furnish the Society with a report of the surplus in his hands.—Carried.

W. G. Mowat then moved that the Secretary do notify all parties who are as yet indebted to the Society, with a view to their settling such indebtedness.—Carried.

E. B. Brown gave notice of a motion to the effect that in Section II, sub-sec. 6, all the words after "sufficient excuse" be struck out and the following substituted: "shall have his name struck off the roll of members."

The subject "Does Poetry afford more entertainment than History?" was then debated, J. A. Paterson taking the place of E. B. Bowes, the leader on the affirmative, who was absent; W. N. Ponton replied on the negative, followed by H. Ridout, who supported the affirmative; J. C. Harstone then spoke in favour of History, and the leader on the affirmative having replied, the chairman, J. G. McKeown decided in favour of the negative. J. A. Paterson took the chair, and the following announcement was made for next meeting: Readers: W. A. Wright, G. Cope. Subject for debate: "Was Wellington a greater Warrior than Statesman?" Leaders: F. E. Hodgins, Affirmative; W. H. Biggar, Negative.

The Society then adjourned.

"DESAVING THE BASTA."—"I engaged," says a lawyer, "a chaise at Galway to conduct me some few miles into the country, and had not proceeded far when it pulled up at the foot of the hill, and the Irish driver, coming to the door, opened it. 'What are you at, man? This isn't where I ordered you to stop.'—"Whist, your honor, whist!" said Paddy, in an undertone; "I am only desaving the basta. I'll just bang the door; he'll think yer out, and then he'll cut up the hill like Old Scratch, see if he don't."

A Quaker and a Baptist, travelling in a stage coach, the latter took every opportunity of ridiculing the former, on account of his religious profession. At length they came to a heath, where the body of a malefactor, lately executed, was hanging in chains upon a gibbet. "I wonder, now," said the Baptist, "what religion that man was of." "Perhaps," replied the Quaker, coldly, "he was a Baptist, and they have hung him up to dry."

A SNOW JOURNEY!—A choleric old gentleman, becoming enraged at the stupidity of an aged and faithful servant, exclaimed, "Zounds, you dolt, I shall go out of my wits at your dullness." To which the honest old servant replied, "Well, there's one comfort, master; you won't have far to go."