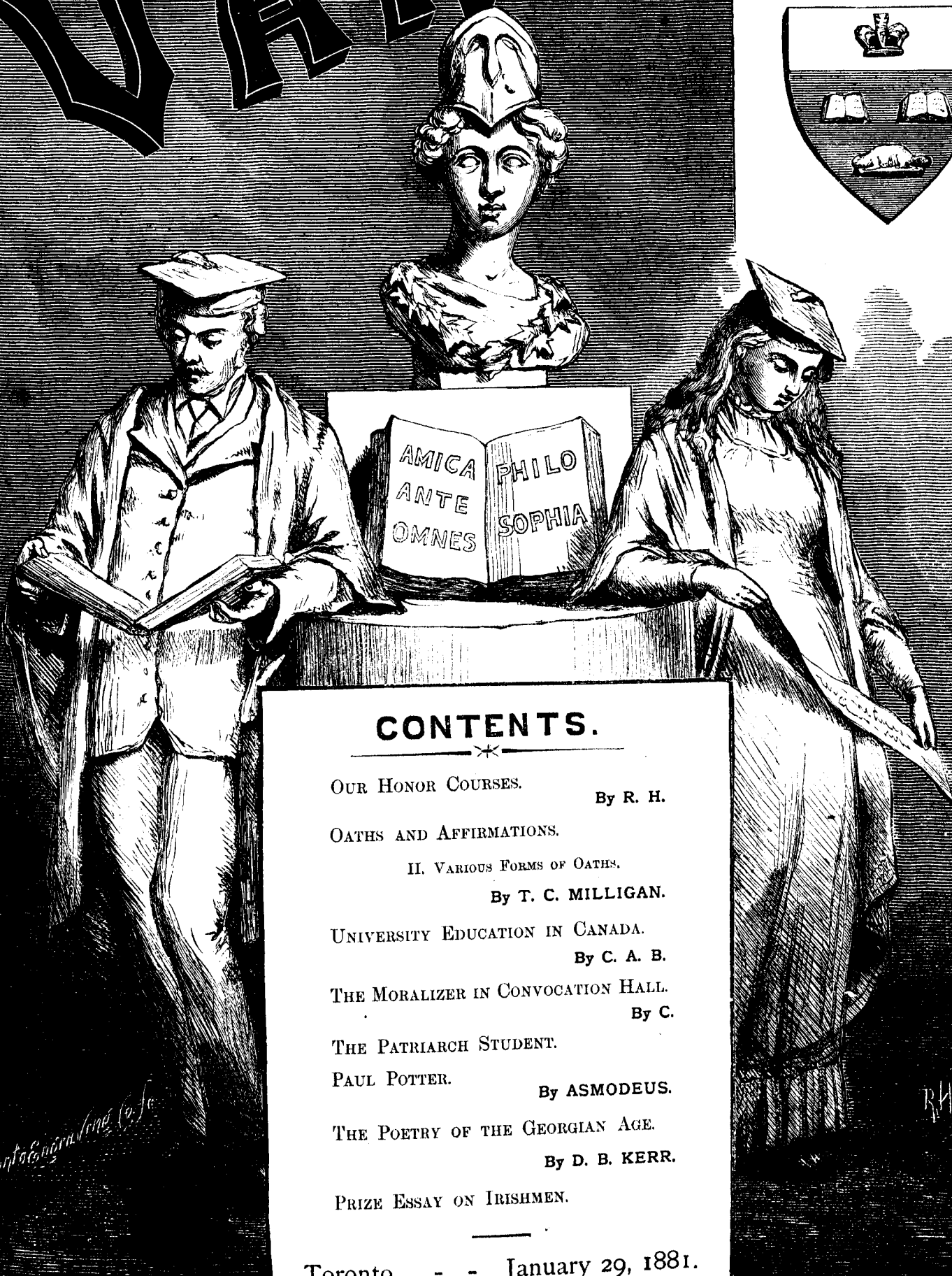


THE UNIVERSITY



CONTENTS.

OUR HONOR COURSES. By R. H.

OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS.

II. VARIOUS FORMS OF OATHS.

By T. C. MILLIGAN.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN CANADA.

By C. A. B.

THE MORALIZER IN CONVOCATION HALL.

By C.

THE PATRIARCH STUDENT.

PAUL POTTER. By ASMODEUS.

THE POETRY OF THE GEORGIAN AGE.

By D. B. KERR.

PRIZE ESSAY ON IRISHMEN.

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THE ' VARSITY:

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF

EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY POLITICS AND EVENTS.

Vol. I. No. 15.

January 29, 1881.

Price 5 cts.

OUR HONOR COURSES.

There exist to-day in the United States and Canada two classes of colleges. On the one hand, we have those institutions which profess to send out their graduates in possession of a good general education. They afford the student no particular opportunities for perfecting himself in any specialty, claiming that this should rather come after graduation. On the other hand, we have colleges with their curriculums divided into various Honor courses, to one or more of which students are permitted, for the last two or three years of their course, to devote almost exclusive attention. It is to the latter of these groups of course that the University of Toronto belongs.

The object of the present article is to set forth a few of what, to an undergraduate mind, appear serious defects in the plan at present pursued in our University; with the hope that some one, whose experience fits him for the duty, will be able to point out an efficient remedy. At first sight, it will probably appear self-evident that, at least for one who intends making the study of a specialty his life work, our Honor course system is the best. But we fear that not even this can be conceded. Many men come to college before they have quite decided what their life work is to be, and a curriculum which affords an imperfect opportunity for this most important matter of choice is surely sadly deficient. And here our institution is certainly at fault. At matriculation, a man is supposed to have some knowledge of Classics, Mathematics and English. Now he may at once select one of the first two or Modern Languages as his Honor course. But we must remember that he has had no opportunity of taking up Mental and Moral Philosophy or Natural Science; while even in regard to the other three, the student would be much the better of a more intimate acquaintance, before making this most important choice. It is therefore possible, that in devoting his attention to Classics, Mathematics or Moderns, he may miss something for which he would be much better adapted. In his chosen subject he may meet with failure or merely-moderate success, while in one of those on which he has never had a chance to enter he might have made for himself a lasting name. The student, however, may act otherwise. Having taken Classics, Mathematics or Modern Languages during his first year, he may change his course to Mental or Natural Science. But here the same difficulty meets us. If he takes one, he knows nothing of the other; and still lacks opportunity for an intelligent choice. It is still possible that he may unknowingly pass by the subject for which he is much the better suited, and in which his success would be much more pronounced.

Let us consider, now, the effect of what we may call the general education system. By the time a man has graduated in this course at any first-class college, he is in possession of at least a pretty fair knowledge of the subjects that go to make up a well-rounded liberal education. He has had a fair opportunity of testing his ability in each of these, and of forming an opinion as to which study he will be most likely to attain success in. Then, if he finds that he possesses decided talent for any particular subject, he may make that his specialty and devote his life to it.

We have so far proceeded on the assumption that the student intends making the study of some special branch his life work. When we take the more common case of a man who intends pursuing one of the more ordinary walks of life, one who intends to be a worker rather than a scholar, a man in business or in one of the learned professions, the aspect of the question changes somewhat. It then presents itself something like this: "Is a man better fitted for the duties and the enjoyment of life, by receiving a general or a special education, *i. e.* of course apart from his direct

professional training." And here we have met a question that wiser minds than ours have not yet settled. But we may at least take this much for granted—no one can in these days pretend to a liberal education or to the name of a cultivated person, who is not tolerably conversant with classical and modern literature, and who cannot converse intelligently on the leading scientific questions of the day. Now, under our system, unless an Honor man happens to be a genius and takes two or three departments, his acquiring such an education is a virtual impossibility. The small portion of pass work which is tacked on to an Honor subject, has as much time devoted to it as the student supposes will enable him to get a percentage of 34 or so in marks for the examination, and no more. Nor is this necessarily the result of laziness or indifference. Under the keen influence of competition for a scholarship or medal, it is natural and unavoidable that each competitor will put no more time than is absolutely necessary on any subject but his Honor one. The consequence is that the small portion of Classics or French or Science, as the case may be, that is attached to the Honor course in the first two or three years, is crammed up for examination in as short a time as possible, and forgotten before the completion of the course. An Honor man in Science may go forth with a B. A. from Toronto University with a knowledge of Classics insufficient to enable him to read even simple passages in those languages, except by the laborious process of grammar and lexicon, or with the aid of a translation. An Honor man in Classics or Mental Science may graduate knowing nothing, so far as his course has been concerned, of the great scientific problems that occupy the foremost place in the literature of the day and in the minds of some of our greatest men.

We condemn the Honor courses, then, from the fact that the education they give is a cramped, narrow and imperfect one.

But it may be said: For you who wish a general education, there exists the Pass course. This has not been forgotten. But the fact that it is a Pass course is just the objection to it. We, who favor the general education system, are as ambitious of honors as those who prefer a special department. Why should a man, who wishes his knowledge to be wider than he can make it by taking any of our Honor courses, be placed at a discount. "He is only a Pass man," said of an applicant for a situation, puts him at a disadvantage at once. So far as the outside world knows, A, who has taken almost full marks on his examination papers, is on a level in scholarship and ability with B, who has squeezed through on his percentage of 33½.

What we want is not a Pass course, intended as a sort of back stairway to a degree, along which those may go who have not the requisite ability or industry to take Honors; but a general course in which there will be as much work as there is in any Honor department, which will have as high a percentage necessary for promotion or graduation, in which there will be scholarships given, if they continue to be offered in the other Honor courses, and in which a man may acquire such an education as will best fit him for succeeding in professional work and enjoying literary leisure.

R. H.

OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS.

II. VARIOUS FORMS OF OATHS.

'If you scratch a Turk you catch a Tartar.' This is an ethnological illustration of the fact that it is not necessary to go very deeply into the history of a race, a language, a political institution or a custom, before the evidence makes it more and more apparent that at no

time have they been able to cast themselves free from their former selves, and that they preserve in their later forms, if we have but the data to trace them out, relics of what they have been. This we may vaguely explain as due to a natural conservatism. Those who like a physical explanation may say that it is involved in the persistence of force.

An entirely new idea is almost an impossibility. The French Revolution—that object of so much blind love and of so much blind hatred—appeared to those who took part in it to be the beginning of an entirely new order of things, to be the beginning of the reign of ideas. Napoleon summed up the spirit and guiding principle of his age when he said: "*Je suis ancêtre.*" But, when viewed by De Tocqueville in the calm light of historical retrospect, the transition, though undoubtedly great, was not so great as many thought. The present intellectual change, which appears to be so great to us who stand at this particular curvature in human progress, will seem to future generations, looking back upon the line of their march, not much greater than many others.

The same thing holds true in lesser matters. To illustrate: The pawnbroker's sign of the three golden balls—the arms of Lombardy—testifies at once to the fact that the Lombards were at one time the bankers of Europe, and that the occupations of money-broker and pawnbroker were once undifferentiated. The barber who puts out a striped pole as the sign of his craft is probably unaware of the fact that it shows that formerly the offices of hair-cutting and doctoring were combined. It was over this pole that he threw the bloody cloths which the frequent lancing of the age rendered so necessary. Perhaps—though no one is bound to believe this—the uneasy feeling which most of us have in a barber's chair may be an inherited dread. The Canadian village boy who sends money to aid the missionaries in the conversion of the savages who wear charms about their necks which they worship, perhaps himself wears a piece of camphor in a bag around his neck—a form of fetichism which, though it has yielded somewhat to medical science, still remains.

The connexion of the above with the subject to be considered is obvious. A perfect treatment of any one form of oath would take it up and trace it back to its origin, showing how it was modified by the successive beliefs of the people, and where it preserved traces of its original character. This, with the majority of the forms of oaths, we can only hope to do in the vaguest manner. Mr. E. B. Tylor—not Taylor as the compositor insisted on having it—has treated the English form of oath in an almost-ideal manner. In Scotland, the witness holding up his hand toward heaven, swears to tell the truth as he shall answer to God at the Day of Judgment. The English form of oath is very different: it is sworn on a halidome (A.S., *hāligdōm*), a holy thing. The practice of swearing on a halidome was very common, and can, I think, be traced to nature-worship. In Aracan, the witness swearing to speak the truth takes in his hand a musket, a sword, a spear, a tiger's tusk, a crocodile's tooth, and a stone celt to represent a thunderbolt. Here the connexion with nature-worship is evident. Livy narrates how Hannibal swore hatred against Rome, laying his hand on the sacred things; and Tennyson tells how Harold, having sworn to recognize William's claim to the English throne, was, after he had taken the oath, shown the sacred relics over which he had, unwittingly, placed his hand. The halidome on which oaths are sworn in England is the Bible. This can be traced back to the Jews, who were accustomed to swear laying their hands on the book of the Law. This, with the Christians, gave place to the Bible. Thus Euagrius swore to the Emperor Theodosius, "laying his hand on the holy book of the Gospels." The practice of holding the book and kissing it, which seems to have been of entirely-Christian origin, was of early introduction. Arsenius, an ancient bishop, records of Ingeltrude, wife of Boson, that she swore an oath to Pope Nicholas in these words: "I, Ingeltrude, swear to my Lord Nicholas, the Chief Pontiff and Universal Pope, by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these four Evangelists of Christ our Lord, which I hold in my own hands, and kiss with my mouth."—Du Cange.

The imprecatory formula, "So help me God!" is of entirely-different origin. It was Teutonic-Scandinavian. Corresponding Latin and French expressions are, from their late date, but translations of the Germanic originals. This imprecation had its origin in a belief in the divine interposition to aid men in doing right. The explanation comes from Iceland. Ulfiot returned to Iceland from Norway, A.D. 928, and there instituted the old Norse judicial oath. It was sworn on a metal arming, which was kept by the godhi or priest, who reddened it with the blood of the ox sacrificed, and the swearer touching it, said, "Name I to witness that I take oath by the ring, law-oath, *so help me* Frey, and Niördh, and almighty Thor, as I shall this suit follow or defend," &c. Thus the history of the form of oath in the English courts involves, in brief, the history of the English people.

A very common form of oath, was that by weapons. The meaning of this is not at once evident. The example from Aracan, quoted above, seems to indicate death by weapons, while the following, from the law of

Manu, seems to indicate their loss, "Let the Judge cause a priest to swear by his veracity; a soldier by his horse, or elephant, or weapons; a merchant by his kine, grain and gold; a mechanic or servile man by imprecating on his own head if he speak falsely, all possible curses." Symbolic forms of oaths were very common. In our own courts a Chinaman is sworn by breaking a saucer, while he prays that if he does not tell the truth his soul may be cracked in like manner. An ancient form of oath both in Greece and Rome was that of slaying an animal, very generally a swine, and imprecating the curse of heaven, in case of falsehood, to fall as inevitably on the perjured head as death was the fate of that victim. Very frequently the hair was first cut off and distributed among all who were to share in the obligation. Livy gives the following account of the treaty between Rome and Alba, on occasion of the encounter between the Horatii and Curiatii. The pater patratus spoke as follows: "Hear, O Jupiter! hear, thou spokesman of the people of Alba! hear, O Albans! as those particulars openly, first and last, have been recited, out of those tables, without fraud, and as they are most rightly understood here to-day, the Roman people will not first fall away from the compact. If they should first, with public counsel and malicious fraud fall away from it, do thou, on that day, O Jupiter, so strike the Roman people, as I strike this swine: and do thou strike them so much more as thou art stronger."

Another very common form of oath was by raising the hand. The Scotch and French raise the hand when swearing. The savages of the Brazilian forests to confirm their words raise the hand over the head. This I conceive to have given rise to what has ultimately become a very common practice. Nothing could be more impressive than for two men to stand, one with his hands within those of the other—as in the oath of fealty—and raised above their heads, imprecating the dreaded thunderbolt upon their heads if they broke faith. Frequency degenerated it into a hand-clasp. Thus Xenophon represents Cyrus as saying to Gobryas, "On these terms I pledge myself to speak the truth, and give my right hand to thee and take thine." Diodorus Siculus says expressly, that the most binding of all pledges of faith among the Persians was by joining of hands. So also marriage pledges are by joining of hands. When two friends have quarrelled, they shake hands on reconciliation. Very often, also, hands are shaken on a bet if no stakes are put up. This origin of so common a practice is, however, not much more than conjectural.

T. C. MILLIGAN.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN CANADA.

The system of education in Canada is allowed to be one of the most admirable in existence. By our Free Public Schools the doors of education are thrown open to all children of school age; the High Schools and Colleges train our youth, at a merely-nominal fee, for the counting-house desk, or prepare them for the University. In few countries are the facilities for education so widely diffused; and the numerous children of both sexes who attend our schools attest that the opportunities afforded are by no means neglected.

When we remember that in 'the good old days' of Chivalry Learning was confined within the cloistered walls of the Church, where the monks, like so many Vestal Virgins, kept the sacred fire aglow; when we remember that every English nobleman in those days used to employ a scribe, since writing was regarded as a superfluous accomplishment, and a gentlemanly education consisted in straddling a fiery steed, bearing a goodly lance, and knowing how

"To tell a whispering tale in a fair lady's ear."

And when to these we add the recollection of the holy horror which greeted the introduction of the art of printing; how the crimson types were by many looked upon as life-blood drawn from living veins, and transmitted in weird characters to the parchment by the dread printer who assuredly was in league with the Evil One; when all these circumstances are considered, we cannot but be forcibly struck in contemplating the great revolution which the world has so happily undergone during the intervening centuries. Nowadays the poorest laborer in his cottage will often be able to step up and sign his name in as clear round flowing a hand as the clergyman at the parsonage, and to read the daily paper with as much ease as his more luxurious neighbor, who sips his claret and toasts his toes before the cheerful fire in the stone mansion opposite.

Great, however, as are the advantages we enjoy through this system of education, which must necessarily have a most wholesome effect on the manners as well as morals of the masses, we cannot but notice a very general tendency to indulge in a highly classical and scholarly education which, though at a more advanced stage would prove highly beneficial, must now, on the contrary, if continued, prove disastrous. For while at some future period—when Canada shall have established herself as a nation of power and weight, entitled to the consideration of other nations—it might be the means of producing a literature as brilliant and profound as any country possesses, this high-pressure education may now prove injurious, by causing too many to rush into the professions as the only

suitable means of gaining a livelihood, when it is most necessary for us to build up our trade and commerce, our farms and our general resources. If students, after taking their degrees, would be willing to return to the business which their fathers had advantageously carried on the unnecessary course would be by no means injurious; but unfortunately this is not the case. Our farmers' sons after graduating at their University disdain the thought of returning to guide the ploughshare on the paternal farm, and flock to the professions, which are already all but swamped; the majority and the wiser portion discover their error and return before passing their final examination; the remainder rush blindly on, enchanted by the thought of making themselves gentlemen (no doubt a most laudable object), in a few years find themselves barristers, though generally in the ranks of the 'briefless.' Those for whom a University education is most necessary, most advantageous, are our litterateurs, our scientists, our professional men and our men of genius, whoever they may be.

Let it not be thought, however, that I advocate the non-education of any class; for as Mr. Goldwin Smith, our eloquent journalist, rightly observes, "education is the sheet-anchor of democratic institutions," and I have no wish to undermine any principle on which that system of Government is founded. So long as a people are uneducated and uncultured, you may impose on them to any extent almost without their even suspecting it; but when you begin to educate them, instead of dictating to them what they shall do, you develop their growth of thought and speech, and they begin to rely on themselves. Then, Tyranny and Oppression, art thou doomed!

Let us, however, take one example of our rural friends from the numerous instances which we might quote. Beginning at the University, we notice that in general he matriculates at the verdant age of twenty-three, and in four or five years succeeds in passing his B.A. examination. Swelled with importance at the sight of the ermine on his gown, and utterly scouting the idea of returning to the farm on which his father and grandsire before him spent their days, milord Bumpkin comes to the conclusion that he has a soul above the ploughshare, and writing to his respected daddy, says he thinks nature intended him for a professional man. Daddy is charmed by the thought of having his son a Q.C., as his extravagant fancy pictures him. After a solemn conference, it is determined that "James shall be a lawyer." Forthwith James is articulated, and in due time called to the Bar; then does his head swell with pride. After wading through Blackstone and other legal luminaries, our friend has reached the summit of his ambition, and with great *éclat* removes to the town nearest his father's farm, where his friends receive him with open arms. He immediately establishes himself there, displaying his shingle in the front street, to the admiring gaze of his fellow-townsmen, and awaits with eager expectations his first client. Alas, how long he has to wait! At length his dreams of honor and ambition bringing naught but poverty, he drops out of sight. Far be it from me to wish to keep any rising young genius, whatever his social position may be, from obtaining whatever advantages he may from a university education; but we must remember we cannot all be successful professional men any more than we can all be prime ministers, and just now the professions are overcrowded, while the farms are deserted. Let each man, therefore, whatever position he occupies, act in that way by which the welfare of the country may best be promoted. If he has a farm to cultivate let him consider well whether it is not best for him to cultivate it rather than enter upon the unknown, where the prizes are few and the competition so great that all the weaker must go to the wall.

C. A. B.

THE MORALIZER IN CONVOCATION HALL.

I sat in College, in the Hall of Sighs,
My papers on the desk before me laid;
Back in my chair I lean'd and closed my eyes,
Sooth'd by the murmur scratching goose-quills made.
I'll sit and dream for some brief minutes, I said,
And moralize on human hopes awhile.
How vain and weak are present moments weigh'd
With past and future! In the lengthened file
Of years how brief! though brief, how winning in their smile.
I hear beside me the weary Pass-man sigh;
He's leaning on his hand—his aching brow
Owns foul defeat, but conquers agony,
Although his few ideas refuse to flow;
And though he doth full well and sadly know
That those sad blots upon his papers thrown
Are mingled sweat and ink—which make a show

That well may make a kind examiner groan,
Or petrify the same, or turn him into stone.

He knows it all, but heeds not, for his thought
Is flying through the mis-spent past away
Among the hours of morning, when he sought
The sleep that merry nights must snatch from day.
He tugs his lanky hair; and I daresay
If time return'd, he'd spend it differently.
Or, who knows, p'raps he'd be again as gay,
And let the giddy hours in mirth pass by.
It matters not; he will not get the chance to try.

Our days misspent may never more return;
Time never rolls again his backward wheel;
The gods are not so kind that we should learn
To undo error thus, and wisdom steal.
The hours, with their weight of woe and weal,
Are gone forever, though we wish them back.
But now to wandering thoughts adieu! I feel
'Tis time to do my papers, for alack!
By moralizing much e'en I may get the sack.

C.

OBSERVATIONS BY THE PATRIARCH STUDENT.

AN association has lately been formed in the University under the title of 'The Conspirators' Club.' I believe an applicant for admission will run least chance of a blackball if he belongs to the Residence, which is, by the way, the theatre of its present operations. The rumor that the members have been making large purchases at Mr. Rawbone's fire-arms establishment is a miserable *canard*. In fact, the laudable object of this laudable institution is an open secret, and I am in a position to assure anyone curious about the matter, that 'shooting-irons' have been entirely discarded as far less serviceable than certain chemical products manufactured in the neighborhood of the University College. An effort has been made to suppress the Club, which was ludicrously abortive, and only added to the prestige of the 'Conspirators,' by investing them with the character of martyrs. The combination is too strong to be tampered with, and the system of organization adopted is too well suited to circumstances to be vulnerable to weak-kneed attempts at throwing impediments in the way. The righteousness of the cause may be questioned, and the alleged grievances which led to the formation of the Club are possibly exaggerated; but the fact remains that amongst the undergraduates a powerful association has suddenly, as in the legend of Pallas Athênê, been born in full life and strength. To come down to details would be superfluous, because they will be more or less known to the students by the light of events that are shortly to take place.

* *

ACCORDING to a San Francisco paper, the youth of California is degenerate in its physique. "And the saddest proof are the sloping shoulders and toothpick legs of the average university student." Of course, this is too much for the *Berkeleyan* (University of California), who promptly takes up the cudgels and denies the allegation *in toto*. The writer of the above dastardly attack is sharply reminded that he was not present at certain athletic exercises, where "he would have seen the utter untruth of his statement." Having once been a student myself, I naturally take sides with the aggrieved party in this case, and am prepared to maintain that the shanks of the young bloods born on the western confines of the great Pacific slope are not suggestive of toothpicks. (At the same time, from what I have seen of young men hailing from that quarter, I may *sotto voce* tell you that in my own private opinion the 'Frisco editor is not so far wrong as the *Berkeleyan* would have us believe.)

* *

THE other day, at a meeting of the Literary Society of Manitoba College, a recitation was given by Mr. R. G. McBeth, entitled, 'I have drunk my last glass,' which, according to the *Winnipeg Free Press*, was well executed. If so, Mr. McBeth must be a model and steady young man, as that sort of thing is usually done in rather a shaky manner.

* *

"LAST month Mr. Adair, a freshman, distinguished himself by reading before his class an essay on 'Woman.' . . . Mr. Adair is a precocious freshman and should be encouraged." *Wittenberger*. Yes, I suppose so; but some people consider that when precocity takes this direction the odds are ten to one in favor of the encouragement having been lamentably misplaced.

EXCLAMATION from first year undergrad plucked at Christmas in Iliad: 'Is this a dagger that I see before me?'

* * *
THE College Council locked the gate,
'Twixt half-past six and seven;
Lest whisky drinking residents
Should smuggle in 'the leaven.'

A daring benefactor, sworn
Authority to scout;
Went at that lock with a screw-driver,
And took its inside out.

* * *
TRINITY'S new cheer is Trinity! Trinity! Trinity! Ge Whittaker!!

* * *
SOME estimable people are sorely exercised over the intention of the Conversazione Committee to set apart a room where refreshments may be had at a charge. The committee has been told that it therein departs not only from precedent, but also (in reference to payment) from the most approved rules of social conventionality. Both objections are on the score of custom, and, as the character of the average undergraduate is somewhat uncustomary, it may be assumed they will receive scant notice. As regards putting a price on ices and coffee, the question might very properly be raised whether it is in the least inappropriate at an entertainment to which admission is by ticket. The answer that the tickets are complimentary is not quite correct. The Debating Society, which holds the Conversazine, sells the tickets at its disposal, and the buyers are at liberty to do with them as they please. Hence persons who receive tickets from their friends in the University may rightly regard them as complimentary from these friends, but not from the givers of the entertainment.

So far as having refreshments at all is concerned, the idea, as I said before, is a first-class one, and should be carried out even if the spirit of punctiliousness is offended. A renovating beverage after one's powers of attention have been tried by watching experiments and by examining the contents of a museum, will in all likelihood be not unacceptable. People who have reached the age in which abstemiousness is natural are apt to make too small an allowance for the voracity of youth; they are apt to forget (though I don't think I ever shall) that the school girl's capacity for light lunches often puzzles her young acquaintances of the more rugged sex, and that the Canadian student becomes melancholy if 'something between the acts' is not within reach.

* * *
THE latest thing in boots—stockings. *Index and Chronicle*. The latest thing in stockings—something much nicer.

* * *
THE *Echo* of January 17th makes a clipping from *Brentano's Monthly*, and surmises that it "may be interesting to our athletes." I should like very much to show this clipping, for it is a notable one. We are told by this modest *Monthly* that a Greek fellow, called Milo, "would bind a cord around his head, and break it by the swelling pressure of his veins. An ordinary meal for Milo was twenty pounds of meat, as much bread, and fifteen pints of wine." The story is doubtless one of those that gentlemen in the Classical course could prove by a ready reference to an ancient author or two. Refer away as much as you please; it is a 'whopper,' and a barefaced and astounding one at that. In starting with Milo, the writer is naturally not long in warming up to his subject. In the next paragraph the poor weak mortals of this generation are informed that "Maximinus could squeeze to powder the hardest stone with his fingers, and break the leg of a horse with a kick." I don't know what follows after this; somebody else who has stronger nerves can come down and read the sequel, if he has such depraved curiosity.

* * *
THE large number of students which daily frequents the new gymnasium promises well for its ultimate success, and in a measure repays the committee for their efforts. The rooms are heated by hot air, and the gas fixtures are well placed. Along the south wall of the working room runs a horizontal and inclined ladder; at the west end are a sliding seat, rowing machine and two chest machines, each with two pulleys, and weights of seven, ten and fourteen pounds. A series of fine rings swing parallel and close to the north wall, and hanging from the beam running across the middle of the ceiling, on either side of the feat and vaulting bars, are a pair of flying rings and a trapeze. There are climbing pegs on the uprights, and a swarming rope is another of the pieces of apparatus. The parallel bars are near the east wall. Proper mattresses, &c., have also been provided. In the boxing room are twenty pairs of dumb-bells, running from two to seventy pounds, twenty pairs of Indian clubs, and in racks around the walls are twenty pairs of bar-bells. The supply of

foils, masks and gloves is complete. A portion of the space in this room is occupied by washstands. The dressing-room has thirty-six double lockers for the working toggery of the athletic undergraduates.

NATURAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.—Last Wednesday night Mr. MAGILL, B.A., read a very concise and elaborate paper on 'Chemical Theories,' which was followed by an abstract from a paper entitled, 'Dust, Clouds and Fogs,' read before one of the November meetings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The herbarium of the Association has been considerably augmented by the specimens presented by Professor Macoun, of Albert College, selected from his collection made last summer when journeying over the North-West Territory with the Botanical Survey.

VARSITY MEN.—Three gentlemen from the Kingston University were mercilessly plucked at the Christmas and May examinations here last year after having put in a year at attendance on lectures. The *Queen's College Journal* remarks complacently that these enterprising undergraduates have 'returned to their early love'—of course without any allusion to the catastrophe which made the return advisable. That the 'leavings' of our examinations find so respectable a refuge is a discovery which is most acceptable to one's charitable feelings.

WE are pleased to see that the Senate have so acceptably filled the office of Vice-Chancellor of the University by electing for that position Mr. William Mulock, the senior member of the firm of Messrs. Mulock, Tilt, McArthur & Crowther, of this city, for the unexpired current term left vacant by the lamented death of the late Chief Justice Moss. We are always pleased to see the governing body of the University gather to itself and encourage with fitting prominence those young, practical and energetic men of the world, who, though young, are not inexperienced; though practical, are not devoid of enthusiasm, and whose energy does not tend to rashness—men whose own careers are stamped with success, and who have the happy faculty of imparting a measure of their success to all their undertakings. We have every reason to believe that the newly-elected Vice-Chancellor belongs to the class of men that we have described, and that he will worthily fill the place that was so worthily filled before. Mr. Mulock was Matriculator from the Newmarket Grammar School into the University in 1859, and after a successful University career he graduated in 1863, carrying off the gold medal in Modern Languages, since which time he has been employed in the profession of the law, and is at the head of a legal business which is now one of the largest and most lucrative in Toronto. He has always been a warm and consistent friend of the University, and an active worker for her best interests. We congratulate Mr. Mulock, and we congratulate the University.

THE Hon. Judge Casault, Professor of Commercial Law in the Quebec Faculty of Law, has been appointed by the Laval University to deliver a course of lectures this winter on the subject.

THE death at his father's residence in Toronto, on last Saturday evening of Mr. Lafayette A. McPherson, '73, silver medallist in Modern Languages, is deeply deplored by his old University friends. From the High School at Hamilton to the University, his career was a most creditable one. After going through the usual ordeals which lie at the entrance of the legal profession, he joined the firm of Messrs. Burton, Walker and Bruce, in Hamilton. A severe cold, however, which followed his escape from the burning Royal Mail Line steamer on Lake Ontario, impaired his health, until he was obliged to succumb to the slow but incurable disease.

PAUL POTTER.

LITERALLY TRANSLATED FROM THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE.

A passionate potter once lived in a lane;
His soul was choked with his love of gain.

The love of gain, like a noxious weed,
Choked the springs of his heart indeed.

The love of silver, of gold, and brass,
Was strong in this pottering chap, alas!

Oft he'd count, as he worked his clay,
How many shekels he'd made that day.

Many a maiden, and widow fair,
Laid for the potter an artful snare;

But the potter sneered, with an ugly grin,
Slapping his pockets so full of tin :

"When the bird is watching, in vain the net,
And I havn't got to my dotage yet.

"As soon as possible get you hence!
Or I'll raise you over the garden fence."

From the taunting words of this awful cad,
The maids and widows would fly like mad.

With quivering lip, and with fluttering heart,
They'd 'cut their sticks,' and with spead depart.

* * * * *

A serving maid had this potter, Paul ;
A maiden, white-armed, young, and tall.

From her shapely head to her tiny feet,
A perfect woman, revised, complete.

The shadowy depths of her sweet brown eyes
My feeble descriptive power defies.

And her creamy throat, and her broad white brow—
But I cannot stop to describe them now.

Suffice it that *Bridget*, the maiden's work,
Was treading clay for this sneering Turk.

With kilted dress she would tread the clay,
In sweet serenity, day by day ;

With patient heart, 'neath her tattered clothes,
And the pipe-clay clogging her shapely toes.

Oft they talked, as she trod the dirt,
Daintily kilting her ragged skirt.

He 'spun her yarns' of alarming size—
Little he recked that the yarns were lies—

Of cannibals, theatres, captive kings,
And the foreign fish that so sweetly sings.

Her great eyes flashed with a wondrous light,
At hearing of dames in their diamonds bright,

And the terrible tourney, where clanking steel
Made knights and esquires uneasy feel ;

And the blood-stained sand, and the reeling fray,
The haughty heralds, and banners gay.

Alas, for the potter ! love's feathered dart
Pierced through the steel of his hardened heart ;

And he drifted out upon passion's sea,
Thralled and enslaved to a high degree.

The heart of the potter as tender grew
As the kindly one that belongs to you.

The weeds in his heart, that flourish amain,
Wilted, never to bloom again.

He ceased to swear at the widows and maids,
And even encouraged their artful raids.

Bridget he clothed in the latest fashions,
Feeding her too on expensive rations.

He decked her in fine imitation pearls,
Making her envied by all the girls.

Oft he persuaded her to peruse
The 'Graphic' and 'Illustrated News' ;

And pointed out in the colored prints,
The bilious green and the yellow tints.

Alas, for the potter ! He little thought
That Bridget was 'playing the fish' she caught ;

He little knew of her mad flirtation
With Noakes, a clerk at the Union Station.

He deeded his property into her hands,
His stocks, his government bonds and lands ;

His houses, his real estate and shares,
His pigs, his poultry, his cows and mares.

I hardly think that my pen is equal
To telling my readers the painful sequel.

Artful Bridget and artful Noakes
Skipped, like a couple of artful folks.

And now, in luxurious domesticity,
They reap the fruits of their dire duplicity

MORAL.

Warning take, from this fate of Paul's,
Ye whom the love of gold enthral !

Never sneer in a woman's face,
But show her the door with a 'knowing' grace.

ASMODEUS.

THE POETRY OF THE GEORGIAN AGE IN ENGLAND

The literature of a nation is always closely allied with its historical evolution. In times of domestic peace and prosperity a corresponding placidity and grace mark literary productions. Novels and poems are written, exhaling the delicious charm of home-life. Many great masters of language busy themselves with criticism. The world stops to count its riches. But it is in ages which behold the death-throes of ancient systems and the birth-agonies of new, that the atmosphere is found favorable to the growth of literature of the highest order.

Such an age dawned with the battle of Marathon ; such an age in modern times was that of Elizabeth ; and such, though to a less extent, was the age of George the Third. That long reign witnessed two great revolutions—a revolution in literature followed by the terrible political revolution, which obscured the close of the last century in a black cloud of anarchy and death. New thoughts were busy in the brains of men. The infinite possibilities of human happiness came like a divine suggestion to many. The poets, as was natural, were charmed with those lofty conceptions of human brotherhood and human perfection. In France these ideas were represented by Rousseau. In England the gentle soul of Cowper gave expression to them in his own pure and pious way. In Scotland the fiery nature of Burns clothed them with the irresistible ardor and potency of song.

Along with these social ideas came still another idea, another love, the love of nature, and the endeavor to express it in poetry—an endeavor which at last received fulfilment at the hands of the most promising genius that the world has seen born during the last 300 years. But before the day of Keats, nature unveiled her beauty, in some degree at least, to Cowper, to Burns, and to Wordsworth.

In reading Cowper we are struck with the charming landscapes which that lovable poet gives us. What a pleasure he takes in meadows strewn with blossoms, in moving brooks, and in the murmur of trees ! And his love of winter scenes is as genuine and delightful.

The sympathies of Burns, in all other things more intense than those of Cowper, were found so in this respect as well. Take for example the famous verses, *To Mary in Heaven*, where, after telling of his meeting her for the last time by the "winding Ayr," he proceeds thus :—

"Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene.

"The flowers sprung wanton to be pressed;
The birds sung love on every spray,
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day."

Here the splendor which arrays the external world is an effluence of the poet's own mind.

In Wordsworth's youth, nature, as he tells us himself, haunted him like a passion:

"He murmured near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own."

But these divine feelings passed away with youth; he grew more and more didactic, and the books which he found in the running brooks, and the sermons which he gathered from stones, were long and very dull.

A great service will have been done for lovers of poetry when some competent person who is prejudiced neither for nor against Wordsworth, that is to say, who is neither a Wordsworthian nor a Shelleyolater, shall choose from among his poems those worthy of preservation. The volume which Mr. Arnold lately gave us, with the assurance that it contained only that which would serve and not disserve Wordsworth, retains, it seems to me, a great deal of very worthless writing. What is beautiful in Wordsworth's poetry is surpassingly beautiful; but its quantity is singularly small. In this residue of beautiful work the external world appears divinely transfigured, glittering, to use Gray's noble phrase, "with orient hues unborrowed of the sun." There is magic, both natural and spiritual, in that often-quoted lovely stanza:

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face."

Wordsworth certainly at no time before or after wrote anything so divine.

This great poet was nowise in sympathy with the revolutionary ideas of his age. His long and peaceful life was spent chiefly in the Lake-country, far removed from the passion and bustle of the world, while year after year slipped away in a pious intercourse with nature. The fruit of the sweet lessons learnt in this school are seen in such deep and wise poems as Resolution and Independence, Ruth, The Fountain, and The Highland Reaper. And though the vast mass of his work is fatiguing to read, yet on turning to these poems and a few others like them, one cannot but assign to him the praise which he so greatly desired, to rank with those

"Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,
The poets who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

As little affected as Wordsworth himself by the political changes and ideas of his age was Coleridge. His best poems are dreams with weird lights thrown across them; visions of wild and unearthly beauty. Like Wordsworth's, his good work is small in bulk; but it is unique in its peculiar qualities. The poetry of Coleridge puts completely aside the problem of existence. It is allied with no creeds, moral or political; it takes no note of the manifold joys and sorrows of human life; it appeals not to the heart, nor to the intellect, but to the imagination. It is for this reason that such very diverse estimates have been formed of Coleridge's place in the poetic art. Critics like Mr. Swinburne, themselves possessed of a rare imaginative faculty, consider Coleridge to be one of the greatest poets in England. Others again, like Mr. Matthew Arnold, who are not gifted with free imaginative power, but who are exquisitely impressed by the thoughtful and gracious melancholy which accompanies the years that bring the philosophic mind, find in Coleridge but little on which the soul can repose. Hence it is, that in his list of the foremost English poets since Milton, Mr. Arnold omits the name of Coleridge, but retains that of the drawing-room scribbler, Moore.

A far warmer spirit than than that of Coleridge reveals itself in the poetry of Keats. The mark of this great master has deeply scored our literature. It is discernible in the graceful verses of the present accomplished poet-laureate. It is no less discernible in the divine creations of Hawthorne. No other English poet, except Shakespeare, ever had such a love for all kinds of beauty, as Keats. He had the sculptor's passionate worship of form, the painter's adoration of rich coloring. All his senses were developed to the utmost. Nature evermore brought to him some new joy.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Such are the words with which he concludes the richest lyric in the language—words which contain an image of his mental character. His was certainly a pleasure-loving temperament; yet his poetry undoubt-

edly has, as Mr. Arnold says, the accent of the high and genuine poets—of the pious poets, who sang in lays not unworthy of Phoebos. As an instance of his power in dealing with nature, I may quote a stanza from the Ode to a Nightingale:—

"I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves."

The matchless beauty of the last line cannot but be felt by everybody.

With Keats the list closes of the poets who, though great, were not fully representative of the age. When we come to Byron and Shelley, we meet with men who understood and sympathized with their time, who were great by personal character as well as by poetic genius. The idea of social regeneration then in vogue laid hold on these impressive spirits, and made them genuine poets of the 19th century—not merely sweet singers like their fellows. And this circumstance has given an importance to Byron, which he will not continue to retain after the course of time shall have led men into new tracts of thought. Great and manly as he was, he does not belong to the order of the true and sacred poets.

With Shelley it is otherwise. His poetry is *sui generis*—a revelation in a way that no other poetry can be said to be. His manner of thought, his style, the melody of his verse, all are his own. He had no precursor in literature, he has had no successor. Some idea of his standard of excellence in poetry and of what, in his best moments, he himself achieved, may be got from his own words: "Poetry" he said, "redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man."

It is instructive to note that the great poets of that age—Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Wordsworth—were all optimists. The reverse is the case with the poets of our own day. Like Hamlet, they have lost all their worth. This goodly frame, the earth, seems to them a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, this brave, o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fires, appears no other than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. The poets are not alone in their dreary mood. They are but giving a voice to the diseased fancies of the times—fancies in which we too have a share. From our own age we can never wholly escape. Its tone of thought, whether joyful or sorrowful, is the mould in which we must think and feel. But we can learn from the past a wisdom that will brighten the present, a joy that will interpenetrate our lives with its own radiance.

And the writings of those great poets of the Georgian era are full of that wisdom, can give us that joy. They lead us to nature and to beauty,

"Whispering in enamored tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells
And summer winds in sylvan cells;
[Having] learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voiced fountains,
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest note of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and [they] knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound,
Which, driven in its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way."

D. B. KERR.

PRIZE ESSAY ON IRISHMEN.

BY OUR OWN PRINTER'S DEVIL.

IRISHMEN is a great people. They says Bedad, Begorra, Bejapers, Bejasus, Betheholypoker, Bemessowl, and lots o' other Be's. Irishmen is always gallant to the fare sects. Which the Irishman as would lift his hands to a woman exceptin' in the way o' kindness, etcetura, etcetura; but which a Irishman occasionally takes a lively jump on his wife, and gently cheers her up wi' the toes o' his best week-day boots.

Irishmen wear large shirts. Sometimes a Irishman's shirt may be well developed about the collar, and very scarce about the tail. Which the Irishwoman named Biddy, she said, says she, "Pat, me bhoy, in connection wi' that same shirt there's, something less than meets the naked eye."

A Irishman he says to me, says he, "Will you thread on the tail av me coat?" Which I threaded on the tail av his coat, an' I knocked the crown out av his hat; and he shouts, "Bedad, an' if ye do that twice ye

won't do it a second time." An' I says, says I, "The curse o' Cromwell on ye." An' the Irishman he runs away to the wars, which we shant see him again until he returns very drunk and covered wi' glory, and wanting some ould woman to lend him the loan o' her gridiron.

Irishmen when they is in the North o' Ireland—the bloomin' black north—they works and does well, and makes linen, and builds ships and things. But when they is in the West o' Ireland they sits at home, starving o' hunger an' cold, on the top av a sack o' pertaters and in front o' a great peat fire made o' coals—with nothing to cheer their droopin' spirits but a couple o' cows, a few pigs, some score or two o' fowls, and a keg o' whisky. Then they curses their landlords, and expects corn to grow without a-sowin' o' any seed.

Irish servants is very perlite. A Irish master he says, "Pat, ye know, this won't do; Phil McCarthy he tells me as you was drunk yesterday." "He is a liar, sor." "But, Pat, I saw ye meself with me own eyes." "An' you're a liar, too, sor." Which the master, he bein' also perlite, he says, "Hurroo!" and knocks Pat down as flat as a flounder.

Irishmen likes Griffiths's valuation. So do I; but then, ye see, I can't get it. Griffiths he were a nice man, and he valued things fifty years ago, when there was no railways, when eggs was three d. a dozen, when pertaters was two d. a stone, and when good peat could be got for the stealin' of. Now that railways has trebled the price o' food an' fire, Griffiths's valuation comes in handy; and the only way to get it is to shoot your landlord. P. S.—First catch your landlord. Which it won't be very long when there will be no Irish landlords to catch.

Irishmen is downthrodden—by themselves. They has many wrongs—o' their own making. They is ill-used—by nobody. They has grievances—which they can't name. They kicks up rows—without any reason. They is very brave—when their opponents is unarmed. They is very generous—but beware. Mr. Judas Iscariot he were an Irishman—and generous.

Our Master he says one day "Thank goodness I have known one good Irishman in my time." And we all, with one voice, shouted, "Where is he, Master?" seein' as how we wanted to see this *rarey arvis*. Which Master he answered and said, while a tear bedimmed his half-drunk eye, "He are dead, my good men; he are dead. Go you and do likewise."

And we didn't go, seein' as how we are good boys and disobey our Master. Which, in conclusion, one o' our boys are a Irish boy, an' he disobeyed his father, an' ran away from him; and now that Irish boy he are the Parody o' the Probable Son. That boy can come to no good. He wastes o' his means by riotously eatin' o' plum-duff, and polonies, and hags-o'-mystery, which some folks calls them sassingers. Out o' gratitude to his parents and love for his country, that boy he swears—and don't he swear orful!—that he means to return to Ireland and hamstring his father's fatted calf.

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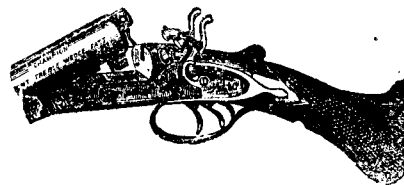
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