

tion, or several of them, in Quebec; and certainly if they spend one they would wish to spend more. It is not opportunity that is wanting, but the true spirit of language study.

C. W.

IN MEMORIAM.

WILLIAM JOHNSTON, M.A., (obit Jan. 7th, 1885).

"Thy leaf has perished in the green."—*Tennyson*.

And so thy work, but scarce begun,
Great soul, intent with earnest eyes
On deeds of worth and high emprise,
E're noon has struck, is passed and done!
Is done and passed! Still it shall live.
E'en as the tree sends shoots again,
So shall thy deeds in struggling men
Stir up new life, and courage give.

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To home a blessing, friends a gain,
To Canada a worthy son.
Thy spirit's with us tho' thou'rt gone,
Tho' passed, thy work shall still remain!

—P. H. B.

Toronto, Feb. 1st, 1885.

OUR PARIS LETTER.

WITH your Christmas number lying before me, I did not expect to have any embarrassment in writing to you. What, feel confused and awkward in talking to my dear old 'VARSITY! You come to me indeed in all the splendor of your holiday dress; but that does not make me forget that you are my old familiar friend come to see me. I simply feel proud of your enhanced beauty. When, too, all those nom-de-plumes and quaint little disguises are kindly made transparent, and I see the "old boys" (of both sexes) joining their thoughts together into such a delightful symposium, the whole 3,000 miles become as nothing, and I see them all again in the 'Varsity halls. I know I don't place them right. Moving about the corridors and chatting on the benches, I see figures who, my good sense tells me, are out in the world now, scattered through various callings and most widely different surroundings. It is very delightful to read on and enjoy these revived college memories. The enjoyment is all the keener that there is a pulling at the heart-strings, "painfully sweet." Where, then, lies the embarrassment? Why not loosen the tongue and talk and talk in garrulous friendship? Well, just as I was looking about to explain this embarrassment, I thought of a picture I once imagined a mad photographer made for himself. He kept one plate upon which he successively stamped the faces of his customers, and, as time went on, he came to have the strangest picture. You could never decide what its real expression was. At first it seemed an old serious man with thoughtful brow and eyes and long white hair, firm mild mouth, and fine sensitive nose; a moment later a different face peeps through. The hair is still long, but it is rippling into curls, and the color is no longer the same. The eyes are blue and bright and the brow is not so heavy and overhanging. A straight little nose, dainty parted lips, dimples, blushes,—I declare, a madien is smiling at you. But what a fright now! Don't look away, pray. Photographer, could ever any such self-condemned villain have voluntarily sat before your camera? But let us stop here; for as we look on, the curious photograph opens up into a long picture-gallery, where the eye aches and the head whirls under the endless fluctuation and succession of faces. And so, in glancing at your face, dear 'VARSITY, to seek inspiration, I experience the strangest bewilderment. First one and then another and then another and another, and a giddy succession of familiar and friendly faces pop up, stay a moment and then away. I sought inspiration, and verily the spirits have come and in numbers to astonish a practised medium. Such a bobbing succession of faces! I can no longer distinguish your head-piece or the table of contents; those faces are "keeping the pot a-boiling" with such mad persistence. Now, I say, how is any regular thinking to be done in this topsy-turvy of images? If this same embarrassment weighs upon your other correspondents, I admire the skill, the genius with which they cut themselves free.—Oh, the flash of an inspiration! I bethink me of a little metaphysical trick. Those haunting faces are tied by a hundred invisible cords to your cover, dear 'VARSITY. Let me hide you away for awhile in my inside coat-pocket.—What a relief! What a fleeing away of cloud upon cloud of visions and the dissolving away of unreal shadow scenery. Like out of a dream I have fallen, fallen, down and down—into my seat here.

Yes, there is no doubt about it, it was a dream, and here I am still sitting in my chair here at the Bibliotheque Nationale. "A pretty considerable sized little room," as a Californian friend at my elbow remarks. He has just walked across the floor, and tells me that it comes to exactly 48½ steps. Add two yards all round for a passage not included; consider the room a rough square and my friend short, and the area figurer out tolerably easily. The ceiling is high enough to keep the atmosphere in a fair state of purity. Eight graceful pillars rise up and branch away into domes, and it is through the glass of these domes that our light comes—never inconveniently dazzling at any time. The walls are lined dense and high with books, scrudging shoulder to shoulder. The serried battalions would strike terror into the boldest by their numbers, and they may easily fling out the defiance of the Persians that were they simply to stand unarmed and unresisting their adversaries would lose the battle and die from the fatigue of the slaughter. This feeling of helplessness before this array of books is exaggerated to a feeling of apprehension by a contrivance of ingenious atrocity. I said the light came in from the top. Very good. But if you turn your eyes to the wall above the books, away up under the dome-like roof, you fall under a delightful illusion. Luxuriant tree-tops fling down a refreshing green to your eyes, and they nod coquettishly into the room, and they give you glimpses of a blue sky and beves of snow-white clouds, and birds sailing in silent enjoyment of their liberty, swinging down head-long and eddying away heavenward again, a blissful scene. And we think how perfect it would be to be able to study out in the open air, in a royal garden, with fountains, lawns, arbors, couches, and all manner of recreations—not a relaxing pleasure-paradise, but such as those gardens in Greece and Italy, where ancient Philosophy was nurtured. As we strolled up and down in these gardens, our learning would be a real growth and rounded development. But alas! I was a-dreaming. It is only a deceiving piece of tapestry we see up there. The walls close in upon us like the walls of a well, and the domes press heavier down from the top. Oh, the crushing weight of those walls of books! They lean forward all together, and hang toppling and ready to rush down and annihilate. One dreads lest, some day, some grim infolio up there may give the charge, "Up, boys, and at them!"

Meanwhile, here we sit—two hundred (the books are two million!)—pecking away at little crumbs or grains of knowledge, gratified over our little successes, our microscopic "bonanzas"—a very miserable, laughable sight. And yet, no; it will not do to look at the thing that way. Properly regarded, everything has dignity about it, nothing is contemptible. Consider, then, this place as the hugest sample-depository of human thought upon the globe. The world is thinking away now, and in some form or other the record of its thought is being increasingly made here. The past of our modern nations is irrevocably fixed here; and nations long dead have registered their names and their occupations here. And so, both for comprehending the sum and direction of the world's activity now and for noting all their fluctuations in the past, for reading the past under the fullest light of the present and for looking out into the future with better knowledge of the past, perhaps there is no vantage ground like that offered by this same Bibliotheque Nationale. And so I say again that it is a place not to be laughed at nor to be made a matter of jesting.

And now, my dear 'VARSITY, after this sermonizing which was not intended for you, peep out of my pocket and follow my enquiring eye around. What a lot of long tables, are there not? I count sixteen on each side of the broad aisle. Don't you think these arm-chairs are snug and back-easing? Perhaps you don't observe the hot-air pipes that offer at once support and warmth to the feet. From ten to four we are nicely cared for. How did I get this pile of books? Oh, I simply wrote the names upon a slip of paper together with the number of my seat (144), and the books were brought to me. It may seem to you incredible that, though three back-breaking volumes were amongst the number, the man, who was an old hand, did not swear at me. I confess I was prepared for it. It is true all these men wear uniforms, and it may be argued that the uniforms have a subduing, civilizing effect. I don't argue that point. What polite men are the chiefs or main directors of this room. Several times search has been made during a whole afternoon for a volume, the exact indications for which I was not able to give; and they put themselves to the trouble to come and express their regret that it could not be found that day, but that to-morrow the search would be renewed and the book found if it took all winter. They have a just pride in their library, those gentlemen, and are much disgusted when they have not any book asked for.

But it is time now to take a look at the persons for whom all these preparations are made. In the first place, they are half of them foreigners. One of the genial librarians assured me of this as I chatted with him one afternoon. Rather than National, the library should be called International, and the name would be nobler as well as truer.

Again, these 200 persons are arranged in no order whatsoever, and