

M. J. Buer.

Reends

The Portfolio.

Vita Sine Literis Mors Est.

VOL. 2.

HAMILTON. NOVEMBER. 1879.

No. 2.

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THE PORTFOLIO.

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SNOW FANCIES.

SITTING alone by the window, watching the lowering sky,
Robed in dull clouds, that still westward, driven by
stormy winds, fly.

What is our life but a dreary drifting before sullen Fate?
There is no love, hope, or beauty, seek we them early or
late.

Now the day grows even darker, but like the pure Noah's
dove,
Heaven is sending forth snowy messengers, telling of Love.

Steadily, silent, the snow flakes faster and faster they fall,
Spreading with gentle caresses a garment of Hope over
all.

Even when life's at its darkest, tenderly down from above,
Wafted on pure snowy pinions, fly the blest birds, Hope
and Love.

Where could we look for more beauty 'han in these large
fleecy flakes?
Fancy, delights without number out of the downy myths
makes.

What though the sky is still lowering, dismal the day
seem again,
Snowflakes, their mission has ended, let them dissolve in
rain.

MODERN ERINNYES.

WHAT'S in a name? Notwithstanding the ridicule which Anthony Trollope has justly affixed to those young literary soarers who, having become possessed of the desire to write a novel, think its title the all-important question to be decided. It is, nevertheless, a point of vantage which they can ill afford to throw aside as of trifling consideration, and one of which he himself was not wont to be careless. Therefore, before entering upon what may be called the true subject-matter in hand, may the writer be allowed to make a slight digression and answer the above question.

What is the immediate psychological effect produced at sight of the word 'modern'? An inference, we answer, based upon the demonstration of the senses, and drawn from the outward and visible concomitants, would not be far from correct. A friend is sitting opposite, slowly cutting the leaves of his November magazine, when suddenly he

starts, gives his chair a jerk towards the light, and we look up to find his tensely-held eyes fixed upon the page before him, his brow contracted, his mouth sternly set, and his finger and thumb nervously clutching the corner of the leaf in the eagerness of his anxiety to turn it over. But, in a short time, he is again leaning back in his chair, his face has resumed its usual tranquil expression, and, looking over his shoulder, we find that he is now reading an article upon the social customs of the ancients. What is the cause of this strange alteration in manner—from manifest interest to seeming littleness? Why, with all that is bound up in Modern Thought, the subject of the article first read, he stands identified. It touches self by its personal form of address, in calling him to his place as a man of the nineteenth century, and by recognizing in him one of its own exclusive audience. But in the latter paper upon the ancients, his identity is lost sight of; millions of individuals may have been entertained with a similar account for the last eighteen hundred years. A writer then should bear in mind that personal recognition of his readers will prove to him a veritable clue through the darksome labyrinth of criticism to the light of their approbation. Concerning the subject of their paper, the reader will observe that, in the fixed determination to gain his or her attention at any cost, the interest attaching to things both ancient and modern have been united; and it is hoped that at least the laudable motive will be duly appreciated.

The three Furies, Alecto, Megæra and Lisiphone, are perhaps better known as the Eumenides than as the Erinnyes, although the latter is the original appellation. Orestes, who at the command of the gods, avenged his father's murder by committing matricide, was delivered up to the Furies or Erinnyes to be tortured of them for his crime. After many efforts to rid himself of them, he fled for refuge to the Temple of Minerva that, before the tribunal of the gods, the question

of his guilt or innocence might be decided. The votes of the Areopagus were equally divided, but the casting vote was given in his favor by Minerva, who then made a compact with "the angrily protesting goddesses, the Erinnyes, that they should henceforward be expiable and assume the enphemic name, Eumenides, by which they were thereafter to be addressed in prayer." Although they have ever since been allowed to wear their mask, they soon went back to their former merciless cruelty; and be it well or ill that this should be concealed, we will at least lift the veil now and then and call them by their true name. The torch and the snake are still their weapons of war, in the long use of which, however, they have become most direfully skilled, as we in their present age well know.

Hovering midway above the ocean, betwixt the new land and the old, casting a shadow successively upon each with the coming and going of the light, circles one of the exultant Three. In both lands the "up-turned faces" are held spell-bound by the writhings of a monstrous snake, upon which she has not once allowed the torch to shine. We see it only in the half-light, and whether it means to spring and fasten upon us, or whether it has not already commenced to coil itself stealthily about our feet, we cannot tell. Some are of one mind, some of another, and no unity of opinion can be obtained. In this vexed "Eastern Question," not to be too personal, but to speak of the country designated by our metaphor in their abstract form, the vengeful Alecto seems to have found an inexhaustible supply of material out of which to evolve torture. For the last four years not a journal has been published, and scarcely a periodical, that has not been "tangled in the thunder at one end." Leaning its huge elbows upon our horizon, and rising head and shoulders above stands "Foreign News," ever leering with ghoulish visage at our credulity. And how fares the Turk meanwhile? It may be a piece of after-wisdom, but to say the least of it he has had but little time for his devotions since first he began to complain of being disturbed, and better have kept quiet. The relentless Alecto is still striving to keep us in darkness, but we are lighting our own torch now, and the end of her triumph is near.

Megæra, the second sister, holds the torch political, as Alecto, the snake. She flashes it alternately from behind the scenes upon both parties, not only rendering the present thoughts and feelings of each member plainly visible to his opponents, but stretching out behind him in long perspective all that they ever have been in the past. Whether or no they be truthfully photographed, is a question always taken for granted in the affirmative. Megæra is of an imaginative turn of mind, and generally seeks out for herself a field where her power may have free scope. Then, when each has seen himself as others see him, and flashes of fire have been lodged in every brain, she transforms them into poisonous serpents, breathing out venom in return. But, after all, more good may be done than she wots of, for to find a man so conscientious as to need no reminder of his faults would indeed be difficult.

Megæra also holds the torch above the head of society, sending its fitful gleam now upon one now upon another, searching out things painful and things amusing, things solemn and things ridiculous, and throwing upon all the same grotesque, weird light. Satire and scandal, with their respective accomplices, Wit and Gossip, are her frequent torch-bearers, and a hoydenish, rough company are they to fall in with. Woe to the poor traveller, however innocent a face he may wear, who happens to meet them! Let him not hope to "so pass by." Those mischievous little urchins, Wit and Gossip, will fling up their torches and blind him with smoke, whether he take it sorely or pleasantly; and if he escape being scorched he is indeed fortunate.

But the third sister, Lisiphone, is the one most to be dreaded. She gives into the hand of each man's friend a torch, and to his enemy a snake. One may grow indifferent to the frequent assaults of one's enemy, and cease to regard them; but who can become callous to the pain of having one's secret motives sought out and scrutinized under the light of that torch held unswervingly over the head by one's friend? Had we not the satisfaction of revenging ourselves upon some other poor unfortunate in like manner, it would be unbearable. To be told of one's failings, though never so kindly, is by no means pleasant, and that the inflic-

tion must be born meekly is its worst phase. How many a time do we make a sickly attempt to throw it off good-humoredly, when in truth we are more inclined to let fly arrows in return.

As in the ancient times, Minerva alone could release Orestes, so in the present Reason is the only goddess to whom we can appeal from the fatal vengeance of modern Erinnyes.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT SOME THINGS.

ON looking from the window this autumn day, we are struck by the general appearance of desolation and decay. We shudder as we see with what rapid strides winter is approaching. Is it somewhat appalling to think of the gradually lengthening darkness that will soon hem in the day; and the thought that there is no escape from it does not lighten the weight which is upon us. But we forget that we only live one day at a time, and that the day generally passes so quickly and pleasantly that there is no time for gloomy thoughts. There is a great similarity between the "sleep of Nature," as it is called, and the sleep of human beings, so many things in each suggesting comparison with the other. As in the sleep of mortals, the brain still carries on the thoughts of the waking hours, so in the great sleep of Nature the work of germination is going on silently, but none the less surely. Deep under the snow lie buried some of the rarest bulbs and roots which are only waiting for the spring time to shoot forth their beautiful blossoms, just as, hidden under our surface thoughts, our best ones lie waiting for some occasion to break forth in language. Yes, winter is indeed a beautiful season. It is chiefly on account of the beauty of the snow, however, that it is so attractive. It seems as though God, knowing our innate love of beauty, has provided it as a covering in order that our eyes may not be struck with the bareness left after the departure of the summer. What a blessed thing is imagination! If we allow our thoughts to carry us past these wintry scenes to the opening spring, how our hearts bound with delight!

Did any one ever remark that the oak is the last tree to shed its leaves? After keep-

ing a few favored ones through the winter, it holds with a tenacious grasp its remaining offspring, even though the other trees are budding into new life. There is something inspiring in the rustling of the old sere leaves; it is almost impossible not to be happy when we are listening to the wind playing with these russet brown little music-makers. For they do make music. As was said of something else, "There is more music in the world than is dreamed of," and this is one of those charmingly unexpected music-boxes.

So we might go on forever, filling page after page with thoughts from Nature, so abundant are they. As winter reminds us of a sleep, spring reminds us of a glorious waking—a waking into all that is good and lovely to look upon.

Literary Items.

JOHN MORLEY'S long-promised "Life of Cobden," which will fill two octavo volumes, will be finished soon after Christmas.

A NEW edition of Jean Ingelow's poems, in two volumes, with new poems added, is to be published in London this month.

THE biography of Voltaire, on which Mr. James Parton has been engaged for more than eighteen years, is now nearly completed.

MR. LONGFELLOW and W. D. Howells are writing together for Lawrence Barrett, a play upon the story of Captain Miles Standish.

THE first translation of the Roman Breviary of the Catholic Church has been completed by George Bute, and will be published shortly.

MISS MATHER'S story of "Coming thro' the Rye," has been translated into Hungarian by Camille Zichy, under the title of "Jon a rozon at."

THE second volume of the third series of the late George Henry Lewes' "Problems of Life and Mind," is announced as in preparation by Messrs. Trubner. The two "problems discussed are, "Mind as a function of the Organism," and "The Sphere of Sense and Logic of Feeling."

The Portfolio.

Published monthly by the Students of the Wesleyan
Female College, Hamilton, Ontario.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,	-	-	-	L. G. BRYSON.
FINANCIAL EDITOR,	-	-	-	M. J. BUCK.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS,	-	-	-	{ C. M. WILSON.
				{ T. D. CLERK.
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THE PORTFOLIO, HAMILTON, ONT.

We invite contributions and correspondence from the Alumnae and
former students.

It is with pleasure that we notice the class, formed this session by Mr. Ambrose for the purpose of giving instruction in the art of teaching music. Many of our students are here taking lessons, in order to be able to teach; the need of such a class, therefore, is evident. No matter how brilliant in execution or how thoroughly acquainted with music a young teacher may be, unless she possess practical knowledge of her undertaking, she must of necessity be hindered by having to seek, and learn to apply the best methods of instruction. Mr. Ambrose's class is designed to meet and overcome this difficulty. The opportunity thus afforded of profiting by the knowledge and experience of so able a master of the art, cannot be too highly valued; our advice to all music pupils who have passed through the initiatory process, is to make the most of the occasion and join the class, for, even though their being obliged at any future time to teach may not be probable, the transitory nature of the good things of this life does not preclude the possibility; whereas, in the event of their not absolutely requiring it, the added information would always be of use. We wish Mr. Ambrose every success in his admirable undertaking.

THE city has lately been honored by a visit from the celebrated Dr. Mueller.

PARTINGS are among the painfully inevitable things in this world. When previous to a short separation, the painfulness is in a measure lost sight of, in looking forward to another meeting; but when a long-continued relationship is broken up, and we know that in similar circumstances we shall never say "good-bye" again, the "adieu" is hard to utter.

Miss Patterson, class of '73, and for the past five years a member of our Faculty, is about to leave us. It is with feelings of the deepest regret that we, in behalf of the students of the College, bid a loving farewell to our honored teacher and a kind and true friend.

LAST Thursday, Miss Paterson was presented by our students with a testimony of their regard in the shape of a handsome gold bracelet. The gift was accompanied by an autograph album, containing not only the student's autographs but the presentation address, as follows:—

MISS PATTERSON,—On this, the occasion of your departure from the College, we, the undersigned students, beg your acceptance of this slight memento of our affection and esteem, and also of our appreciation of your unvaried kindness and unwearied efforts in our behalf, both as teacher and as a friend. We cannot express the regret we feel at your going from among us, but assure you that though bereft of your presence, nothing can deprive us of the memory of your part in the happy relationship that is now at an end. In leaving us you are accompanied by our fondest hopes and sincerest wishes for your future welfare, that unclouded happiness may be your portion, and that friends as faithful as those you now leave behind, may ever walk with you through life.

On Friday, the following letter in reply was received and read to the students:—

MY BELOVED PUPILS,—Feeling my utter inability to meet you personally, I choose this method of communicating to you my very high appreciation of your love for me. I cannot tell you how deeply I feel at parting with you, who have uniformly treated me with so much respect and affection, of which I needed no tangible expression. It is not necessary for me to assure you that the beautiful gift you have bestowed upon me will be always among my most treasured possessions, and that it will be a visible link between the past and future. I take

this opportunity of stating how thankful I have often been for the pleasant way in which you received the reproof which necessarily arises from the position of pupil and teacher, and as I leave you now, I think I can safely say that no teacher ever left pupils who endeavored more than you have to make my oftentimes difficult and and trying position one of ease and comfort. I speak from the heart when I say that it pains me to say, "Farewell," and I cannot do so without thanking you sincerely for the fond and loving wishes you have expressed for my happiness, and although we may never all meet again on earth, let us endeavor so to live that we may be numbered among Christ's jewels when He cometh into His kingdom.

Believe me ever your sincere and loving friend,

M. PATERSON.

W. F. COLLEGE, Nov. 14th, 1879.

THE reports that reach us every week concerning the progress of the Literary Societies are most favorable. Each meeting seems to be an improvement on the last, at least so we would judge from the increasing and almost universally favorable criticisms of the members themselves. When the satisfaction is so general, it cannot be without foundation. Were this general satisfaction the only proof of improvement, we would not be so ready with our commendation, but it is accompanied by general enthusiasm, and as the latter is simply the outward manifestation of energy, we do not hesitate to pronounce the Societies, so far this year, a success, and to congratulate the officers and members. The impromptu speeches, lately introduced, add greatly to the interest and profitableness of the meetings. It is no small test of a student's nerve and intellect to be called upon to deliver a speech at a moment's notice upon some subject furnished on the spot by the programme committee. The surprise of being thus called upon often elicits laughable and original ideas, that had they been pondered over in preparation, or subjected in imagination to the criticism of a possible audience, would never have found the light. The recital of parts of Shakespeare's plays is another admirable feature of the Society gatherings. That, and the establishment of a Question

Drawer, are improvements worthy the name. May the Societies continue on their journey toward perfection, is the sentiment of THE PORTFOLIO on the subject.

SINCE the recent fall of snow, the question has been going the rounds, "When are we going to have the rink again?" The cold spell that visited the city the other week raised the hopes of all the skaters in regard to the nearness of winter, but the mild weather since has dashed those hopes to the ground. The vivid memory of last year's pleasure on our rink is of course at the root of all this anxious expectancy. However, we would not, if we could, hurry on the winter, it will come soon enough, bringing with it skating, Christmas, and—the attendant examinations.

It was very kind of "An old Student" to remember us in "Thoughts about Some Things." While thanking her, we add that we would prefer knowing whom we have to thank, though, if desired, the name need not be published. We now inform our old students that hereafter we cannot notice anonymous contributions.

EXCHANGES.

THE exchange column is always an interesting one to students in general, and editors and contributors in particular, and on the supposition that ours would be to others as interesting as those of others have been to us, we regret that we did not commence our column sooner. Last session our exchange list was so small that it was thought not worth while to devote either time or space to it; however, thanks to the kindness of friends, we can this year boast a larger list, and consequently the subjoined infliction.

The first exchange we have the pleasure of bidding welcome is *The Simpsonian*, from

Indianola. It comes to us in a form totally different from that of last year, while in place of its former cream-tinted covering we find it clothed in blue; from this, as well as from the declaration of its opening editorial, we infer that the color is an indication of its intended exalted tone. The first article on the "Trinity of Art," is lengthy but good. In it, as in almost all the articles, a marked feature is the unvaried brevity of the sentences; to quote the Rhetoric,— "Too great a succession of short sentences becomes monotonous and tiresome." The epigrammatic style gives a certain sprightliness and animation when used in moderation. The defect, though, is one easily remedied.

The next among our old friends that we greet is *The Argosy*. One essay, "Concerning Pyramids," contains an ingenious theory as to their origin. The writer has evidently solved the problem, burst the formerly impenetrable veil of mystery that enveloped those wonderful structures, and presented to the world an explanation of their origin worthy the ingenuity of a Darwin or Spencer. We congratulate *The Argosy* on being the medium through which a theory so strikingly probable has been given to the public. The Pyramids most assuredly "have been evolved," and, as the writer says, "An age which has accepted with composure the unaided development of man from a mollusk, yea, even from inorganic matter, need have little difficulty in explaining, as effects of natural causes, the apparent traces of intelligent work to be found in connection with the pyramids."

The first number of the *Queen's College Journal* for this year, lies before us. The *Journal* is quite imposing in its new cover, and no less so in its contents. We have read with pleasure and profit the extract it contains of a lecture delivered by Prof. Watson, the subject, a "Phase of Modern Thought," on the evening of "University

Day." The *Journal* offers two prizes for the "best literary articles," handed in by any of their College students before December next. We think this an excellent plan of encouraging contributions, and only wish our own paper was wealthy enough to go and do likewise.

The *Acta Victoriana* also has altered in appearance since the holidays, and instead of the "hyphenized advertisements," which some one so ruthlessly censured last year, a neat and clear title page meets our view. Reading in the first editorial of the "beautiful, neatly-executed engraving of the college" that adorned the cover, we thought that our memory could not have served us aright, and turned back to look, our astonishment at not finding it was dispelled, however, when we reached the explanation in the "Editorial Notes."

The Shattuck Cadet, a four-page paper published by the Senior Class of the Shattuck School, comes to us from Faribault, Minnesota. Its columns are occupied chiefly by items interesting to Alumni and former students. Making no "alluring promises," it is wisely modest in the statement of its object and intentions. We are glad to number it among our exchanges.

ALL interested in the welfare of the College will be gratified to learn that the well-known vocalist, Miss Hackett, has been secured to give instruction in singing to those of our students who desire it. Miss Hackett's musical education was received in Chicago, and already in her new position as leader of the Centenary choir she has confirmed everyone in the opinion that she is fully competent to undertake all that she purposes doing.

MR. TENNYSON, accompanied by his eldest son, is about to make a tour in Italy.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE AND JEAN INGELOW AS NOVELISTS.

A LIFE full of variety and change of scene, though conducive to intellectual vigor, is not wholly necessary thereto. Both Charlotte Bronte and Jean Ingelow passed the greater part of their lives in obscurity, uneventful quiet, perhaps dullness. Charlotte Bronte at least, according to her biographer, Mrs. Gaskell, could not have passed more monotonous days, or a more retired and isolated existence.

But yet both are women of genius, and consequently of power. Charlotte Bronte as a novel writer is probably the most gifted of her age. Her book presents a symmetry of construction, a harmony throughout, a purpose towards which the whole course of the story bends—not a page but means something when viewed in the light of the large plot.

Jean Ingelow's books, from the beginning to the end, are full of interest to the reader: here, appealing to his highest nature; there calling forth his sympathies, and rousing his sensibilities to the utmost. But viewed as an artistic performance how jagged! how lacking in roundness, in perfection. Good in every minutiae, but as a whole falling apart like a rope of sand.

If Charlotte Bronte has a fault in her delineation of character, it is that of dogmatism. She goes to nature for her models, but instead of being scrupulously true to that exemplar, she allows her preconceived ideas to govern too much the reality. Thus, while *Shirley* is almost a girl one might meet, she is a shade too beautiful, a fault too grand, except as she might appear in a lover's eyes. *Robert* and *Louis Moore* are almost too much alike to be two distinct men, even brothers, yet the writer insists on a wide difference between them. *Rochester* cannot be found fault with in this respect; his weakness lies in a taste for the homely, a quality not frequently found in Charlotte Bronte's heroes.

Jean Ingelow's characters, on the contrary, are rather beyond her control. She who created them cannot compass them, does not quite know what to make of them, is never quite sure what they may do, to what lengths they may run, or what extra-

vagance they may commit. *Tom Graham* especially illustrates this vagary in the writer. His childhood and manhood fail to match in the smallest particular. He also presents the anomaly of a man, possessing a mind well furnished, apparently unusually cultivated, and yet remaining low and coarse. The reader receives an impression of the kind of person *Brandon* is rather from acquaintance with admirable qualities in real persons and a suggestion of analogy, than from description or direct revelation by the author. *Doralthea* and *Brandon*, as the reader catches a glimpse of them in "Fated to be Free," have almost become strangers to the writer herself; at least her manner with them is decidedly shy. This indefiniteness, almost mysteriousness, in her writing, constitutes at once its charm and its defect.

In Charlotte Bronte there is the power of conscious possession. In Jean Ingelow the power that lies in a clear sight of what is beyond, and a constant outreaching towards it. Charlotte Bronte stands above and looks down complacently and all comprehendingly on her subjects, as their creator might do. Jean Ingelow writes more as if she herself were in each one the soul, and, soul-like, cannot fathom her own capacity. Charlotte Bronte is art perfected; Jean Ingelow is nature unfettered.

Charlotte Bronte, in her paucity of circumstances and evident limitation of means, reveals the grandeur of making so much interest of so little matter; while Jean Ingelow, out of her wealth of resource, only masters the difficulty of selecting and adjusting. Charlotte Bronte, while true and pure and healthy in her tone, lacks the deeper spiritual vision that Jean Ingelow betrays here and there in her works, though scarcely one sentence might be construed into having a religious bearing.

Such novels have a mission like that of music; they elevate, cultivate and strengthen, while used as a recreation from severe mental or physical toil.

THE total number of the Hebrew race to-day is about what it was in the days of King David, between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000.

College Items.

THE College roll has been shortened by an Inch.

SOME of our editors complain that their Thanksgiving holiday was one only in name.

THE latest discovery — an animal, the quality of whose hide extends inwardly indefinitely.

THE tea-meetings held in the King Street and Wesley Churches last month were attended and much enjoyed by our students.

AN exceedingly noisy clock in a certain hall was likened to a "young locomotive." It has since "stopped short, never to go again."

A BOARDER having been served to an unusually thick slice of bread, was heard to murmur softly to herself, "Twelve lines make one inch."

WHAT is the point of resemblance between verbs and the manner of reading in a certain literature class? Both may be classified as *regular, irregular and defective*.

IN the chemistry class, not long since, a student was striving to delineate upon a cotton surface a familiar visage. She suddenly stopped. What was the reason?

"JACK," the canine friend of the College, in some mysterious way strayed into the senior class room during a lecture on Moral Science, the other day. He no sooner sniffed Gregory ('s mixture) than he beat a hasty retreat.

WE have heard of an essay written recently on the subject of "Pinafore," whose concluding sentence ran thus:—"O, Pinafore! immortal Pinafore! when will thy praises cease? Never? And from the distance, floating softly, comes the answer, 'Well, hardly ever!'"

PROF. WRIGHT, our learned instructor in the Natural Sciences, carried off quite a number of prizes both at the Toronto Exhibition and the one held last month in this city. The prizes were for botanical albums, a collection of ferns, a skeleton leaf bouquet and specimens of copper ore.

WHEN the fire broke out the other week in the building next the College, and the news spread through the classes, two of the resident students rushed frantically to their rooms to collect their valuables for a hasty flight. Nothing could bring them to desist but absolute certainty as to the fire being extinct.

THOSE of our students who were able to spare the time, attended a concert given by the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, in the city, a few weeks ago. Most of the music pupils availed themselves of the golden opportunity thus afforded, of listening to the grand strains of the great composers, and their expectations of pleasure were fully realized.

JOSH BILLINGS is not very far astray in his idea of an editor's occupation:—"An editor's bizness is to write editorials, grind out poetry, sort manuscripts, keep a mighty big waste basket, steal matter, fite other people's battles, take white beans and applesass for pay (when he can get it), work nineteen hours out of the twenty-four (24), and be condemned by everybody."

AN open meeting of the Senior Literary Society was held on Monday, the 17th of this month. The programme, as the President took care to inform the visitors, was not at all out of the ordinary, but fully as long and as interesting a one as is furnished every week to the members themselves. The meeting was a most satisfactory one to all concerned. Mention is made of the societies and their progress in another column.

ON Thanksgiving Eve, the O'Neil Sisters (some of whom were members of the late lamented Stibbs Family), gave an entertainment in our drawing-room to those of our students whom fortune had not favored with an invitation to spend their holiday elsewhere. The subject presented to this appreciative audience was, "The trials of having a Colored Servant." Considering their impromptu nature, the illustrations were excellent. The characters of the *Grandmother* and *Topsey* were most creditably sustained, and provoked much laughter and enthusiastic applause. It is to be hoped this will not be the last of such entertainments, and that the O'Neil Family will not long stand alone as furnishers of Friday evening fun.

Clippings.

THE following very ingenious and elegant letter is said to have been written to a friend in London by an Irish Baronet in 1782:—

MY DEAR SIR,—Enjoying now a little peace and quietness, I sit down to inform you of the dreadful bustle and confusion we are in from those blood-thirsty rebels, most of whom are, thank goodness, killed or despatched. We are in a pretty mess—can get nothing to eat and no wine to drink except whiskey. When we sit down to dinner, we are obliged to keep both hands armed, and while I write this letter I hold a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. I concluded in the beginning that this would be the end of it, and I see I was right, for it is not half over yet; at present there are such goings on that every thing is at a stand. I would have answered your letter a fortnight ago but I only received it this morning; indeed, hardly a mail arrives safe, without being robbed. No longer than yesterday the coach with the mail for Dublin was robbed near this town; the bags had judiciously been left behind for fear of accident, and by good luck there was nobody in the coach but two outside passengers, and they had nothing for the thieves to take. Last Thursday, notice was given that a gang of rebels was advancing hither under the French standard, but they had no colors, nor any drums except bagpipes. Immediately every man in the place, including women and boys, ran out to meet them. We soon found our forces much too little, and they were far too many for us to think of retreating. Death was in every face, but to it we went. Fortunately the rebels had no guns but pistols, cutlasses and pikes, and as we had plenty of muskets and ammunition, we put them all to the sword; not a sole of them escaped, except some that were drowned in an adjoining bog. Their uniform was all of different colors, but mostly green. After the action we went to rummage a sort of camp they left behind them, but all we found was a few pikes without any heads. Troops are placed everywhere round the country, which exactly squares with my ideas. I have only time to add, that I am in haste,

Yours truly,

V. P.

TORU DUTT.

THE name at the head of this article is that of a woman who died at Bhowanipore, India, on the 30th August, 1877. She was a Hindoo of pure blood, who never set foot outside of her native country, and yet had done literary work in French and English which would have secured her fame had either of those languages been her own. At a very early age she discovered her strong literary bent, and becoming convinced that Hindostanee was not a medium through which she could address a wide circle of readers, she commenced the study of the European tongues. In 1874, when she was eighteen years old she made her first appearance in print as the author of a paper in English on the writings of Leconte de Lisle, exhibiting a minute knowledge of French literature, and illustrating her subject by excellent translations into English verse.

In 1876 she published at Bhowanipore a volume bearing the title, "A sheaf gleaned in French fields," consisting of English translations from Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, Bandelaire Gautier, and many other French poets of the present century. The *Saturday Review* states that her selections were carefully made by a refined taste, and that "the 'Sheaf gleaned in French fields' would have been an extraordinary feat had it been performed by an English lady of high education; from a Hindoo girl it was little short of miraculous. There were occasional mistakes in the English that only served to make the merits of the writing more conspicuous by proving that the work was genuine. There was sometimes words of which the quantity was unknown to the poetess, and lines that from this and similar errors were erratic in the matter of scansion. But as a whole, the vigor of versification and the poetic freedom of diction in a foreign language were quite marvellous."

At the time the volume appeared the translations were highly praised by a competent English critic, merely as translations, and not as a *tour de force*. Her mastery of English is indicated to some slight degree by the following original verses, which are not only melodious, but show that she had conceived a clear idea of residence in England on its poetic side:—

"The rural sounds of eve were softly blending—
The fountain's murmur like a magic rhyme,
The bellow of the cattle, homeward wending,
The distant steeple's melancholy chime:

The peasants' shouts, that charms from distance borrow,
The greenfinch whirring in its amorous flight.
The cricket's chirp, the night-bird's song of sorrow,
The laugh of girls who beat the linen white.

The breeze scarce stirred the reeds beside the river,
The swallows saw their figures as they flew
In that clear mirror for a moment quiver,
Before they vanished in the clouds from view.

And schoolboys wilder than the winging swallows,
Far from the master with his look severe,
Bounded like fawns, to gather weeds, marshmallows,
And primrose blossoms, to the young heart dear."

In 1874 she began the study of Sanscrit, and was almost constantly employed at it till 1876, when she became an invalid and was forced to cease work. Nevertheless, she had in those two years not only learned that most difficult language, but had translated into English blank-verse the whole of the Vishnu Parana. Scholars await anxiously the publication of her work, their interest being stimulated by the excellence of the fragments which have already been given to the world.

We have already recounted achievements which might well have employed the whole time of any author who ceased to write at twenty and died at twenty-two years of age. But Toru Dutt had also written much English verse, which has yet to be published, and a novel of French life in the French language—"Le Journal de Mdle. d'Arvers"—which has been given to the world. The plot is suitable to French society, her characters live in a French world, the only objection taken to them being that the hero and heroine are conceived psychologically and physically in Indian colors. It was possible for the authoress to imagine the outward circumstances of a life of which she only knew what she had learned from study, but not possible for her to imagine and exhibit naturally human souls different from those which she had known. Her mastery of the French language was even greater than her command of English, the diction of "Mdle. d'Arvers" being very easy and graceful.

THE work on the removal of Cleopatra's Needle to the United States is going on.

GROWING MOUNTAINS.

THESE remarkable phenomena are found between Baku and Navagi, along the road, within a space of about fifteen versts. They are of various heights, never attaining any great elevation. Their color is grey; they are devoid of vegetation, and their form is conical. The soil is argillaceous earth; each mountain seems to contain within itself a source of salt water, thick and slimy, which, ascending up to its summit, overflows when it reaches the edge of the opening. The deposit becomes petrified, and thus gradually increases the dimensions of the mountains. Some of these springs—those at the highest elevation—have been dried up, but others have burst forth from openings at the sides, and are continually spouting a thick slime. Not only in this locality, but in other parts of the country, "growing mountains" exist. Near the sea there is a mountain which is constantly emitting flames.—*Hanstee's Travels in Siberia.*

A LEARNED German doctor has discovered a means of dyeing the eyes of animals in general and of men in particular, any color he pleases. He is accompanied on his travels of propagation by a dog with a rose-colored eye, a cat with an orange-red eye, and a monkey with a chrome yellow eye. But the most curious specimens of his art are a negro with a black eye and the other blue and a negress with one eye gold-colored and the other silver-white. The doctor says the process of ocular transformation, far from injuring the sight, strengthens and improves it.

It is now proposed to make railroad ties of glass. Soon after De la Bastie introduced his method of toughening glass, Mr. F. Siemens, of Dresden, commenced a series of researches, which have culminated at present in the production of a very hard glass, which, unlike the material produced by the De la Bastie method, does not fly into a million fragments when broken. The sleepers, which are being tested on the North Metropolitan line in Stratford, England, are three feet long and four inches wide, by six inches deep, the upper side being shaped to fit the rails. The glass sleepers are not so strong as those cut from sound pine, but they are practically indestructible, and, what is more, are cheap.—*Ex.*

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