

THE GLEE CLUB TOUR.

Towards noon on Tuesday, December 15th, a number of bedraggled students might have been seen hurrying through the slush and slop, bedecked with cap and gown, each bearing on his shoulders or lugging with weary arm a valise of portentous look and unutterable weight, and when at last they reach the "Union" and board their special car, a large-sized sigh of relief goes up as the valise comes down with a dull thud on the floor. Soon the bells clang out their warning note and with snail-like pace we pull out of the station. The much talked of tour has begun.

Two enthusiasts have painted us a sign bearing the legend, "Varsity Glee Club, Toronto," and it proves an object of admiration and no little awe to the rustics, as we fly along at the rate of ten miles an hour.

After a stop at Hamilton, St. Catharines is reached, and with a yell of exultation we proceed to take possession of the town. A rehearsal, a supper, and an hour spent in struggling with refractory collar buttons, cravats bound to get round on one side, and pumps whose sizes too small and we are ready for the fray. As we sally out, the rain comes down in torrents through the pitchy darkness of unlighted streets, but within the church all is warm and bright, and a good-sized crowd greets us as we step upon the platform for our first concert.

All went "merry as a marriage bell," and our exertions were rewarded a liberal meed of applause. The "sweet strains" over, a descent was made on the "lower regions," where a pleasant-looking supper table, surrounded by pleasant looking faces, was laid, and midst the clatter of cups and plates, and the gleam of bright eyes, all our woes were forgotten and spirits bubbled o'er in merry jest and song.

The next morning sees us on our way again, and soon that place of world-wide fame, Niagara Falls, is reached. Our luggage safely stowed away, we cross the bridge, and, with Meinherr Schuch in command, proceed to view the sights. After walking for an hour or more, and seeing nothing but a number of buildings, bearing the mystic words SAMPLE ROOM, in large yellow letters, we take possession of a wayside inn, and demolish oysters and beef-steak to the strains of *Trovatore*, rendered by a remarkable combination called an Orchestrion, in an adjoining room. Then after an hour's rest and recreation, we go down and have a critical look at the Falls, and, having pronounced them genuine, hie us again to the Canadian shore.

A first-class house greeted us in the evening, and with the confidence of old hands, we did ourselves ample justice, and the rafters fairly rang with applause.

A royal spread followed, during which one unblushing freshman was seen to pass his plate *five* times for trifle, and was accordingly rebuked. Supper was followed by promenading and dancing, and it was in the "wee sma' hours" when we returned to rest with the cheering knowledge that dawning day must see us on our way again. Is it any wonder, then, that two of us were left? Nay, verily; the wonder is that not two but thirty were not left behind to mourn.

Slowest of the slow was the train, and innumerable the stops next day, and it was with glad heart we heard the brakesman call out "Brantford," and felt the jarring of the brakes as the train came slowly to a standstill. Brantford is a delightful place, and who of us would not have liked to settle down there, and that without delay, especially near the Ladies' College.

After a very sociable time spent at the College in the afternoon, we were not in the best of trim for our concert in the evening, but nevertheless succeeded in charming the large audience assembled in Wycliffe Hall. Unstinted applause rewarded our efforts, and we retired from the hall a satisfied though somewhat sleepy crowd of students, the more fortunate to wend their way to the home of one

of Brantford's *fair* ones, to spend a short time in social converse, the rest to console themselves with slumber deep.

On the following afternoon we arrived at Chatham. Chatham is a town on the Thames, and boasts among other wonderful things a "Street Railway System." Some of the freshmen had never seen a street railway system before, and gazed with no little wonder at the car as it stood in the middle of the road, while horse and driver took a quiet siesta in the shade of a spreading maple. We were still pondering over these things when we took our places on the stage of the Opera House in the evening, but they soon gave way to subjects of more grave import. An enthusiastic draught made vigorous and frequent claims on our attention. It seemed to come from everywhere at once, and several times threatened to sweep the whole club, conductor and all, bodily off the stage. The audience too was different from the general run of audiences. A calm dignity characterized it throughout, and gave way only before the classic strains of "Kemo-Kimo." "God save the Queen" put an end to the concert, and we retired with a sense of duty done, glad and yet sorry that it was all over.

The next morning saw us on our homeward journey, a wiser but not sadder crowd. All too soon we reached the city again, and the tour of '91 was a thing of the past.

The tour was in every way a complete success, and is doubtless but a fore-runner of greater things to come. P.

OBITUARY.

JOHN ALFRED SPARLING, B.A., '88.

It is our painful duty this week to record the death of one of Toronto's most distinguished graduates, Mr. John A. Sparling.

While attending the University he took a brilliant stand not only in the class-lists but in all departments connected with our college. He occupied the most distinguished positions in the gift of his fellow-students.

He was President of the University Y. M. C. A. during his last year, and throughout his whole course took an active part in its work. He was the acknowledged leader of the affirmative party, which gained such a signal victory in 1888. These are the most conspicuous evidences of his extreme popularity and wide-spread influence.

The following is a clipping from one of the newspapers of Strathroy, where he labored ever since graduation. The paragraph speaks for itself:—

DEATH'S SAD WORK.

It is our sad duty to-day to announce the death of Mr. John A. Sparling, mathematical master of the Strathroy Collegiate Institute. After a very short and distressing illness he passed away this morning at eight o'clock. Only last Thursday he was at his place in the school, apparently in good health, to-day his relatives and friends mourn his death, and the cessation of work at the Collegiate Institute indicates the keenness of the regret of his fellow-workers and of the whole body of students for whose welfare he has toiled so hard. Mr. Sparling was a young man of unusual ability and promise. His early taking off is lamentable indeed. His sterling character and manly worth were well known to all. The old proverb says, "Nothing but good of the dead," but here was a man about whom, when alive, no one could say or even think anything but good. Mr. Sparling's connection with Strathroy dates back to 1884. He came here as a pupil in January of that year with Mr. Wetherell, who had been his teacher in St. Mary's. Last Thursday, the day he was stricken down, was the eighth anniversary of his coming to this town. In the summer of 1884 he matriculated at Toronto University. After a brilliant course of study in Toronto he returned after four years to Strathroy to attend the Training Institute. As the most distinguished teacher in his class, he was chosen in Dec., 1888, to fill a vacancy in the Collegiate Institute staff. He was soon promoted to the position of