

A SONG FOR NITA.

Nita, I'm here in the noon-tide still,
 Never a sound to mar,
 Following dreams at my own sweet will,
 Following dreams afar;
 Dreaming of Love and dreaming of you,
 Not one shadow across the blue.

Nita, they say that the time to dream
 Comes when the night-shades fall,
 When the silken sails from Twilight's stream
 Shadow the world and all;
 But Twilight lingers for me and you,
 With its love-lit islands, the whole day thro'.

Like silver bells on a distant strand
 Ripples the river away,
 While the sunlight dances over the sand
 Out to the snow-white spray;
 And the wild-flowers hide in the banks above,
 And the wild-bird whistles his song of love.

And thus the river of Time flows on
 Down to the twilit sea,
 Where our dream-raised isles shall merge in one,
 In the years that are yet to be;
 And Love brood over its eons far
 With the calm, clear light of an evening star.

But the failing breath of a day in June
 Dies in the noontide still,
 And the golden orb of the sun will soon
 Sink over the western hill;
 Then, Nita, come ere the day depart;
 Nita, Juanita, my own true heart!

ILBRAHIM.

OPEN LETTER.

E. Bristol, B.A., President of the University College Literary and Scientific Society,

DEAR SIR,—In your capacity as President of the Literary Society of University College, you ruled Friday night week on the relation borne by the payment of the annual fee of this Society to its franchise. From this ruling, as well as more particularly from the remarks accompanying it, and from such as were made subsequently by you at the same meeting, I desire to express my dissent through the medium of this letter. You outlined at that meeting the point of view from which, as President of this Society, you viewed the Constitution, and your conception of the duties devolving upon you as occupant of the presidential chair. Accordingly I do not think, sir, that you can well object to a short discussion of these matters under your initiative.

The third clause of the first article of the Society's Constitution defines, I think, its functions with sufficient accuracy. The second part of this clause follows as a natural corollary from the extent of its membership as described in the first clause of the article; and the objects here described are, I think, at least as important as its literary aims. For, while the University boasts of a large number of societies that are more or less literary in their character, it has no other that adequately represents the student body in matters of general interest. Anything, then, tending to narrow the sphere of the Society's action within these bounds cannot but have a very detrimental effect upon it.

The collection of a fee from the members of this Society, or from the major part of them, is from self-evident

reasons a necessity. But if the obligation to pay this fee be placed upon the honour of each undergraduate using the privileges of the Society, not enforced by refusing to extend its privileges (the right of a vote at the spring election alone excepted) to such as may occasionally frequent it without paying their dues, it is, I think, placed on no unstable footing, and the great danger of restricting the Society in matters of general interest is avoided. Such, I think, has been the view under which the Society has been conducted at least during the last few years. It seems to me that it was under this view that the Constitution was, in March, 1893, so amended as to provide for the payment of the Society's fee either in the fall or the spring term. It seems hardly reasonable to suppose that when a member is expected to pay a fee half as large again if he delays payment until the spring term, he is in addition to be deprived of his franchise in the Society during the Michaelmas term. Since the passing of this amendment, unless I mistake greatly, there has never been any distinction made in the ruling privileges of the members of this Society, with the exception of the spring elections. For it has generally been held that it were more expedient that the Literary Society should be fully representative and have but one grade of membership, than that, with the possible loss of a few fees, the scope of the Society should be limited *pari passu* with its membership.

In so far as small things are like great, the Constitution of this Society has been held, I think, at least during the last few years, like the Constitution of our country, in that it has both a law and a custom. And the customs of this Society have been held as essential to its proper working as its written law. The Society has in some respects grown beyond its Constitution as written. To strictly bind it to those rules which form its printed Constitution, without the use of discretionary power and judgment, would at least produce continual discord if not greater evils. And, indeed, it seems to me that the part played by custom in this Constitution gives it a certain elasticity and adaptability to changed conditions that is one of its chief merits.

I cannot well understand, sir, in what light the members of the Literary Society interpret a remark that fell from the chair Friday night week. You remarked, if I mistake not: "You might in the nature of things have expected to have one day, as President of this Society, a man with sufficient backbone to stand by your Constitution." It has never, sir, to my knowledge been hitherto advanced that your predecessors in this office have lacked either strength of will or administrative ability, or indeed—and perhaps this is equally pertinent—a knowledge of the rules under which a society such as this should be governed.

I am not aware, sir, that it is the intent of any member of this Society to convert it into a "bear-garden," as you expressed it Friday night week. But whether an interpretation of the Constitution such as you outlined at that meeting will bring about a state of chaos in this Society, the unpleasantness at that meeting may suggest, and the future will decide.

In conclusion, sir, I am not aware that any one of your predecessors in this honourable office has considered it his duty to enforce an interpretation of its Constitution upon this Society, that is clearly opposed by its members.

These matters are brought before your notice, sir, in the shape of an open letter, from the force of circumstance. It was my intention to address you on these matters last evening, when, the revision of the Constitution being under discussion, I conceived I would be in order to do so. Your unavoidable absence from last night's meeting has caused me to throw my remarks in the shape of a letter. They are expected to carry neither greater nor less force in this form than in that first contemplated.

FRANK B. PROCTOR.

University College, Nov. 9th