

about the Council's iniquity but dinna forget to mention any advances in medicine made during the past year. You may now take your seats, gentlemen.

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One of the most noticeable changes in our college life within the past few years is the decay of singing. Even the present undergraduate can recall the time when singing before lecture was the rule in almost every class in the University, and "Clementine," "The Old Ontario Strand," etc., were familiar to everyone. Now all is changed, and we hear only, in wearily drawn out measures, "There's no hair on the top of his head," whose dismal wail for the departed is well fitted to be the dirge of Orpheus. But, worse than this, public meetings in Convocation Hall have lost one of their most interesting features, the ever popular college songs, and even the praise of the Y.M.C.A., though, no doubt, coming from the heart, seems often to have little regard for the ear.

The cause is quite obvious. The leaders of the Glee Club having left college, none undertook to succeed them, and anarchy had its inevitable results. This want of organization was strikingly shown two years ago when the Choral Club instantly disappeared without any apparent cause, and no attempt has since been made to revive it. Perhaps it was that it should be dropped for a year or two that it might be taken up with greater interest when its loss was duly felt. But surely *now* this object lesson has taught its moral to every one, and unless our singers mean to "die with all their music in them," it is time they bestir themselves.

It is too late for any practice this year, but now is the time to lay plans for a well organized glee club next year. A moderate membership fee would keep out all uninterested ones, and at the same time form a nucleus to pay an instructor. A good concert could be easily got up during the winter and would pay the balance. Why, this year "Varsity" Glee Club visited some of the leading cities of Ontario, and their concerts were a great success, patronized by the Governor General, lauded by the newspapers, etc. ! If the expenses could not be fully met in this way, many students outside the club would be glad to contribute, as they already do to football.

The recently announced result of examinations at the Kingston Ladies' College reveals the fact that the "dears" are deep versed in Divinity. There seems to be an English Faculty, a Presbyterian Faculty and a Methodist Faculty, and yet the utmost harmony prevails. The theologues are divided as to whether they should petition to have the College affiliated or pray that its students may become Freshies next year. Certainly something should be done.

## LITERATURE.

### THE CLOSING CHAPTERS OF OLD MORTALITY.

HERE is nothing in Scott that surpasses and not much that equals the closing chapters of *Old Mortality*. Scott, as well as Shakespeare, have been sometimes charged with unduly hurrying their conclusion. I have never felt the soundness of that criticism. The truth is that such great story tellers know very well when their work is done, when the problems of fate have been solved and the destinies of character for good or for evil have been sufficiently accomplished. After that every incident, every word almost, is a weakening of the tragic impression, the deep sense of destiny, of fatality even, in life which is left on the mind by every great work of art.

In the *Merchant of Venice*, for example, Shylock, a lonely old man amidst a crew of jibing Venetians,\* after judgment has been given against him, says simply :—

I pray you give me leave to go from hence,  
I am not well : Send the deed after me,  
And I will sign it.

And that is the last you see or hear of the Jew. With these words of his the deep tragic interest of the play comes to an end, and what is left is but the thread of romantic comedy in the story, which Shakespeare winds up with swift, dexterous strokes, throwing in freely high lyrical notes that relieve the tragic gloom of the preceding act :

On such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love,  
To come again to Carthage.

A wonderful balance of tragic and comic elements, unique even in Shakespeare !

It is one of the marks of the inferiority of the novel as a form of art, that the novelist is generally obliged, in order to satisfy the ordinary reader's demand for formal completeness in the story, to protract his narrative beyond the perfectly artistic close, the close which leaves the reader with the profoundest impression of the fates of life.

The great novelists have not always yielded willingly to the necessities of their art. Sometimes they have successfully defied them. Charlotte Bronte seizes the tragic moment and closes *Villette* abruptly in a passionate lyrical outburst ; and Scott openly acknowledges his reluctance to weaken the tragic close of *Old Mortality* by a formal conclusion. And no wonder ! for of all his novels *Old Mortality* moves to its end with the most powerful union of pathetic and tragic elements. The thirty-seventh chapter marks the beginning of the closing move-

\*This is putting the situation somewhat strongly, in order to bring out the tragic element in the play. In reality the characters of Antonio and Portia have the effect of balancing the sympathies of the reader.