

## Our Contributors.

### AN OFFENSIVE DISEASE.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The disease we refer to is popularly known as swelled-head. Some people call it big head.

Physically considered, the head of a man who has this disease is not usually large. Indeed it is generally beneath the average size. His egotism, self-conceit, self-consciousness, self-assertiveness, however, are abnormally large. The brain is often small, but the Ego is colossal.

The symptoms of swelled head are well marked. You never need to make a scientific diagnosis to find them. They are on the surface. In fact, the symptoms generally thrust themselves upon you and you cannot help seeing them even when you don't want to see them. In bad cases they are as palpable as a mountain.

The superintendent of one of our insane asylums was once badgered in the witness-box by a lawyer who insisted on making the great specialist give one symptom that was present in all cases of insanity. The superintendent showed that there are many symptoms and that they differ in different persons. The lawyer persisted in demanding one symptom. Well, said the superintendent, if there is one symptom more prevalent than any other I should say it is the *habit of asking foolish questions*.

If we were put in the witness-box and asked to give one symptom of swelled head, present in almost every case, we should say EGOTISM.

If a man talks continually about what "I" did—heavy emphasis on "I"—what "I" said, what "I" am doing, what "I" intend to do, you may safely conclude that his head is badly swelled. In fact, there is no surer symptom of swelled head than continually talking about oneself.

Self-assertion, self-conceit, self-consciousness, arrogance, assurance, are all symptoms of swelled head.

The pride that apes humility is a symptom.

Swelled head is not confined to any class of humanity. It is found among all men, though it may prevail more in some classes than in others and more in youth than in advanced years.

The percentage of swelled head is said to be larger among schoolmasters and clergymen than among any other class. Quite likely that is true. If men are placed in a position in which they can talk by the hour without being contradicted or even questioned; their heads are very likely to swell.

Students are often said to be sorely afflicted with head swelling. We doubt very much if the disease prevails to any considerable extent among real students. A young man attending college is not necessarily a student. We happen to know a considerable number of young men who really did study and who won high honours in arts, in law and in medicine and there is not a single case of swelled head among them. We have the pleasure of knowing several young ladies who took brilliant university courses and they are as far as possible removed from swelled head.

The brilliant students of our college days—such men as Munro Gibson, John Campbell Thomas Moss and others—had no symptoms of head swelling. Perhaps Tom Moss, as we used to call him, was the brightest man ever raised in Ontario, and he was as modest and kindly as he was bright. Real students are seldom afflicted with head swelling.

The men at college who do not study are as a rule the men whose heads are badly swelled. Get a fellow at the Divinity Hall who dodges his examinations or falls in them, who clips his sessions and tries to shorten his course, but who is

POPULAR ON THE FIELD,

and you may possibly find an aggravated case of swelled head.

Perhaps no class of men are so sorely afflicted with swelled head as travelling evangelists. Given the delusion that you alone can preach the gospel, that you have a monopoly of converting power, and add to these delusions the intoxication that comes to such people from addressing crowds, and you have nine times out of ten a most odious and offensive case of swelled head.

It is saddening to think that swelled heads are so often associated with loud professions to superior piety. One of the most aggravated, one of the most offensive cases of swelled head ever seen in Canada was that of a man who posed as a specialist in "holiness" and foreign missions. So odious was that man's egotism that it was painful for a modest man to associate with him in such ordinary matters as arranging the programme for a public meeting.

Clerical swelled head is far too common. If there was less of it perhaps it would not be so difficult to raise money for augmentation and other useful schemes.

Success at the beginning of any course in life is likely to cause more or less swelling in the upper story. The first successful speech, the first success in the pulpit, the first article that was not put in the waste basket, the first success at the polls, first success in any line should be closely watched.

In a great majority of cases swelled head may be cured or at least mitigated. Increased knowledge, increased experience, increased grace, sanctified affliction and hard knocks from rivals are among the best remedies for big head.

Some cases are absolutely incurable. If a man has big head at fifty you may write incurable after his name.

A youth who "writes for the weekly papers" is very likely to have big head.

We have known some violent cases of swelled head among farmers.

We had a few more things to say about big head, but time is up.

### THANKSGIVING, OR THE JOY OF HARVEST.

BY W. G. JORDAN, B.A.

In the olden time people used to make more of the Harvest Season than we do now, both in the way of social festivity and religious celebration. This does not prove that they were in the whole range of life more intelligent and devout, but that they clearly recognized the blessing of a good harvest. It is not needful to dance and sing amid the standing corn, or to turn our church service into a gorgeous carnival, but we may in simple and beautiful ways acknowledge the God of Harvest. We all admit theoretically our constant dependence upon God and the need of gratitude for those common mercies which crown the year with gladness. It may not be amiss then to note some influences, which while they ought to work the other way, seem to hinder our gratitude from being perfectly spontaneous and richly exuberant.

*The very commonness of our blessings.* In recent years we have had drawbacks, disappointment and low prices, but never anything wide-spread or utter failure. In the flat fen country of Lincolnshire (England) for three or four successive seasons I have seen the rain pour down from the dark, distressful skies. What a terrible time that was for farmers, and others who suffered with them! and what sadness came over one when thinking of those who through destroying floods lost a great part of their living! Here, whatever other difficulties we may have had, our harvests have come round regularly and have been safely gathered in. We are in danger of undervaluing that which is common and making it commonplace. It is well, however, to remember that this is the sign of a dry, commonplace soul. The devout spirit regards this regularity of blessing as a perpetual miracle, a wonder of God's mercy, a token of His love. Thus we see that gratitude is not simply a demand which God makes upon us, it is a need of our own highest life.

*We do not know the privations which were so real to our forefathers.* In the old days when the world was so big and movement around it so slow, the failure of a crop in a particular place was much more serious than now. It might mean not only the loss of part of one's income, but immediate danger of hunger to both rich and poor. Now men can whisper their wants round the globe in a few minutes and food can come from the most distant parts in a few weeks. Those who lived in dark, unsettled times were not sure they would reap the harvest they had sown; in a very literal and cruel sense, "one sowed and another reaped." The wild Arab (or Indian) came by night to make havoc and plunder, or the husbandmen were compelled to flee before an army, glad to save themselves behind the walls of a "fenced city," while they left their crops at the mercy of the foe. In such times people were prepared to be grateful and glad when they saw a good harvest safely housed without let or hindrance. From thankful hearts and lusty throats they raised "the song of harvest home."

*The harvest does not bring us all that we want.* Our lives are not so simple as the life of our fathers: there are so many things that we desire and we are prone to grumble if we cannot get. Some would be glad if they could see their way through all the practical problems of another winter. Some would like more clothing, more furniture, more books or pictures. Or perhaps it is more money that we crave because we think that it contains "the promise and potency" of all earthly needs. In our perversity of nature we prize what we cannot get, more than what we have, and this mars our gratitude.

Some murmur when the sky is clear  
And wholly bright to view,  
If but one spot of dark appear  
In their great heaven of blue,  
And some with thankful joy are filled  
If but one streak of light,  
One ray of God's good mercy gild  
The darkness of their night.

*In these modern days of scientific chemistry and agricultural colleges we are in danger of moving God back.* Let us not say a word against science or the study of laws which rule the seeds and the soils. This patient study is part of the work which God will bless and reward. But we ought not to think that because we know more of natural processes we know less of God. The fact is the reverse for nature also is a revelation of God. In Him we live and move and have our being and He is not far from any one of us. We think that it is a mere matter of our machinery, our fertilizers, our cleverness, our work. We may have pride in the harvest but not the deepest joy, for that can only come from the recognition of God.

These reasons may perhaps account for our comparative coldness and lack of true, honest enthusiasm, but they do not excuse us; they rather call us, in loud, clear tones, to cultivate a childlike, thankful joy.

Man as a rule does not do any work unless he expects some return, some real fruit. This is not selfishness, it is simply sanity; it is a law of our being to expect to reap where we have sown. Even when men undertake some task merely to give themselves healthy occupation, they have the sufficient motive of delivering themselves from tormenting emptiness and weariness. To do work which is no use to ourselves or others may be convict labor, but it is not a true man's toil. Prisoners are at times doomed to useless labour, to carry stones up hill and then roll them back again, to turn a wheel which pumps no water and grinds no grain; what can be more painful than such toil with no interest and no hope in it?

We may make our life such prison-work, we may spend our money for that which does not satisfy, but there is no need that we should condemn ourselves to a life of drudgery and disappointment.

The joy of harvest is the joy of work well done, not the pleasure from a smart clever stroke, or glee over an unexpected piece of "luck," but the joy of one that has had to work some space of time in silence

and prayer. The joy of the husbandman, when winter's storms and summer's drought, when destructive plague or devouring blight have all past, and the golden grain stands safe before his eyes. The joy of the teacher who has given much patient thought and gentle help to a promising pupil, and now beholds a capable, honorable, well-equipped man. The joy of the mother when after long years of patient suffering and prayerful toil she is rewarded by the sight of a noble son playing well his part in the battle of life. The joy of the preacher when he knows that the seeds of truth have been watered by the refreshing showers from heaven and have brought forth fruit to the good of men and the glory of God. Of those who trust in God it is thus fulfilled, "they joy before the harvest according to the joy of harvest."

The highest harvest joy is self-sacrifice which achieves its worthy purpose. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." "He for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame." The Christian religion does not call to vain sacrifice, to useless mutilation of any part of our life. We are called to sacrifice the low to the high, the base to the noble, the animal to the angel, self to God. The great suffering that our Lord endured was for the holiest purpose, to reveal God and save men, to atone for sin and bring new life to faithful souls. When we bow before Him in penitence and find the way to God, He tastes the joy of harvest. If we spend our youth in a giddy round of pleasure seeking, what harvest can we expect? If our first thought is to get through life as easily as possible, what kind of men and women can we expect to be? How can the man who grasps all greedily for himself joy before God with the joy of harvest. The deepest joy comes from service rendered to men in the love of God.

The central principle of our religion is that such service cannot fail either in the case of the Christ or of the lowliest of His followers. True faith leads us to look beyond the weakness and confusion of the present, unto the time when the people that sit in darkness shall see a great light. There are only these two ways of looking at human life, with all its toils, cares, bereavement and disappointments. One says that it is a thing of fate, dark and desolate, doomed to end in vain efforts and unfulfilled plans, so that we are fortunate if we can catch a little comfort of any kind before it is too late. That is a way that crawls upon the earth, ending in dust and darkness. There is the way of faith which climbs the mountain and looks out towards the promised land seeing the "sacramental host of God's elect," and cries "they joy before Thee according to the joy of harvest." If you ask how do we know that this is not a delusive dream, a deceptive mirage, the reply is, because God is what He is this must come to pass. His eager love, His jealous care will see that the true spiritual seed is not lost. Prayers unanswered, service seemingly in vain, noble lives cut short and good enterprises defeated these shall rise again. The true vision of God's people is not of a hopeless, defeated, despairing host, but of a glorious company who joy before Him according to the joy of harvest. "The zeal of the Lord of hosts hath performed this."

### PRINCETON'S 150th ANNIVERSARY.

As Princeton College has so many alumni in Canada who may not have the means of knowing, but who will be deeply interested in the exercises which are to mark the celebration of the important anniversary to be held on the 20th, 21st and 22nd days of this month, we gladly, at the suggestion of an alumnus, give a place to the following notice of them in an American exchange.—[ED.]

On the first day, Tuesday, October 20th, the celebration will begin with a commemorative religious service in the Marquand Chapel at 11 o'clock in the morning. President Patton will deliver the discourse, which is expected to set forth the religious attitude of Princeton during the one hundred and fifty years of its existence. This service will