

own men are concerned, I unhesitatingly reply—study. Lessons are set, actual veritable lessons, and only too often the student's full attention is absorbed by them. There is a cast-iron system of classes and subjects and lectures, and he is bound to give his attention to these, on pain of losing or being delayed in attaining that *Summum Bonum*—his degree. From his first year to his fourth there is a regular round of daily duty to be done, and he is too apt to fancy that that duty is the whole matter. He is too apt to become a jug into which is poured certain facts, and which is then sent into the world labelled B.A. or M.A., as the case may be. He is too apt to view his studies absolutely instead of relatively, as all important means to information, instead of some among many means to culture. There is no time for outside reading, for society, for the theatre, for anything which may turn him aside from his programme of studies.

Now we may return to the original question: is this student an interesting being to a person of fair culture, who has no special interest in student life? And this I think may now be answered by another: how can he be? To be interesting to such a person, a youth at this period should be alive to the feelings, the opinions and interests of his time. His studies should be the solid groundwork upon which he bases a fresh and vigorous interest in the life of the world around him. But our typical student is none of that. He is the victim of a system of intellectual asceticism. For the doubtful advantage of a certain amount of a certain kind of knowledge and mental training he has sequestered himself from the world. To keep up with the demands of the class and lecture mill he has sacrificed acquaintance with current thought and life. He presents no spectacle of ardent youth, tremulously alive to the spirit of the age, agitated by the hopes and fears of the great men of that age! No, he is employed in calmly laying a structure of information which may in certain respects be sound enough, but which will lose much of its force and vitality when once it is parted from the place where he has learned it. Properly, one's university training should be a period in which he first tastes the world, but tastes it with idealistic surroundings. A university should be a place where the best thought and feelings of the age

should lie at hand and be ready to influence young men at every turn. Instead of this, what is it? Only too often a seminary. And is a seminary youth interesting to anyone out of his own special line?

What is the best university work for a young man who has received a good grounding? A maximum of reading and a minimum of lectures. Professors should be helpers for men who are reading for themselves, not teachers to impart to pupils all that the said pupils will ever know about the subject. Turn a good student loose into a good library; insist more on the essay which means individual and various reading than on attendance on lectures which may easily resolve itself into presence of the body, and the body alone. And by way of conclusion I may be pardoned for reminding my readers of a curious difference in the terminology of English universities and of those on this side of the water. There the students are "men" and "read;" here they are "boys" and "study."

C.F.H.

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## LITERATURE.

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### AMERICAN HUMOROUS VERSE.

A CRITICISM.

WITH the short essay on "American Humorous Verse," published in your second number, I must disagree. It seems to me that Mr. Barr, instead of making his selections with "care and literary taste," has omitted many of America's best humorous poems, and inserted a great deal of mediocre, not to say trashy, work. For instance, we have five poems of A. W. Bellaw, each one duller than the others, and eight of S. W. Foss, while Carleton, Holmes and Lowell contributed but two each; nor are these, in the case of the first named, by any means the best that might have been chosen. Again, H. C. Dodge has six, and Bret Harte four, of which one is among the poorest things he ever wrote. Still, from the fact that it is mainly a collection of the verse of minor American poets, the book is not without value. One of the best of these is G. T. Lanigan, of whom more should be known, if his other work at all approaches the standard of Mr. Barr's selections. An abstract may be