

loftiest imagination, the noblest appreciation of nature, the grandest portrayal of the human and the divinest conception of the infinite. This is the universal in art, and a literature will be great in proportion as it is imbued with this spirit of the universal. Of this, local colouring will form but a small part, and it will be properly subordinated. If a really great writer were to arise among us he would make use, perhaps a magnificent use, of materials found ready to hand; but the greatness of his work would be but little enhanced by their presence; his work would be great primarily to the English-speaking race, and then to us as Canadians. It is in this way that Shakespeare is great—perhaps unapproachable. It may be objected that we cannot hope to produce a Shakespeare. Probably not; but that does not alter the fact that we must aim at the very best; we must try all things—and that by the one standard of the universal in art—and keep that which is good. In this way only will real progress towards the highest be made.

It may be asked: How are we to know that progress is being made, and that our literature, or, rather, our contributions to English literature, are attaining to a measure of greatness? The answer may perhaps be found in a pithy sentence of one who has claims to eminence as a writer, and who is a keen judge of the great and beautiful in literature: "The thing to do with the book of Isaiah is to enjoy it." Enjoyment, then, is the final test by which a work is to be judged. Not individual enjoyment. The apothegm cannot mean that each enjoy Isaiah after his own fashion, because his own fashion is almost sure to be wrong. The individual nature is not fully developed; many faculties in it are undeveloped; one or two, perhaps, are of abnormal growth. The sentence might be paraphrased thus: "Isaiah is great, great for all time, great for the universal mind of man. Let it be your study to attain to enjoyment of him; not because he was great to little Israel; not because he was the high priest of a national literature; but because he was inspired with the power and beauty of the universal in art, and can thus appeal to what is universally good and fine in human nature."

The conclusion seems to be that if we are to strive after the highest, by which means alone our attainment can be progressively good, we must give up the cry for a purely Canadian Literature. We are a small and scattered portion of the great English-speaking race, who find ourselves in a somewhat anomalous position in this corner of the world. If we are to become illustrious, it must result from communion with the illustrious. If we are to produce a Shakespeare or an Isaiah, we must first learn to enjoy him, and there is much to be done in this respect. "The thing to do with the book of Isaiah is to enjoy it." When we have become imbued with the spirit of the universal, our Isaiah will appear.

J. O. MILLER.

"H TAN H EIII TAS."

O Sparta mater, quæ sobolis memor
Sedes sub umbra Taygeti sacra,
Servasque demisso ruinas
Vertice, compositamque vallem!

Mater virorum! si Niobe velut
Natis superstes, tu lacrymis adhuc
Sedes Lacænarum sepultas,
Si pueros taciturna quæris:

Paullum relicto munere lugubri,
Dic, cur sacrantis nec citharæ melos,
Nec marmor insculptum prioris
Urbis amat celebrare laudes.

Atqui tuorum non aliter nitet
Virtute nomen, (sic placuit Deis,
Nam nulla Musarum severos
Ausit inire lares Lycurgi.)

Quam si superbe sub statuis nimis
Fulgeret auro, et Phidiaca manu;
Raptimve per ripas sonantes
Pindarico trepidaret amne.

Fertur refixum mascula filio
Dedisse scutum, dum juvenis rosas
Sororis e suavi labello
Corripit, et memorans duella,

"I quo locorum Gloria te vocat!
Hoc ferto victor"—non muliebribus
Dixisse lamentis Lacæna—
"Vel mihi te, puer, hoc reducat!"

His, his juvenus docta parentibus
Dejecit hostes plus vice simplici,
Domosque Persarum catervis
Eripuit, patriamque letho.

Hac arte vicit semianimus truci
Campo superstes, qui sibi, luridæ
Par nubis, e cæsis resurgens,
Scripsit ovans sanie tropæum.

Testis Platææ, quid Lacedæmonis
Possent phalanges, Bactria cum mainax
Versæque Medorum cohortes
Præcipites petiere campos!

En! surgit Cæta, et sorte superbiens
Spargit sepulcrum rore Leonidæ;
Matresque testantur beatas
Thermopylæ tumulis trecentis.

Quæ vallis aut qui mons Scythicæ nivis
Ignarus urbis, quæ sine mœnibus
Defendit et sedes et aras
Cæbalæ, veteremque famam?

Quod si Lycurgo conticuit lyra,
Dudum tacentes nec retinet modos
Beatus Eurotas sub antro
Quos coluit, meditante Phœbo;

Saltem volenti des mihi, Pieri,
Flores Lacænis nectere, te, precor,
Ducente lustratas per oras
Montis oliviferi sequentem.

W. H. C. KERR.

OUR VISITOR.

Now, in the first place, we would have all men know that we, THE VARSITY, conceit ourselves that we are rather apt at turning off a sonnet to our mistress' eyebrow, when we are feeling pretty well. And certainly if at any time we should, with any deference to what is the proper thing, feel in a mood to take down the rhyming dictionary from behind the pile of exchanges, it ought to have been that same night—for it was nigh the day consecrated to the good Bishop Valentine.

In fact some one was reaching for the rhyming dictionary when our visitor entered. He was clad in black, and his eyes gleamed wildly, to the manifest perturbation of the VARSITY owl.

It is needless to recount what happened after his entrance. Everybody knows what these mysterious men in black do when they come into sanctums, sighing and groaning. They generally leave manuscripts of great interest and value. Their coming into the sanctum is an old stage trick in college journalism. It is sometimes a merry device. These are some of the scraps our visitor left with us:—

TO PR-S-D-NT D-N-L W-LS-N.

May all that you hold dear on earth unite
To cheer the chastened twilight of thy life with light.

TO PR-F-SS-R Y-NG.

Thy white-haired age, revered and loved by youth,
Thy voice the voice of Wisdom and of Truth!