

THE MCGILL GAZETTE.

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MEETS

MARCH 3rd,

IN

Academy of Music, Victoria Street,

AT 8 O'CLOCK, P. M.

Reader.—MR. F. J. KELLER, B.C.L.

Essayist.—MR. R. W. BOODLE, B.A. (Oxon)

Debate.—"Should Colonists accept Imperial titular distinctions for colonial public services?"

F. D. MONK, Rec.-Sec.

THE MCGILL GAZETTE.

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No. 7

MOLSON HALL.

We all look upon the past with reverence. The student of history, that he may draw correct inferences from the contemplation of the heroes of the past, must transport himself to the times and scenes, in which they lived and acted, and must imagine himself their contemporary. But, in thus contemplating the past, one casts aside all prejudice, and, being blind to all the follies and imperfections of those heroes, one sees only their virtues, and attributes to them qualities superior to those of the men of one's own day.

But especially is this the case in connection with the history of Universities. Whilst listening to an old Graduate, as he narrates the story of his own undergraduate course, or dilates upon the legends and traditions connected with our "Alma Mater," we become convinced that the College, or at least the students, have sadly degenerated, that the spirit of joviality has been buried with the past, and that college life of the present day is comparatively tame.

The success of "Tom Brown," and other works of the same description, is due, to a great extent, to this respect and reverence, which all students feel towards their predecessors; and to the same feeling may be traced the peculiar sensations experienced by one visiting the old and time honored Universities of the Old World. As the student of History, upon visiting some ancient and historic scene, associates therewith some great deeds there accomplished or some great names with which the place is connected, so the undergraduate, retiring within the narrower world of his College, may be equally enthusiastic in associating with the scenes before him visions of those who formerly occupied his position, and who have since gone out into the world, and have there, by their talent, acquired honour for themselves and their University. Some may think, that McGill has not yet sufficiently gathered the moss and rust of age, to act as a very suggestive agent to those who may intend at some future period to be numbered among her Alumni; but there is at least one scene within her walls pregnant with associations, alike to graduate and undergraduate. Every

graduate has peculiar reminiscences upon entering "Molson Hall," in which he has undergone so much torture and in which, as a reward for unremitting toils he received the longed-for parchment; and the undergraduate, whilst reflecting possibly upon what he has to undergo, cannot abstain from thinking of the hundreds whom the "Hall" has known, but now knows no more. Such thoughts are greatly fostered by the inscriptions with which the desks are covered, a few of which will form a fine text for some rambling comments

To the uninitiated it may not be amiss to state, that "Molson Hall," which presents so harmless an appearance at such times as it receives the public, periodically puts on a much graver and more business like aspect. A strange metamorphosis takes place. Desks, disfigured with the ink and inscriptions accumulated during numerous examinations, are inserted amongst the seats, and in fact the whole hall assumes a more academical and scholastic air. Professors, who, contrary to their every day practice, have divested themselves of all charity and all mercy, are seen flitting about with countenances expressive of a firm belief in the natural depravity of all undergraduates; whilst students with hollow cheeks, dull eyes, and a general expression of weariness, come up with the air of martyrs to undergo the much dreaded examinations. "Molson Hall," new and modern as it is, can tell its little tale of the troubles and anxieties of undergraduates. Some, in anxious dread of finding themselves among the list of "plucked," have shown greater dexterity in committing their sensations to the inkstained desks, than in passing their examinations; some again, rejoicing over what is perhaps an unexpected victory, show a temperament much more jubilant, and others have, in some neat manner, expressed their regret at leaving "the dear old College." On entering the Hall one day the writer was immediately struck with a bit of art which displayed on the part of the artist a very vivid imagination. A student has carved upon the desks a pair of scales, in one pan of which is seen a mathematical paper of very insignificant appearance, whilst he has represented himself as having taken a seat in the opposite pan, when to his evident dismay,

"The latter quick up flew and kicked the beam."

Many there are, who are annually convinced of their insignificance, when, having pitted themselves with confidence against a mathematical paper harmless in appearance, they have been forced to yield to its specific gravity, or to some other quality equally destructive.

But another student has met with a more melancholy termination to his struggle with Mathematics, and, over a casket bedecked with the skull and cross-bones, has left the following inscription.

Hic jacet

Occisus est a P.—

R. I. P.

He has since been resuscitated, and if I mistake not has entered the healing profession, and is now, doubtless, in a position to reverse the order of things, and instead of being the object has become the agent of a slaughter, less harmless than that to which he himself fell a victim.

To the plucked there appears to be no consolation in this life, and—so numerous are the monuments—that one would judge thoughts of suicide to be frequently entertained as a balm to their misfortune. Doubtless such were the feelings of the author of the following ;

"*Sacred to the memory of H. J. who fell at the commencement of a glorious career, a victim to the ravaging effects of Chemistry.*"

Many of the present undergraduates can sympathize with our departed friend. An epidemic, similar to that to which H. J. fell a victim, semi-annually sweeps over the College, and numbers are as often sacrificed to its rapacious demands. After each visit the ranks of the Freshmen are left thinned and depleted, although in justice to the contagion we must admit, that its victims are invariably chosen with a great deal of discrimination. Passing on, I came upon a table on which a student had struggled with a Botany paper, and, if we accept his own statement, had been worsted. He consoles himself with the following ;

"On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden,
Where the Phænogams are blooming,
There is rest for thee.—Pluckee."

Our friend shows a needless despondency in thus banishing all hopes of rest on this side of Jordan, but even in these lines he has betrayed his love of nature, since paradise is to him, but a place abounding in Phænogams. Would he but apply himself, we might yet hear of him in the ranks of science.

The following I will leave to those to whom it will apply, satisfied that the emotions it suggests will be sufficiently vivid without any extraneous aid.

"*Sunt qui in honoris mathematicis se magnopere jactant.*"

Some poor fellow, who certainly did not belong to the above class, has left this question, which I will not undertake to answer.

Euclid, why wert thou born ?

A classical man has left the following ;

"Fac ut possim demonstrare
Quam sit dulce te amare,
Tecum pati, tecum flere,
Tecum semper * * * *"

That an undergraduate should entertain a thought such as that contained in the next inscription that met my eye, may appear strange even to those who have undergone examinations. The wish is certainly a relic of school days, but in this case it has been duly qualified, and I see in it no great depravity.

The examiner having been delayed, the student has been suddenly inspired with the hope, that he may have an additional day or two to make himself more thorough in his work, and has recalled the following passage ;

Utinam quidem !
Quod cum salute, ejus fiat, ita se defatigarit velim,
Ut triduo hoc perpetuo prosum e lecto nequeat surgere.

These are but a few of the many relics of past examinations. They are full of suggestive power, and to those who love to soliloquize will form fertile texts. In conclusion, I will give a few verses the work of some one about to graduate, in which is expressed very well what every graduate must have felt upon passing his last examination.

"In this old hall, how oft I've sat
In days gone by, a Freshman silly,
To quail before the glance of Pat,
And tremble at the voice of Billy.
Not up ! for answers at a loss,
Now I could give them in a caution ;
Ah well ! perhaps mutamus nos
As well as tempora mutantur."

"Gone are the good old days indeed,
Since here we sat, and swore, and grumbled,
Our neighbours papers tried to read,
And in our cribs for answers fumbled.
No more we seek the friendly aid,
And hope the answer 'll be a loud one ;
No more at eve, when punch is made,
Drink we the health of every ploughed one."

"Gone are the old companions true,
Friends of many a grind and revel,
Some gone abroad, at home a few,
Some pious, more gone to the devil.
Last of the band to day I aim
But to display my legal knowledge,
And for the last time sign my name,
A student of the dear old College."

A MONTREAL REVIEWER ON KANT.

"Sus Minervam docet."

Some time ago the *Montreal Gazette* published a series of pretentious essays by a writer who assumed the *nom de plume* of 'Kuklos.' These essays have now been reprinted from the *Gazette*, and have appeared in a number of well-bound volumes, nine or ten of which have found their way to the McGill College Library. Our curiosity impelled us to examine these performances, and to ascertain the merit of this paragon, who is being so loudly advertised in all our leading dailies. It is something so novel and unexpected to see the shop-keepers of Montreal turning their attention to abstruse metaphysical questions which have all along seemed so foreign to their tastes, that we have thought it might interest our readers to know what philosophical lights our city bids fair to produce, and what literary 'pabulum' is offered to the reading public.

But before calling the attention of our reader to these productions, we would have him remember that we do not regard them as in any way deserving of his notice; our only excuse for advertizing to them at all, being the fact that they have been so prominently obtruded on the public.

It is not our intention to pass in review all these, for we should despair of being heard through. It will be sufficient to examine one of them (the smallest), which amply illustrates the author's spirit and mode of procedure. We shall accordingly confine our remarks to the one which bears the modest title of "Supplement to Theology and Science, or the Rationalism of Metaphysics, being a Review of a book by Immanuel Kant, called Critique of Pure Reason, By Kuklos (John Harris)." The reader is at once offended at seeing a book of world-wide fame like the 'Kritik' of Kant, which revolutionized thought in Europe and marks an era in speculation, impudently designated as 'a book called Critique of Pure Reason'. Such an utter disregard of all literary *convenances* at the very

outset, does not speak favourably for the author. One is forcibly reminded of Swift when he affirms 'on the word of a sincere man that there is in being a certain poet called John Dryden, whose translation of Virgil was lately printed in a large folio, well-bound, and, if diligent search were made, for aught I know, is yet to be seen'; with this difference, however, that the ungracious sarcasms of the great satirist on his contemporaries are relieved by an inimitable raillery and sparkling wit, while the would-be castigator of Kant has no charms of style to redeem his incompetency in the treatment of the subject.

Whatever may be the value of his contributions to other branches of science, Mr. Harris is certainly not seen to advantage in his first attempt to dabble in Metaphysics. To understand his position and disposition, we must remember what, according to him, is the criterion for determining whether a science rests on a sound basis. We are told that the question to be asked is: Does this science rest on Natural and Revealed religion as its basis, and does it conform to the rules of Theology? Mr. Harris will hear of no exceptions, and if the rules of Theology ran counter to the truths of mathematics, he would unhesitatingly renounce his faith in the latter. As may be presumed, he has found Kant guilty in this respect, and has undertaken to guard the reader from the pernicious influence of the Critique, by making overt all the 'unsense' which it contains from beginning to end. Hear his opening lines:—"In noticing this book, bringing it again, perhaps, prominently before the public, and calling attention particularly to certain passages in it; we do so under protest. We protest against any supposition that the book in a correct sense belongs to science; or that it has in itself any value to recommend its reconsideration by the public. On the contrary it has been, and still is, directly and indirectly, potent for mischief." A little lower down, Mr. Harris feels sure 'that the perusal of a few pages by a person whose mind is in a naturally healthy condition, must usually produce a degree of mental nausea sufficient to protect the ordinary individual from direct injury.' Mr. Harris, let us remark in passing, may rest assured that for a similar

reason his own effusion must remain perfectly harmless.

After offering some interesting conjectures to explain how it is that such writers can ever exert an influence on any sane mind, our critic proceeds to 'an analytical examination of that which, assuming the work to have any pretension to scientific arrangement, must be considered the commencement proper of the treatise,' to wit, the chapter on "Pure Reason as the seat of the Transcendental Illusory appearance," of which a part is quoted (page 212, sqq. ed. Meicklejohn). To this Mr. Harris, appends his own elaborate elucidation, 'for,' he adds, 'as they are put before the reader, we do not think that they can be fairly considered to convey any definite, intelligible meaning.'

Now every one admits that the Critique is at times very unyielding, and that the carelessness of Kant about style is often troublesome, but Mr. Harris could not have made a worse choice than this, as the passage which he denounces is perfectly lucid throughout, and does not present the slightest difficulty to an intelligent reader of Kant. Nowhere, perhaps, is the distinction so sharply drawn between the three all-important words: *Understanding*, *Judgment* and *Reason*, on the sense of which the whole of Mr. Harris' discussion turns. Being unable to understand Kant's meaning, he at once concludes that everybody else must be as dull as himself, and that the Critique could not by any ingenuity, be made to yield the slightest sense. Would it not have been better for him if, before attempting to bespatter such a man as Kant, he had condescended to make himself acquainted with the meaning of the words employed by his author? If he had only read the most elementary history of philosophy, in which the critical philosophy is presented in a more popular form, he would not have made such a display of ignorance as the present. But Mr. Harris prefers to ignore the Kantian sense of a word, and either 'opines' that it means so-and-so, or else refers to his great authority, Johnson's Dictionary! One can hardly divine what put such a *mauvaise idée* into his head. Why, of all dictionaries, he should select the one, which (as is well-known)

is pre-eminently defective in philosophical definitions, and probably contains no greater blemish, must remain a mystery. It may be remarked, however, that, *mutatis mutandis*, there is some affinity between the philosophical tenets of Dr. Johnson and those of Mr. Harris, and that the refutation of Berkeley by the former is on a par with the attacks on Kant of the latter. With such a guide and by the light of his own intellect we are not surprised to find that he makes a fearful jumble of the three words above cited. It would be useless to flounder with him through several pages (pp. 8-23,) of what he is pleased to call an 'examination,' since, as before mentioned, the whole question depends on the (Kantian) sense of these words of which he has admittedly not the slightest conception.

We pass, then, to the formal accusation which the reviewer brings against Kant. The offences are enumerated as follows.

1. Disregard of verbal science.
2. Disregard of the rules of reason.
3. Disregard of the primary laws of Theology

As regards the first two counts, we have already seen what a competent judge Mr. Harris has shown himself. Besides, Mr. Harris saves us the trouble of considering these, by observing that it is the third offence which is all-important, since 'from it the first and second primarily arise!' It is 'the great offence—that which is fundamental to the others and out of which they have arisen!' It is this which has all along been rankling in his mind, and his virtuous wrath now breaks forth. His horror is unaffected.

What! a man who had the presumption to examine the validity of a proof of the existence of God—who headed whole sections of his book thus:—"On the impossibility of a cosmological proof of the existence of God," "Of the impossibility of a Physico-theological proof," "Critique of all Theology based on speculative principles of reason!" To Mr. Harris the very idea that a man should employ his reason to verify and establish theology, is a blasphemy. One might very properly ask him what *is* theology. Is it something given? Is it something which we apprehend independently of our reason? Or is it something which

the human reason has constructed out of the elements presented to it? If so, how can the study of Theology be said to precede that of reason? In short, Mr. Harris has gone back to the philosophy of the Dark Ages, and his watchword is that of the school men: *credo ut intelligam*. In consequence of a total misapprehension of Kant's sole aim, he has gone the length of doubting the sincerity of that philosopher's profession of Christianity, and says it would have been better 'if Kant had professed pure Atheism, denied the existence of God, disputed the facts of creation as such' &c., &c. Can it be necessary to tell Mr. Harris that Kant's sole purpose was just to establish Religion on a firm and immovable basis, and, by ridding it of all false support, to roll back the tide of scepticism which overwhelmed all Europe in his time? Must we tell him that while Kant proved the validity of Religion from the nature of man's Practical Reason, he most reluctantly abandoned the hope of making it accord with the freaks of his Theoretical Reason? Need we say that it is precisely this feature in all Kant's works, this 'ogling at theology' in all he says, which has given so much offence to the Empiricists? But if Mr. Harris would only take the trouble of reading an author properly before presumptuously criticising him, he would learn that Kant's religious and moral system is by far the purest which philosopher ever devised, and that Christianity never had a more loyal or more intelligent defender.

But we have inflicted enough of Mr. Harris on our patient reader. We are well aware that to undertake the defence of Kant from such ridiculous attacks is quite otiose, and we fear that in taking up the gauntlet we have presented the same appearance as the doughty don Quixote when he laid lance in rest against the squadron of sheep. In writing thus at length, however, we have also had in view other critics of Kant, whose high standing gives them a stronger claim to our notice. Strange to say, after all that has been done of late in England by writers of eminence to correct the erroneous notions about Kant which have obtained there too long, there are yet those who

cling to the old prejudice, and who raise the cry against Kant as a dangerous enemy of Religion. We are carefully put on our guard against the 'subtle scepticism' which pervades his writings, and we are taught to look at Kant's works in a most unfair light. When one sees men of repute and position writing in such a strain, one cannot refrain from energetically protesting against this perversion of Kant's doctrines. We find in such writers an entire misapprehension of his most glaring and best known dicta, and mis-statements which any tyro could correct. We have only this to say, that the sooner these moralists return to Kant, the better for them and for the interests of Religion. Germany has taught us many a lesson already, and if, instead of spurning her teaching and setting up crude systems which are powerless against scepticism, some of our metaphysicians would but accept a few more wholesome precepts from the same source, their speculations would stand some chance of living after them.

CLASSICS AND MATHEMATICS VIEWED WITH
REFERENCE TO THEIR BEARING ON LIBERAL
EDUCATION.

Few subjects have so often been discussed in College Periodicals, as that of the relative merits of a Classical and a Mathematical training in the development of the human mind. Yet often as it has been discussed, the writer feels that considering its importance, no apology is necessary for again treating the subject.

In one of his conversations with Dr. Johnson, Boswell remarks in reference to Gray's "Bard" that one of its chief merits is that the Poet plunges at once into his subject. Whether this be a merit in a poet or not, it is certainly a quality to be desired in a writer with only the limited space of the Gazette at his disposal, and we must therefore proceed at once "in medias res."

The most frequent boast made in regard to the Science of Mathematics, is, that it is the most exact of all the sciences and the only one that leads to infallible conclusions. Now, if passing by the chain of deductions, we consider

the objects to which the science is directed, we find that it is confined exclusively to space and to the relations of quantities. If we ask the mathematician how he arrives at these conceptions of space, he can give no satisfactory answer, inasmuch as it is a question which is still a matter of dispute between the different schools of Philosophy. Therefore if Mathematics starts with principles that are unknown or which are mere hypotheses, we cannot see how its conclusions can be claimed to be infallible or even how it merits the name of a Science, a fact long ago observed by Plato in his Republic. In consequence of the hasty assumption of first principles, we find in the Mathematician—when he reasons on matters unconnected with his favourite subjects, that is in the wide field of every day probabilities, in which he cannot make use of his easy process of connecting symbols—"a facility in the admission of data, a proneness to avail himself of principles sanctioned by imposing names and a tendency to avoid all discussion which might lead to an examination of ultimate truths or involve a vigorous analysis of the ideas." But a more immediate inference and one that bears more directly on the subject at issue, is that Mathematics merely exercises the understanding in regard to quantity alone, and that it therefore educates the least number of our faculties, and that too in the feeblest manner. We shall find still further, that when studied too exclusively, it has a tendency to derange the mind, in proof of which we need only look over the long succession of incapables, and of the illustrious obscure, in the list of Cambridge Mathematical Wranglers. It offers likewise, a barrier against the imagination, to such a degree, that a Cambridge Wrangler was heard to say that he could never read Milton "because he proves nothing"!!

The only beneficial influence to which this science can pretend, is the correction of a certain vice, and the formation of a corresponding virtue.

The vice is the habit of mental distraction: the virtue, the habit of continuous attention. Therefore as far as regards Liberal Education, or in other words the general and harmonious

development of *all* our faculties and capacities, Mathematics should hold a very subordinate rank.

Classics have held and will hold deservedly a high rank in the estimation of educationalists. The habit of translation from the ancient writers, evokes a clear appreciation of the distinctive characteristics of ancient and modern literature, and enriches the imagination with a perpetual influx of new imagery ideas and combinations. In it there is the difficulty of seizing the nearest equivalent phrase, of rendering the full spirit, or the beauty of the image without transgressing against the genius of the older tongue, the close adherence to the sense, the substitution of a kindred form of thought or word, all put to the severest test the resources of the student, and at once show his facility, taste, and judgment.

It has often been said that too close a study of classical models often deforms our style Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, all composed in Latin without any sacrifice of pure idiomatic Italian for latinized forms of expression. The noble thoughts of the Paradise Lost, are perhaps occasionally cast in too antique a mould. But if we turn to Oratory, was Canning under no obligations to his classical studies for the fastidious delicacy of his style, the high wrought tone of his speeches, and the harmony of his diction? Did the pages of Cicero or Demosthenes, cramp the bold unfettered simplicity of Fox?

Brougham used to relate that he composed the peroration of his celebrated speech, in defence of Queen Caroline, after reading Demosthenes through six times.

Macaulay, the greatest writer of the present century, and master of a style which was hardly ever rivalled, except by De Quincy, in his *Suspiria de Profundis*—was the best classical scholar of his time.

On the many beautiful images, thoughts and descriptions, which cluster like gems in the works of the ancient masters, we would like to dwell, but will merely make mention of a few which recur to our memory: the parting of Hector and Andromache, so well known to all; the concluding lines of the Prometheus

Vinctus ; the conclusion of the Agricola ; and the magnificent passage where Clytemnestra describes to the chorus the progress of the watch-fires that announced to expecting Greece, the Fall of Troy, which makes one irresistibly think of Sir Walter Scott's equally celebrated description in his "Lay of the Last Minstrel," of the bale-fires which announced to the Lothians a Border inroad of the English forces. The passage has been beautifully rendered by Bulwer in his Rise and Fall of Athens.

A gleam—a gleam from Ida's height,
By the Fire-god sent it came :—
From watch to watch it leapt that light,
As a rider rode the Flame, &c.

We can hardly think, that years of after toil and the cares of professional or public life, can wholly quench that "divinæ particulam auræ" with which one was inspired by the study of the classics in earlier years.

"Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem Testa diu."

One who has once been thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Classic Literature, must have the turn and character of his thoughts and arguments influenced by it, and when he seeks to convey his thoughts in language, though the stream be drawn from "the pure well of English undefiled," there may still linger in the draught some flavour of the Heliconian spring, and under the influence of Ancient Harmony, our rugged but noble language may sometimes mould itself into periods, in which may be entwined something of the melodious rhythm, and the incomparable introduction of those mighty masters of Thought and Language.

If the few hints which are scattered through the preceding remarks would lead the majority of our students to consider their education, as a harmonious whole, their College life not one of mere dull routine spent in irksome tasks, in 'poring over miserable books, and in "cramming" for medals and prizes, but as a means to an end as a system of mental culture, as a training fitting us nobly to do and bravely to act, sans peur et sans reproche in "life's broad field of battle,"—the end and aim of the writer will be accomplished.

D. C. R.

THE MCGILL GAZETTE.

Wednesday, March 1st, 1876.

It must afford matter for regret to all conscientious students, that so many of those who fill our colleges, and halls of learning, should proceed to a degree, and in a short time after graduation show but a confused remembrance of their college studies. Professional students while keeping up those branches which their life occupations render necessary to them, soon become unfamiliar with the other subjects with which they were formerly engaged ; and those who have for their object in entering upon a college life, merely the acquisition of what is termed a liberal education, seem, many of them, to bid adieu at one and the same time to their *alma mater*, and to the subjects they are supposed to have learned by her aid.

Now is it perfectly natural that a man, who on leaving college, commences the pursuit of a business or profession which requires all his time and energies, should forget many of the details of his old studies. His mind becomes so full of his present occupation, that all his knowledge, not in daily requisition, is soon stowed in out of the way corners, if we may be allowed the expression, and, when he suddenly wishes to recall some bit of information, he is disappointed to find himself unable to do so. This we say is perfectly natural. Still we do think that a man should remember more than the most general principles of the sciences with which he once endeavoured to familiarize himself. Now, though it is probable that as nothing in this world is perfect, the present system of education might be improved, (we do not pretend to suggest how) it can not be doubted, that students in a great measure have themselves to blame for the readiness with which they allow to escape them the knowledge which they spent so long a time in acquiring. Few students think enough independently upon their studies. They do not assimilate what they learn, and make it part and parcel of themselves. And now we come to the difficult question ; how shall one, the greater part of whose time is occupied in acquiring new facts, as a student's time must be, find opportunity for reflecting upon and arranging in his mind the facts he has previously learned ? For unless a

student has the power of acquiring facts very rapidly, by the time he has finished his actual learning, he is fatigued, and the last thing he will do is to begin to ponder over the work of the previous day.

It seems to us, and the idea is not original, that the students should form clubs for the discussion of the various questions which arise in the different classes they attend. The clubs should have but a small number of members, and there should be one for each main branch of study in the College curriculum. Thus let all students who are particularly interested in philosophy form a club and discuss the questions that occur from time to time in the lectures. The form of the meetings might be varied by some members occasionally preparing an essay on the subject for the evening, and allowing the others to base their discussion on the various points touched upon in the essay. And there are many other ways in which the exercises might be modified so as to preclude all possibility of monotony. We have no doubt that such a club would be of great value and interest to the members. Again take classics. The members of the classical club might read some interesting author, and discuss the meaning of disputed passages; they could prepare essays on peculiarities of style, character, and sentiment displayed by the author under discussion. They might also read aloud merely the text of the easy authors, and the members would by this means become gradually familiarized with the sound of the classics as well as with the appearance of the words in a book, and would learn to think in the dead languages. Thus their progress in this branch of study would be materially advanced.

In the same manner clubs might be formed for the study of all the other branches. And as the courses of the club would generally be parallel, or nearly so, with the courses of lectures they would be of material service in preparing the ordinary class work, while they would be especially valuable as a means of preparation for the examinations. Now if students could be induced to undertake some such system as this, each member of a club

would derive solid benefit from it. For as we have already said, the reason, in our opinion, that men so soon lose all but the very rudiments of a College education, is because they rarely have any incentive to reflect upon and make truly their own, the knowledge imparted to them in the lectures. The work of the lecturer is over when he ceases to speak; the true work of the student only begins at this point. But at present almost any pretext affords sufficient ground for postponing reflection, and revision grows more and more difficult the longer it is deferred.

We hope that clubs may be formed in McGill at as early a date as possible, if not this year, next year; and we feel confident that, were they once put into active operation they would not soon become extinct.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY GLEE CLUB

The opening concert of this Club took place on the evening of Friday the 11th. in the William Molson Hall. Notwithstanding the unfavourable weather which doubtless forced many who would otherwise have attended this concert to remain sheltered at home, there was present quite a large audience, and the Club should feel both complimented and encouraged to think that on such an evening they were able to draw so many to hear them.

The University Glee Club was organized only some three or four months since, and in consideration of the short time available for preparation for a concert, we must deem the effort of last night, a decided success. High praise is due to Mr. Houghton the conductor, for the careful training which he has evidently bestowed upon his club. And we may add, has bestowed not in vain. The club sings fluently and easily, well together and in good time. The quality of tone which was produced at the concert was generally very good, though at times it was not pure. The principal defects were such as must be attributed to want of time for preparation, and to comparative inexperience in singing together, viz:—a want of contrast between the *pianos* and *fortes*, and occasional false notes. However, it would be demanding

impossibilities of the conductor to require him to overcome such difficulties as these in the short time at his disposal; and indeed in some of the numbers, as for instance in the two glees, "*All among the Barley*," and "*Since first I saw your face*," both very well sung, he appeared to have nearly overcome them already.

The solos were on the whole well done. And several well deserved *encores* were responded to. We must in fairness take exception to Mr. Houghton's piano solo, which, possibly because it came so early in the evening that the performer had not warmed to his work, was not given so well as we expected it would be. He missed the sentiment of the composition, and played throughout in an exaggerated style. As an offset to this however his song from Sterndale Bennett's "*May Queen*" was well rendered and he played his own accompaniment remarkably well. Mr. Cochrane's solo would have given greater satisfaction had he not unfortunately commenced to play before he had [correctly] tuned his flute.

Still, when all is said, we must end, as we began by congratulating all the performers on the success of this concert. We feel sure that this Glee Club is the beginning of a really excellent and valuable society of which all students of the University should feel proud, and which they should encourage and aid by every means within their power.

UNIVERSITY LITERARY SOCIETY

Feb. 4th—The resignation of Mr. Robertson as Secretary was accepted. A vote of thanks was passed to him for his services and Mr. F. D. Monk was elected in his stead. The following programme was then carried out:

Reading—Mr. Henderson, Debate—"Is the acquisition by England of the Khedive's stock in the Suez Canal likely to prove advantageous to Great Britain?" Affirmative: Messrs. Mac-Master and Trenholme; Negative: Messrs. Hall and Monk.

Feb. 12th—The subject for debate was: "Should the Legislative Council of Quebec be abolished?" Messrs. M. Lonergan, R. D. McGibbon, and Trenholme spoke on the affirm-

ative and Messrs. DeSalaberry and Corrigan sustained the negative. The Debate was adjourned for one week.

Mr. Hutchison then moved seconded by Mr. Robertson "That this Society do declare itself dissolved."

This motion, notice of which had been previously given, had excited much interest, as was evident from the large attendance. The mover in an able speech explained that his motive in making his motion was to reconstruct the Society on a purely political basis. Mr. Robertson succeeded him adducing many cogent reasons for the adoption of the motion and was followed by Mr. C. H. Stephens on the same side. These speakers were frequently interrupted and at one time there was great excitement. An amendment was proposed but was declared out of order. An adjournment of the discussion for one week was moved, and a three months hoist proposed in amendment, both being lost. The previous question was then moved and carried in the affirmative, and then followed a motion for adjournment which was lost. Finally Mr. Hutchison's motion was lost on a close division and the meeting adjourned at about half past eleven o'clock. Altogether the meeting was very interesting. The opponents of the motion made no remarks against it, preferring to defeat it on technical grounds.

We are glad to see that the discussion of Literary and Scientific subjects has not been eliminated from the exercises of the Society, and we trust that in future these subjects may receive more attention than has been accorded them in the past.

Feb. 18th—The debate on the abolition of the Quebec Legislative Council was continued. After much discussion the question was decided in the negative by a majority of one.

Feb. 25th—Reading, Mr. R. W. Wilson. Debate:—Should members of Parliament be indemnified for their services?

ATHLETICS.

We were much pleased to notice in the *Toronto Nation* of Feb. 18th an article on the above subject written in a manly spirit and

which, coming from the source it does, cannot but be of considerable influence in furthering the interests of athletics in Canada.

The writer thinks, and thinks rightly, that athletics exert a great power in the suppression of the vice of intemperance and he draws a comparison between the way in which billiard saloons and taverns on the one hand, gymnastic and athletic clubs on the other, are supported by the young men of our large cities. That the former are the best sustained is a fact which the *Nation* deplures, and which will be deplored by every right-minded citizen. The reason of this is ascribed to the fact that 'there is no leisured class among our young men who can devote themselves continuously, to the cultivation of athletic sports and give the tone to the pursuits of the young men of the country generally,' and the writer goes on to say that to the employers of young men, and to the directors of schools and colleges we must look for the encouragement and fostering of sports and games.

That the former of these, namely the employers of youth do not do their duty in this respect is too well known to need any argument whatever. Young men in mercantile pursuits who practice Cricket, Lacrosse, Football and other games, are too often looked upon by their masters as bestowing attention for athletics which should be given to money-making, etc., and so these sports are not only not encouraged and fostered, but absolutely frowned upon and to a certain extent deprecated. But if we enquire into the matter, it will invariably be found to be the case that a young man who does devote his leisure hours to cricket, boating or any other sports is generally much more able to do his daily work satisfactorily than one who, evading such pursuits, spends his evenings or holidays in manipulating a billiard cue or in talking gossip with congenial spirits. In our schools and Universities more attention is being yearly given to all sports, and the result is that a large percentage of medallists and honour men are those who have gained distinction on the Cricket field or at any other outside sports. These facts are evident to all and we hope that the press generally will follow the manly and spirited example

of the *Nation* in giving support to the practice of athletics in Canada. A healthy tone will thus be given to the matter, and possibly more leisure granted to our young men for the enjoyment of outdoor exercises, which, more than anything else will develop in the Canadian youth vigorous constitutions and well regulated bodies and go far to attain that oft quoted but by no means effete *summum bonum* "mens sana in corpore sano."

CORRESPONDENCE.

We have been requested by the conductor of the Glee Club to publish the following letter, received by him.

MONTREAL, February 12th, 1876.

DEAR SIR,

Like all your friends present at last night's Concert, I enjoyed the successful entertainment which your club then provided.

While there, the idea occurred to me, and in mentioning it to others I found it generally approved, that the time has come for the opportune revival of the Founder's Festival of past years, which has unfortunately fallen into disuetude.

One chief cause of this was the difficulty then found in providing a programme of a character somewhat academic, while also varying an entertainment which, in its recurring provision in our time had, people said, become monotonous.

With your club organized and capable of much, the task appears easy, the former difficulties disappear, and I beg, as an old graduate, and as a somewhat active member of too many Founder's Festivals' Committees, to recommend the matter to your consideration.

If the idea be entertained I will be happy to give you such information of the former Festivals, modes of subscription, cost and other details as may yield you the benefit of our experience, of what success we had, and may enable you to avoid our errors.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully.

R. A. R.

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE VISITOR

The annual report of the University authorities to the visitor, His Excellency the Governor General, has been published, and we deem it not out of place to make a few remarks upon its most interesting features.

The first point to be noticed is the rapid increase in the number of the students attending the various Faculties of the University. According to the report of last year, the total number of students during the session 1874-75 was three hundred (300), while during the present session, there are three hundred and fifty two in attendance upon lectures. In the words of the Report, "the increase of students in the University is very gratifying, and testifies to the increased desire for a liberal education, and to the growing reputation of the University not only in the Province of Quebec, but beyond its limits". No one can doubt that the work done by the University is more than proportional to the funds at its disposal, and we venture to express a hope that ere long the endowment fund may receive substantial additions. Mention is made of the great loss sustained by the University in the death of William Molson Esq. of Montreal.

Mr. Molson was a member of the board of Governors, and owing to his munificent donations at a time when most needed, his name will be forever indissolubly connected with the History of the University. To him we owe "Molson Hall," the museum, the chemical class-room, and the laboratory. By him, aided by his two brothers, the Chair of English Literature was endowed, and, whenever funds were necessary for any specific object, he was a ready and liberal subscriber.

Notice is also taken of the demise of Sir William Edmund Logan, LL.D., F.R.S., a fellow of the University, and the benefactor to whom we owe the Logan Chair of Geology.

After treating of the various changes, and the increased number of students in the Faculties of Law and Medicine, the report turns to the Faculty of Arts, and first, mentions that important work, which is now, we believe, completed, viz, the publication of a catalogue of the Librar-

ry. The want of such a catalogue has hitherto been much felt, and we feel certain that all those who may hereafter have occasion to make use of it, will feel grateful to those who have laboured so assiduously to bring about its completion. That portion of the Report which speaks of the contemplated erection of college halls upon our own grounds, will be read with a great deal of pleasure by all those students who have occasion to board in the city, but without undertaking to dictate, we would venture to suggest that the time has already come for the erection of such buildings. In treating of the Science Department, the Report to a great extent resembles those speeches from the Throne in which the country is promised a great deal of legislation that, in reality, is never accomplished. We are well aware of the difficulties to be surmounted, before this department can be established on a satisfactory basis; but there are some minor reforms to be instituted before the course can ever be popular with the students. We have repeatedly heard promises of the erection of a work-shop and of a separate building for the accommodation of the science students, but as yet nothing appears to have been done, nor have the more glaring abuses been rectified. However we have every confidence in the good intention of the authorities and hope the experience of the past will aid them in their plans for the future.

Last, but not least, the Report refers to the restoration of the monument covering the remains of the Founder, and to the public spirit of Mr. R. A. Ramsay, M.A., in contributing the means necessary for the much needed repairs. Situated as the monument now is, it daily calls up to the students the memory of the man, to whom they owe an unbounded debt of gratitude, as the Founder of all the educational advantages they are enjoying, and it will tend, if a monument is needed for such a purpose, to perpetuate his memory for all time to come. But now that McGill can number her graduates by hundreds we think it would be but a fitting testimonial to the memory of the Founder of our "Alma Mater," were the Alumni to erect a more pretentious and stately monument over the remains of James McGill.

PERSONALS.

It gives us pleasure to record that Mr. H. T. Rainville, Professor of Civil Law has been elevated to the Judicial Bench.

'55, Mr. E. J. Hemming, B.C.L. is at present conducting an investigation into the working of the Prothonotaries' Office in Montreal.

'71, Mr. D. Macmaster, B.C.L. will have the honour of conducting the first case presented before the newly established Supreme Court of Canada.

'62, Mr. F. E. Gilman, M.A., B.C.L., is a Candidate for Municipal honours in Montreal.

'63, Mr. L. Cushing, M.A., B.C.L., was lately presented with an elegant silver service at a complimentary dinner tendered him by the electors of Argenteuil County.

ITEMS.

The Harvard advocate complains that the number of Electives taken in Mathematics has decreased from 170 in '73-4 to 90 in '75-6.

Oxford and Cambridge played a match at Football last month the former winning by four goals to none.

The N. Y. Nation has a circulation of 180 copies in Harvard College.

It is not probable that Oxford and Cambridge will row at Philadelphia next summer. The difficulty is that between Henley (at which their presence is indispensable) and the Centennial regatta there is not time enough for a trip across the Ocean and training adequate for an international race.

Durham College (Eng.) will not send a crew to Philadelphia either.

The University at Berlin has four hundred distinct lecture courses.—*Cornell Era*.

The Canadian Football Association has received a challenge from Harvard. If the challenge be not accepted by the Association, the Montreal club will take it up on its own account.

The Rink has failed! After mortgaging the ice and allowing the Superintendent to take out his wages in skating, all debts have been paid. The ice was clear only four or five times and the venture will serve as a warning to future students.

The truth of the adage "Our touch of nature makes the whole world kin," was charmingly brought out that slippery morning, when a blue-eyed school girl sat down hard among her books, and remarked 'd-n it" Ex.

Prof.—[giving a long sentence in English] "Please translate that into German, Mr. C." Mr. C. "There are three words, I don't know," Prof.—"Which three?" Mr. C. (who is disposed to be accommodating,) "Oh! any three you wish"—*Cornell Era*.

A lady of the Senior class being asked by the professor of physics the "duration of a spark," replied, (perhaps from experience,) "One evening."—*Ex.*

Mr. Varin, on behalf of the Law Students presented to Professor Rainville, an address of congratulation on his being appointed Judge. The worthy Professor made a suitable reply.

The Catalogue of the books in the Library is now ready.

Complaints are made by the Librarian, that the walls of the Reading-room are disfigured by students writing and scribbling on them.

It is reported that the Janitor's Christmas present will be handed to him about the first of March.

Whenever we see a short gentleman with a tall lady, we are reminded that man was created a little lower than the angels.—*Ex.*

EXCHANGES.

The *Dalhousie Gazette*, always contains well written and very readable articles. The last number is no exception to the general rule.

"Mr. E. M. Senseney, late local editor of the *Collegian*, did not return after the holidays. * * * Mr. E. W. Bedford, is a talented young man, and we have no doubt but that he will make the local columns as interesting as they have been heretofore." *Central Collegian*.

If Mr. Bedford is the talented young man he is represented to be, we presume he will find this task sufficiently easy.

The *Eurhetorian Argosy* confirms the old saying that appearances often deceive. Appearing as it does in a light pink cover, and possessing an exceedingly learned title, one might expect the *Argosy* to be a readable paper, but such is not the case. The *Eurhetorian Argosy* is filled with the veriest trash badly printed, and altogether may be regarded as a failure.

The *Harvard Advocate* makes its appearance under a new staff of Editors, Though traces of are visible, still the *Advocate* is well written. We observe that the subjects are not so excessively athletic as under the old regime, and this must be regarded as a decided improvement.

"We very much regret that an unavoidable accident prevented the issue of the number of the GAZETTE due on the 15th inst.

To make amends however, this issue is much larger than ordinary. We hope indulgence will be extended to us by our readers and advertisers, and we on our part shall endeavour to prevent the recurrence of such another accident.

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