

In the United States the importance of this subject has long been recognized and we find the Stars and Stripes floating from almost every school-house in the land upon all public anniversaries. From his earliest years the American youth is taught to love his flag, not because of any intrinsic value in the thing itself but because it represents a great and free nation of which he is a member. Their national flag in various sizes and textures, can be found in every American home. Now we do well to learn the lesson and profit by the example of our worthy cousins. It is to be hoped that a flag-staff and flag will, ere long, be considered a necessary part of the equipment of all our common schools, and that the youth of the land may learn to love our flag because of the great country for which it stands.

Another educating factor in our national life worthy of consideration is the songs we sing. Much has been said in regard to the influence of a nation's songs upon the character and lives of its people. We accept the fact that national songs foster and encourage national sentiment. The question for us is, what songs do we sing? and to what extent do they influence us as a nation?

First of all we have our National Anthem. Grand words set to grand music. Words which no true hearted Britisher, the wide world over, can sing without a thrill of pride and thanksgiving for the part played by our great empire in the world's strange drama. Of late years the hearty way in which Acadia students sing "God save the Queen," has been remarked as an indication of the strong spirit of loyalty to be found among us. We hope that the future, even more than the past, will find Acadia to the very front among Canadian Colleges in this particular.

HAMLET.

HAMLET is one of Shakespeare's deepest and most ambiguous characters, and there has been much diversity of opinion with respect to his mental attributes. Without doubt he possessed a mind of remarkable intelligence, keenness, subtlety, power, and his profundity and complexity of character and mind are evidenced in his use of words and expressions, strong in affections he could sacrifice them to a sense of duty, and an unsatisfied revenge

was the controlling motor of his life after his father's death. But why his revenge was not accomplished sooner is a disputed question.

The very first speech of Hamlet shows that he and his uncle are not in harmony, and he seems to have some intuitive feeling that the king and his mother are guilty. He was devotedly attached to his father and the circumstances of his death were peculiar, so perhaps it was only natural that suspicion should rest on his uncle whose character also might give some colour to this distrust. At first he consents to the king's wishes and never violently opposes them, but there is a deeper and very different feeling underlying his peaceful words. When left alone his true nature asserts itself and the strain of his double life is removed. What a picture of the utter misery and despair of his tortured heart! His life appears to him a burden, then his thoughts turn to the cause of his sorrow, his father's excellence, his mother's faithlessness. This is a touch of the hidden springs of feeling which only a clear insight into nature could dictate. The ingenuity with which he can hide his melancholy and welcome his avowed friends is remarkable, but when reference is made to his father his natural susceptibility comes to the surface and the depth of his filial devotion is expressed in the lines,

'He was a man, take him all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.'

At the mention of the ghost what could be more true to nature than Hamlet's incredulity, then amazement, then interest, and finally intensely curious desire to see it for himself! When again left alone his anxiety and eagerness are apparent in his words. While waiting for the ghost his mind, weighed down with sorrow and apprehension, notices slight circumstances around him. When the ghost says,

'If ever thou didst thy dear father love,'

his intense ejaculation shows how truly deep his love was, and on hearing his suspicion of the guilt of his uncle confirmed he is beside himself and can hardly bear the rest of the recital. His subtlety of judgment forbids him to divulge the result of that secret interview which stamps his whole after life with its dreadful import.

From this time onward the nature of Hamlet is twofold, for he seems to plan a peculiar method of action which will serve him in carrying out his revenge, and assumes an appearance of madness towards