

CREMATION.

BY A BURNING ADMIRER OF SIR HENRY THOMPSON.

To Urn or not to Urn? that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler for our frames to suffer
The shows and follies of outrageous custom,
Or to take fire—against a sea of zealots—
And by consuming, end them? To urn—to keep—
No more: and while we keep to say we end
Contagion and the thousand graveyard ills
That flesh is heir to—'tis a consume—ation
Devoutly to be wished! To burn—to keep—
To keep! Perchance to lose—aye, there's the rub:
For in the course of things what duns may come,
Or who may shuffle off our Dresden Urn,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes inter-i-ment of so long use,
For who would have the pail and plumes of hire,
The tradesman's prize—a proud man's obsequies,
When he himself might his few ashes make
With a mere furnace? Who would tombstones bear,
And lie beneath a lying epitaph,
But that the dread of simmering after death—
That uncongenial furnace from whose burn
No increment returns—weakens the will,
And makes us rather bear the graves we have
Than fly to ovens that we know not of?
This, Thompson, does make cowards of us all.
And thus the wisdom of incineration
Is thick laid o'er with the pale ghost of nought,
And incrementors of great pith and courage
With this regard their faces turn away,
And shudder at Cremation.

WM. SAWYER.

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PRINTED LECTURES.

The students of Medicine in McGill are at present agitating the question of University education, or that particular part of it which has special reference to themselves. It has long been the boast of our old landmarks of learning that they are *semper eadem*, as unchangeable as the northern star, and if they do not say so in express terms, they imply as much, believing, no doubt, that actions in many instances are more eloquent than words. In the olden time, before Gutenberg's art had been given to the world, a few great men were the sole repositories of all the learning of an age, and as the means of communicating their knowledge was, as a matter of course, very limited, students flocked to their schools to receive

from these men the burning words that fell from their lips. When our old English and Continental Universities were founded, such was the condition of things, and the system which was absolutely necessary in those days has, to a certain extent, been handed down to us.

We can see no anomaly in the fact of a *savant* of the 10th century reading or reciting to his class words from a manuscript which had perhaps been the production of years of patient toil and deep research. The circumstances of the age rendered this imperatively necessary, for, as we said before, printing had not yet been invented, and as a consequence books, such as we understand by that name now-a-days, had no existence whatever. The students of the middle ages were quite content to listen to the instructions of some great master, and to note what he said for future reference, as it could be found nowhere else. These were the halcyon days of note-taking. The quill alone was the instrument which was capable of giving knowledge to the world, and as such it was duly honoured by the student and philosopher. Then came the art which has done so much for the human race; the art which completely revolutionized the pre-existing order of things, and gave a literal as well as a metaphorical meaning to the expression "winged words," which now flow far and wide to the remotest corners of the globe, bearing with them truth and knowledge in their train.

Printing has done much for mankind in general, but for students during their university career scarcely anything at all. This statement may sound rather absurd, but nevertheless it is a startling truth, and all university students in Canada, and especially medical students, know it to be the case. We think a little explanation will make this clear. As this article is written more especially to show some of the weak points in the system of medical teaching, we will take that Faculty as an example. With the single exception of anatomy all the lectures are transcribed in the note books of the students. Anatomy is somewhat like mathematics—anything that can be said on the subject is so exact that all the works treating on it are alike, and contain the same facts, so that a professor of that department of medicine can say nothing new which is not contained in some ordinary work on the subject; but with the other divisions of the healing art it is quite otherwise.