

We have but one criticism to make on the conduct of the Literary Society during the past two months. It is far from our intention to make an attack on the present executive, for it will be seen that, as regards the evil we complain of, the membership in general is as much at fault as the officers. The object of the society is avowedly mutual improvement among its members in literary and musical expression, and in public speaking. With this end in view members are encouraged to present the products of their best skill before the society at its weekly meetings. So far, well and good. In order that these contributors may derive the greatest possible amount of good from these tentative efforts, a critic is provided, whose duty it is to commend the excellences of the various items of the programme, to point out in a kindly spirit the defects, and to suggest means of improvement. It is just here in this important, almost essential part of the society's work that too great laxity is shown. At the opening of each meeting this onerous duty is unceremoniously thrust upon some unsuspecting member, who comes totally unprepared for the task, and before he has time to collect his thoughts, he is launched forth into the programme. Can such a critic, no matter how conscientiously he may try, do justice to himself and his audience under the circumstances? To make matters worse, his report, if not ignored altogether, is crowded to the wall by the long-winded utterances of some wordy member. When at last he does secure a hearing, his audience is on the point of stampeding out of the hall, or if they do restrain

their impatience sufficiently to remain, they are in a mood to treat the whole affair as a huge joke, and the poor critic must perforce endure much raillery, if he persists in his laudable efforts "to make mild a rugged people," and finally he is obliged to retire in ignominious confusion. Such a state of affairs surely calls loudly for reform. We believe that the constitution permits of the appointment of a critic at the meeting one week previous to that at which he is to act. If the office cannot be made a permanent one, this rule should certainly be followed, so that the member who is called upon to act in this capacity may come prepared to discharge this important function creditably. Moreover, every member of the society should feel that demands of courtesy and order require that the critic's remarks be received with all due decorum and the president should insist that the dignity of the assembly be maintained in this regard.

The Schoolmistress of Ye Olden Time.

In every village marked with little spire,
Embow'ed in trees, and hardly known to
fame,
There dwells, in lowly shade and mean
attire,
A matron stern, whom we Schoolmistress
name,
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame ;
They griev'd sore, in piteous durance pent,
Aw'd by the pow'r of this relentless dame,
And oft-times, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are
sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
Which Learning near her little dome did
stowe,
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
Tho' now so wide its waving branches low,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe ;
For not a wind might curl the leaves that
blew,
But their limbs shuddered, and their pulse
beat low,
And as they look'd they found their horror
grew,
And shaped it into rods, and tingled at the
view.