

LITERARY NOTES.

Professor Sayce has left Oxford for a tour in Egypt; while there he intends to copy the cuneiform tablets which are now being collected in Cairo.

Mr. T. H. Warren, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, has long been engaged on an edition of *Plato's Republic*. He has at last issued, through MacMillan & Co., a volume in which the first five books have been edited. There has been a long-felt want for such a work and while there are admirable translations of the *Republic*, yet there is no good text with English notes. This will be heartily welcomed by Honour Classical men in the University.

Richard Holt Hutton has the reputation of being one of the best living English essayists, and the popularity of his 'Literary Essays' (D. T. McAlinsh), which has passed into its third edition, is sufficient proof that he is a very able writer. In the new volume he writes on: Goethe and his Influence, The Genius of Wordsworth, Shelley and his Poetry; Mr. Browning, The Poetry of the Old Testament, Arthur Hugh Clough, The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, Tennyson and Nathaniel Hawthorne; all are masterly productions. The one on Tennyson is specially fine.

C. C. McCaul, B.A. '79, has sent THE VARSITY a copy of his inaugural address as President of the Lethbridge (N.W.T.) Scientific and Historical Society. This society has set before it most worthy objects—that of gathering together and preserving the historical records and traditions of the Territories, their fauna and flora, and other facts of interest and importance, besides, of course, scientific and historical work of a general kind. Lethbridge is the centre of the great coal region of the N. W. Territories and is rapidly pushing to the front. It is pleasing, therefore, to see that the inhabitants are not wholly given over to material pursuits, but that they have the time and inclination to devote to literary and scientific studies. Mr. McCaul's address is eminently practical in tone, and if it reflects the spirit, as we have reason to believe it does, of the Society in general, then the new Society is bound to succeed and to become a centre of light and learning in the Territories.

COMMUNICATIONS.

THE Editors are not responsible for the opinions of correspondents. No notice will be taken of unsigned contributions.

THE PROPOSED 'Varsity BASEBALL CLUB TOUR.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—Will you kindly allow me a short space in your valuable columns, in order to bring before the undergraduates generally a scheme, just now in the bud, but which, I think, will commend itself to all those who feel an interest in their Alma Mater, and in sport generally; I refer to the proposed baseball tour through the various American colleges.

This scheme has been more or less discussed by the baseballers during the present year. On the face of it, it seems a rather ambitious undertaking, but when we fairly consider the question, it becomes quite feasible.

There are several very important questions to be considered. Can a representative college team be got to go, which will be able to play winning games? What benefit are we likely to derive from such a tour, either directly or indirectly? Can money be raised in order to start the team, which cannot be expected to go at their own expense?

With regard to the first, I may say that I think the Baseball Club now contains at least one team of very strong players; in fact, almost if not the strongest the 'Varsity has ever had in the field. The team would include several men who are individually as good ball players as almost any of the amateurs in any college.

Baseball is quite a modern game in the University; a decade ago it was unknown. But a club has been organized for five or six years, and has during this time played matches with the leading amateur clubs in the city, and has won 75 per cent. of them, a good showing for a young club.

But good individual play without equally good combination is only likely to almost, but not quite, win the games, and much team practice and individual training is necessary for such an undertaking, and if anyone concerned could suggest a place where team practice could be held, such a suggestion would be most thankfully received.

One of the immediate effects would be the creation of a better *esprit de corps* between the students in our University and those of the American colleges. Besides, a greater interest concerning Toronto University would be created in the young American minds. How is it we have so few American students here? I know there are a large number at the Agricultural College, and also at the Veterinary College. I venture to say that one principal reason is, the lack of a general athletic spirit, that so characterizes all the American colleges. In this way also American students would be led to attend our University.

Again, a baseball team is the only one we could send; for the Americans do not play either Rugby or Association Football as we do, while lacrosse and cricket are scarcely played there at all.

The third question is an important one. I may say that replies offering good guarantees have been received from several of the leading colleges *e.g.*, Yale and Cornell, but not enough to justify a team in starting on any trip. The undergraduates, however, might do a great deal in the way of a subscription list or something of the kind.

SHORT STOP.

Feb. 6th, 1889.

COLLEGE SOCIETIES.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—During the past year or two there has been one circumstance becoming every week more and more noticeable; and it is a thing greatly to be lamented:—Our societies are becoming more and more dead creatures. Those not already dead to all good are fast becoming so. An offensive little odor rises now and then, which tells us that the one-time robust frame of the Literary Society has become already a victim to intellectual starvation; a plaintive, effeminate wail, just audible, convinces us that the Modern Language Club yet lives, but is in a rapid decline; while, although the Political Science has been much strengthened by the late generous supply of fresh and supporting aliment, it is yet in a precarious condition, and a relapse is hourly expected. And how much more might be said of other equally valuable associations.

A University, I take it—and surely it is the more cosmopolitan acceptance of the term—a University should embrace and foster all and every institution where instruction, practical and theoretical, may be and is obtained. And so has our University done her duty in this respect. While yet in embryonic existence she had her various associations, and they were, in those olden days, conducive of material good, and flourishing. But they, like the Indian from our plains, are vanishing from our halls. Now, sirs, how is it that such should be the case? we have to-day just as smart and able men in our college precincts as then.

But have you not noticed that each year seems more and more to take a "wall-eyed" view of a course in college? I am not, sirs, inclined to pessimistic views, or to belittle my successors; but somehow each advancing year seems to be composed ever more exclusively of "plugs"—(I need not explain). Men appear to think that if they have not their optics ever screwed down to some printed sheet, they will be missing the essential object of a course. That is true to some extent. But is it comparatively true that much may be learnt at these societies? In very sooth, do not both go hand in hand; and the one is most beneficial when associated with the other? I will not tell you how much may thus be learnt in rubbing off the excrescences of a hitherto almost hermit life and in giving a manly carriage to the shaping character. In fine, gentlemen of the First Year seem to think that they are being duped, when asked by their seniors to join some society. And while this lasts, so long will each of our societies be a nullity and of no influence. Let us take an interest and pride in our student institutions.

Univ. Coll., Feb. 5th, 1889.

W. C. H.