

DIVINITY HALL.

One of the novices has of late been the victim of strange and severe experiences.

Firstly—In wrestling with an angel (?)—C. G. Y-ng—he met with a misfortune similar to that which befell the patriarch Jacob—the third finger of his left hand did shrink, and, like Lot's wife, turned back, but he received healing through the psychological influence of Bro. M. H. W-n.

But this is not the worst. His heart-strings have been subjected to wrenches more severe and less easily cured than that of his finger, and the erstwhile genial melody of his nature has become discordant. But he has by no means lost hope. We are informed that he makes frequent visits to an up-town music store in search of the "lost chord."

K. J. McD-ld is our authority for the statement that Jack Muirhead's mission is not one of pleasure simply, but that he has discovered very valuable MSS. in the vicinity of Rat Portage. He has submitted them for examination to our eminent archæologist in Textual Criticism. These newly discovered parchments will be known in future as Codex X, and we anticipate a very interesting and valuable addition to the course of lectures on the subject next session.

For many days after the re-opening of classes, the calling of the roll testified to the fact that a number of the flock were missing. No one could tell where they were, although some one called our attention to the probability of their being called to fill the places left vacant by the resignation of the cabinet ministers at Ottawa. Some of them, however, being grits, much doubt was entertained as to this supposition. Finally, all such fears were set at rest in the arrival of G. W. R-e, who announced officially that his colleagues were not at the capital. Next to appear was D. W. B-t. Whence he came no one could tell. His home is said to be in the east, but railway officials report him as journeying from the west. It is presumed he came round the other way. W. H. K-n arrived, looking somewhat bewildered, evincing mental and heart trouble, and in answer to the question, "Where have you been?" meekly answers, "I haven't been here." J. B. McK-n is quoted as coming from Vermont, although some evil-minded persons suspect that he has been to "greener fields and warmer skies." The general consensus of opinion is, however, that John was ministering to the spiritual wants of our Yankee friends.

As we go to press W. G. B-k and H. Car-l are not on the scene. They are expected before the first of April. They left us long before classes closed, but the Principal affirms that "domestic reasons called them away." If such is so, we extend to them our sincerest sympathies.

CLASSICAL AND PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

At the meeting of the Classical and Philological Society, on the evening of the 10th of January, a paper on the "Delphian Oracle" was read by H. S. Berlanguet. Oracles, he said, were originally used not to foretell the future, but to give advice and counsel as to conduct in doubtful and difficult circumstances. The origin of oracles is shrouded in mystery. They probably rose from a belief in the existence round about us of spirits, whether as ghosts or as embodied in animals, a belief shared by almost all primitive peoples. Of the Delphian oracle in early times we have little information, and that little is purely mythical. This shrine far exceeded all others in importance; it possessed a world-wide celebrity, and in all parts of the Greek world was regarded with veneration. Such foreign nations, too, as the Lydians, Phrygians and Romans, were in the habit of consulting it. As the central point of civilization it became a bond of union between the different Greek states.

The oracle gave responses on all questions of importance, religious, political, public or social. When consulted on a subject of a religious nature the answer was always of a kind calculated to protect and preserve religious institutions, so that the Delphian oracle was the preserver and promoter of religion in the ancient world. This oracle had a decided leaning in favour of the Doric states, and its decline dates from the time when, during the Peloponnesian war, it showed such a decided preference for Sparta that the Athenians lost faith in its divine character, and the oracle became a mere instrument in the hands of a political party. It still continued, however, to be consulted down to the days of the emperor Julian.

Notwithstanding the general ambiguity and obscurity of most of the responses, there are many that convey so clear and distinct a meaning that it is impossible to deny the existence of some wise agency connected with the oracle. This was the belief of the early Christians, who ascribed it to the Evil Spirit.

The Delphian oracle possessed many features in common with other oracles in Greece. From the earliest times we can trace the influence of oracles in discouraging relentless bloodshed, in distinguishing classes of murder, and allowing purification and expiation in certain cases. They made the sanctity of the oath between man and man a special duty. The oracle at Delphi, as the centre of an Amphictyony, including many Greek states, had a great influence in promoting that ideal unity of Grecian states, which, though never realized, was yet ever present in the Greek mind.