

acts upon it, he makes as many acquaintances as he may desire. If he fails to observe it, he is left severely alone, for it is taken for granted that he wishes to live a quiet life undisturbed by visitors and invitations.

I know of no country where the conventions are so few and so sensible as they are in Germany. If they are duly observed, life flows more evenly and more pleasantly than it does almost anywhere else. One can live his own life and get time to make of himself what he wants to be.

Added to this respect for individual rights and tastes, German politeness gives a charm to life. At times it may seem formal. It is never so elegant as the French variety or so graceful and dignified as that of the Italians, but it is generally marked by sincerity, and it proceeds from thorough kindness of heart.

No well-conditioned youth would ever think of walking at an older man's right side, but would always choose the left, thus showing respect to the other's years, if not to his position. All men, except the military, greet one another with a magnificent bow, in the course of which the hat describes a series of curves that bring it to its owner's knee. The officers and soldiers give a very precise salute, which it is just as well not to describe as seen in profile.

We are apt to think that only in the British Empire does a man receive the consideration to which he is entitled as a man. But it seems to me that, while we boast, the Germans go further in their practice than we do. They hold that another man may be as good as themselves, while we in Canada say, like the Americans, "I am as good as any other man." For this reason we have become one of the rudest of peoples, forgetting that mutual courtesy is the salvation of democracy, and that he honors himself who pays honor to him whose due it is.

The students, especially those belonging to the Korps, are strong upholders of the law of politeness. Hence the sword marks that adorn their faces.

Upon the occasion of my debut at the *Romanistenverein*, I remember what deference was paid to the professor, a man whose name is known wherever Romance languages are studied. The whole company arose when he entered, and remained standing till he was seated. Nobody ventured to leave the meeting till he had taken his departure. That was after midnight, for he was fond of cigars, and he was not averse to wine. When he did say good-night, there was a repetition of the ceremony that had been observed at his arrival.

The meetings of the Verein were peculiar, in that there was no programme—nothing but conversation, which was not necessarily on matters pertaining to Romance languages. Students of chemistry and theology have been known to have papers read at their meetings, but they were a mere preface to conversation and refreshments.

Anyone who carries away the impression that German students are frivolous, will be making a grave mistake. On the contrary, they are more serious than Canadians, and, taking them all in all, they work harder. At the same time, they have leisure enough really to educate themselves, and to enjoy the society of their fellows in a human and rational fashion. In fact, they seem to have learned, like the majority of their compatriots, the philosophy of life, which their greatest poet summed up in, "*Tages Arbeit, Abends Gast.*"

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## ON WRITING FOR "THE VARSITY."

To receive a request to contribute to THE VARSITY nearly twenty years after one's last attempt gives one a pause. It does more, it sicklies o'er the native hue of resolution with the pale cast of thought. How light heartedly one attempted it in youth! With what a heavy heart one approaches the task in middle age! Ah! the divine audacity of youth! As carelessly it writes for THE VARSITY's columns as it requests contributions for its columns!

Well, may an Old Boy try to give two hints to young ones?—Provided the young ones will not take them!—Not yet a while, at all events: far better the divine audacity of youth than the halting diffidence of age. When youth ages . . . that is another matter.

Two things, one seems to learn in time, are absolutely necessary to any writing whatsoever: clarity of vision and clarity of expression. (What a platitude that must sound to youth! What an almost unattainable ideal it sounds to middle age!) Unless you have felt keenly the truth of what you are going to say—do not say it; and unless you can say it so that your reader shall feel it as keenly as you—do not say it. And whatever else you do, do not aim at "a style," do not "put on style" ("*videntem dicere verum, quid vetat?*"). An artificial style is always inapt—like loud clothes. Nevertheless, to sincerity and clarity you may add any ornaments you like (as a beautiful woman may dress as richly as she pleases)—rhythmical utterance, wealth of allusion, subtlety of humor, lambent irony, depth of pathos, sprightly jocularity, brilliancy of phrase—any ornaments you like. But, unless you can see, and unless you can say, ornament is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.—And, alas! to see requires so much looking; and to say, cometh not but by laborious study. Few attain it, and fewer maintain it when attained. As says Robert Louis Stevenson (in a sentence itself too labored), "perfect sentences are rare and perfect pages rarer" (—a sentence, too, that always reminds me of "Peter Piper picked," etc.).

All Art, including the literary, is an appeal from the heart to the heart, is an appeal to the emotions. Aristotle long ago taught us this in his definition of the function of the drama—a *πάθος* of the emotions. So Horace: "*Si vis me flere, tibi dolendum est primum.*" "Look in thy heart and write," says Sidney. "They learn in suffering what they teach in song," says Shelley. So Mat. Arnold:

"Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse! Young, gay,  
Radiant, adorn'd outside; a hidden ground  
Of thought and of austerity within."

It may be, though of this I am not yet quite certain, it may be that depth of feeling results in beauty and aptness of expression; that the beauty is dependent upon the depth—as "matter" and "form" are, after all (as Aristotle, again, showed) one and indivisible. Whether feeble and shallow conviction ever expresses itself deeply and powerfully, I doubt—which may solve for us the problem whether truth or beauty be the more effective element of Art. On this point Dr. John Beattie Crozier has a luminous passage:—"Whether your language . . . shall be rich, various, and running over with subtle allusions which shall bring out its finest shading, glancing and sparkling from it as from the facets of a gem; will depend not on your knowledge of words as such, but on the richness, fineness, and complexity of your sympathies