

THE VARSITY

A Weekly Journal of Literature, University Thought and Events.

VOL. IX

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, MARCH 30, 1889.

No. 18.

A RHYME OF THE LUGGER "RUBY."

—
CALM.

Our lug hangs limp from gaff to boom ;
And though no breath of wind we feel,
There's just enough to move the boat ;
We steady on with even keel.

Listless I sit and think to steer,
The tiller wagging in my hand ;
The sheet goes idly switching through
The water, as I watch the land.

The others lie down half asleep
And on the dunnage take their doze ;
We rock upon the oily swell ;
Deeper the drowsy languor grows.

The sun is hot above our heads,
The planks are hot beneath our feet ;
The breathless sky is hot and blue,
The water dazzles with the heat.

MOVING.

There's a crisp blackness over there !
A spreading, creeping, ruffling streak !
It nears us fast, 'tis wind at last ;
I feel it cool against my cheek.

The freshening breeze has caught the lug,
The trailing sheet comes dripping in ;
And now I feel its welcome pull
That tells me work and sport begin.

She bends and buckles to the breeze,
Before the brisk beam wind she flies ;
And to the starboard gunwale rail,
To keep her trim, I quickly rise.

The weather-stay is taut and stiff,
The lee-stay there is hanging slack ;
Our one great sail is straining full,
The white torn water shows our track.

The joy of speed, the joy of toil,
The joy of danger near we feel ;
The very eddies speak of joy,
That hoarsely gurgle round our keel.

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

A STORY WITHOUT A PURPOSE.

"Hello, Jim !"

"Yes, Uncle Tom?" and Jim softly closed the hall door, through which he had been endeavouring to noiselessly smuggle his toboggan. Indeed, it was an unforeseen collision between the latter and the door post that had first roused Uncle Tom to the fact that a steady and icy draught of air was establishing itself between the hall door and the parlour chimney, and passing uncomfortably near his bald head.

The old gentleman slowly surveyed the blanket suit and the moccasins of his nephew, who stationed himself in the parlor

door-way, standing first on one foot and then on the other in the manner common to youth when extremely uncertain as to the immediate future.

"Where are you off to in that garb, you young rascal?" was the enquiry which resulted from the inspection.

"Tobogganing, sir," answered Jim, with a bold face but sinking heart.

"Tobogganing, eh? Have you learnt your lessons, Jim?"

"Yes, sir. I learnt them all this afternoon," was the eager response, and Jim began to sidle towards the hall-door again, when he was brought to a stand by his aunt's taking up the cross-examination. She had been dozing over her knitting before the fire, but it seemed to Jim that her memory was preternaturally wide awake, when she said:

"Why Jim, you're not thinking of going tobogganing after staying home from school, and taking cough mixture every hour of the day?"

"You know, aunt, it says on the bottle that it will cure you in six hours, and it's ever so many more than that since I began to take it. Besides," he muttered to himself, "I wouldn't have taken it at all except that I wanted to go tobogganing, for I could have easily made my cold last over to-morrow."

"Please don't go, Jim," pleaded Aunt Sally; "I'll give you fifty cents if you will stay at home with your uncle and me."

Jim hastened to enter the fifty cents on the asset side of his mental cash-book, and then devoted his attention to giving an abrupt turn to the conversation, for he knew by many tantalizing experiences his uncle's incurable prejudice against bribery.

"Uncle Tom," said he, "did you ever toboggan?"

"Oh yes, my boy," answered the old gentleman, smiling mysteriously, "I have had a good many experiences on the hills. Did I never tell you about the last time I took a toboggan down?"

"No, do tell me about it," said Jim, sprawling down on the hearth rug with his chin rested on his folded arms, his neck bent back and his eyes fixed on his uncle's face, while his feet waved gracefully but negligently in the air.

Uncle Tom laid down his quaintly carved and richly coloured meerschaum pipe, folded his newspaper over his knee, and began:

"In my young days, as you may imagine, tobogganing was a different thing from what it is at present. Nobody had thought of these artificial slides, or if they had been thought of, nobody had ventured to introduce them, and so we used to go down the hills, rough or smooth, just as we found them. It seems to me those hills were like the life of a young fellow then; he had to take it, hard or soft, fast or slow, just as he best could. Sometimes he struck a stump and was upset and sometimes he arrived safe at the bottom. Nowadays, you boys have everything made safe and even for you and can run on without fear of a spill. I believe the old way was the best. It taught us to be men and take care of ourselves. However, I suppose you want to hear my story and not my moralizing upon it. To be a good tobogganer then meant something more than to have gone out three or four times, and to have somehow got down in safety. It meant to be able to handle your toboggan as a jockey handles a horse, to be able to turn it to this side or that with a motion of the body, to stick to it even though a bump or hollow should shoot it for twenty feet through the air, to be able to manage it kneeling and even standing. Your father and myself were considered two of the best tobogganers in town, and there was not a hill for many miles around that we

had not visited. The one, however, to which we devoted most of our attention at the period of which I am speaking, and where we held nearly all our parties, was the elbow of a ravine and sloped off in two directions, north and east. The eastern side was fairly gradual and was therefore patronized by all beginners and by those who gave themselves up to entertaining the ladies; while the north side, a savage and abrupt descent, was given over to those few adventurers who pursued glory rather than pleasure. Even these, however, usually warned themselves to the sport upon the 'Woman's Hill' (as they sneeringly called the latter slope), and so it was always late before anyone had the courage to break the solitude of the perilous 'Sudden Death,' for so we nicknamed the north slope.

"Accordingly, when it was observed that it was but seldom that those who started from the top of the 'Sudden Death' arrived at the bottom without an upset, it was not long before somebody discovered that these catastrophes always occurred in the neighbourhood of twelve o'clock, and of course the natural or rather supernatural explanation of this was by a reference to ghosts. When one unfortunate sportsman confided to me his belief that his upset had been caused by spiritual intervention, and related that his losing control of his toboggan was due to his eyes having been dazzled by an uncanny light, I was heartless enough to say that perhaps spirits *had* something to do with it. The tone in which I made this remark caused him to look at me for a minute and then to retort that he believed I was afraid to go down the 'Sudden Death' myself. I was engaged to your Aunt Sally at that time, and as I had cared far more for enjoying her society than for sustaining my old sporting reputation, I had stuck most religiously to the 'Woman's Hill,' and had never gone near the 'Sudden Death.' This taunt, however, could not be overlooked, and so I pledged myself to make the descent on the very next night. I would be on hand at twelve precisely, I further promised, in order that I might meet any ghosts that might inhabit that part of the world.

"I was working very hard in the warehouse then, for I was expecting the rise in my salary which was to enable me to get married, and so I did not get home to dinner till very late on the evening appointed for my venture, and it was not till after ten that I joined the party at the hills, feeling perfectly tired out.

"It was a lovely bright night, the trees casting black shadows across the pure gleaming snow, while a heavy bank of clouds in the north-west, looking white and innocent in the moonlight, seemed to be a continuation of the hills themselves.

"By about half-past eleven, however, those innocent-looking clouds had spread over the whole sky and were scudding across the moon, while the wind, but lately risen, came shrieking down the valley, making the poor old pines shiver and howl as though with fright.

"Most of the party were then for going home and tried to persuade me, for that night at least, to abandon the feat, for as such the recent turn of events had caused my proposed descent to be regarded. But I was in a state of almost feverish excitement, brought on I suppose by the thoroughly exhausted state of my nerves, and I said if no one would wait to see me through with it, I would stay alone. Aunt Sally, like the brave girl she was, said that she for one intended to stay, and that she would go down with me, if I would only take her. At first I refused, but she begged so hard that I gave in, and I confess it was a great comfort to me to know that I was to have her inspiring company. She had, I think, noticed with anxiety my utter fatigue, which had caused me to act rather strangely, and had nobly resolved to do her best to help me through.

"When the time for starting came I had almost recovered my old composure.

"'Lean back well, and don't be afraid,' I whispered to Sally,—to Aunt Sally I mean,—as I braced myself on the toboggan.

"She laughed back that she wasn't in the least frightened, for she didn't believe that any ghost would dare to upset the best steerer in town. As we shoved off, the moon shone forth for a moment from its veil of cloud, while the wind ceased suddenly as if in expectant quiet. Smoothly we went at first, then swift, swifter, past the first great

bump with its tremendous leap through the air, and I had begun to think we were already safe, when suddenly we stopped short, I saw a form wrapped in robes of misty white glide swiftly by, a hideous shriek of laughter rang in my ears, and our toboggan rolled over and over.

"For the next week I lay in a delirium, passing through the strangest adventures. Now I was tobogganing with Aunt Sally on an iceberg, calmly wondering whether the waters of the sea into which we were inevitably rushing would cool my burning skin, when I would suddenly discover that it was not Aunt Sally who was before me, but a polar bear, an unexpected companion whose presence caused me such fright that I rolled off the toboggan, and bumped and tumbled till I passed to other dreams.

"Another time I remember finding myself sliding down one of the pyramids of Egypt, and although I was going with tremendous rapidity, I still managed to decipher the inscriptions on the surface, for I had somehow learned to understand hieroglyphics perfectly.

"When at last I came to myself, I found Aunt Sally sitting by my bed-side. I wanted immediately to learn all about our upset, but she would not let me speak at all; I had been very ill, she said, and the doctor had forbidden any excitement.

"In the course of a few days, however, I learned that we had executed a wild somersault on the hill. Aunt Sally had not been hurt, but me they found raving like a lunatic. They were dreadfully afraid that I had gone quite out of my mind, but the doctor had said it was brain fever brought on by overwork and excitement, and that a rest would set me right again; which sure enough it did. I could never induce Aunt Sally to confess that she saw the ghost. In fact," he concluded with a smile, "this is the only subject on which we disagree. She says I saw the ghost because I had brain fever. I say that I had brain fever because I saw the ghost."

Jim, who had listened attentively throughout, raised himself on his elbows and gazed up with a puzzled expression at his old uncle's inscrutable face, as he mused: "Well, I thought old people never believed in ghosts. I wonder if Uncle Tom really does believe in this one. Anyway I'm mighty glad I stayed at home and heard the story. Won't I just tell it to all the boys. Besides," and here his face relaxed into a smile of perfect joy, "besides, I've got the fifty cents from Aunt Sally."

HENRI.

WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE.

Strong hero-soul! that, for thy country's weal,
Recked not of danger nor pale-visaged fear;
That, clear above the tumult, still didst her
Her voice sustain thee, and could'st only feel
Her wrongs and Freedom's, not thine own; we seal—
Here in the land thou gavest to Freedom; here,
Where never more shall fall the sorrowing tear
Of Liberty despoiled—peal on peal
The while applauding, thine undying fame.
Inspire us, patriot-heart! and thou as well,
Unfettered goddess, teach us love for thee
And Canada. Oh, let us love her name,
That, discord past, the wandering winds may swell
Her seven-stringed harp in purest harmony.

Univ. Coll., Tor.

D. M.

"LETTER PROBATE."

TORONTO, March 14th, 188—.

MY DEAR H.,—I just read THE VARSITY of March 9th; in it I found a "Letter Legacy" descanting on the dearth of literature, poetry and poets in Canada. The Legacy is dated June 12th, 188—, so I presume the writer is not long departed. I wonder if the Stars and Stripes wave over his grave; he surely did not hope for less, although he had "neither the genius to inspire nor the independence to execute, etc." He must have been a Liberal who foresaw he would not be

asked to the Governor-General's Ball, or if he lived in the States he certainly had a Government "sit," or whence arises this—"With them of all the countries in the world can poetry inform politics with a purity of intention and bend it from all base ends"—a fine sentiment, but, bother my ears, they somehow ring with "Alaska," "office-seekers," "Irish vote," "Fisheries Treaty," "Sackville," and a thousand other such by-words. We are threatened with "some impending and momentous change" which "will annihilate all the labours of those who do not work with a desire to hasten destiny and precipitate the change that future histories will moralize on forever"—i.e., annexation! Thank you, dear Defunct, "forever" is a long time and we would sooner shine in another and opposite direction. "The Atlantic is cold," we admit, it is also salt; I wish I'd had a glass before I read that Legacy. I don't think the race that begot a Homer were annexationists—"champion oarsman" is not to be ridiculed. At least Athens owed a good deal to hers, I think.

Alas! dear H., that our "immense uncultivated areas of land" should stand in the way of poetry—what in the world are the emigrant agents about?—they are an unpoetical lot anyway; the opposition might add this to the list of offences of Minister Ross. And so the letter goes on from here to the end bidding us to choose between country or song—country first, say I, and song after, even if it is sung by our descendants as they lament our premature death in defence of the country that had no "leisured wealth" or "material prosperity." No Canadian that reads the latter part of the Legacy will, I think, experience anything but a desire to know at what university in the States the testator was educated. I will forbear comment on it, only let me say that Mæcenas did not live in the early days of Rome, and it was not the descendants of advocates of submission to a foreign power that he patronized, or perchance he might have given his Sabine farm to a Roman who had become a naturalized Gaul. Tell me, dear H., of a country with a poetry that was not at some time or in some relation "omnipotent in arms"; tell me, dear H., of a country that manufactured a poet and became a land of song by capitulation. Shut up the armoury, ye ancient Janitor, and stock it with 'Ras Wimans, for we would have a literature. Patriotism may give us a poet, annexationism never will.

I forgive his friend for leaving the country; we have no desire to retain him, and I'd forgive the testator if he had signed himself R. I. P.

Yours truly,
S. L. O.

M. COQUELIN.

Toronto has seldom been offered such a dramatic treat as the leading living French comedian's appearance at the Grand Opera House at the beginning of last week, and it is tolerably certain, judging from the very small number that took advantage of it, that it will be long before the opportunity occurs again.

The reasons for this poor reception are not far to seek. In the first place, of course, the French language, in which all the performances were given presented an obstacle to the enjoyment of those who were not familiar with that tongue, although this obstacle does not prevent Sara Barnhardt from drawing immense houses whenever she visits us. But the grand reason for the financial failure was the ignorance of the Toronto public in regard to M. Coquelin's position in the dramatic world.

From an artistic standpoint, however, the success was pronounced and complete. The representations were as carefully given as they could have been before the most crowded and enthusiastic audiences, while the lack of numbers in the house was partially atoned for by the appreciation which was manifested throughout.

The first impression derived from the performances is the perfect naturalness that characterizes the acting throughout. There is no staginess, no ranting; nothing of what might be called padding. Every action has its meaning, and when the passage affords no opening for dramatic effect, there is no striving after a meretricious glamour which we see so frequently

in English companies even of the best. On the other hand, first play on Monday night was Madame Girardin's "*La Joie fait Peur*," a sentimental comedy, somewhat light but intensely however, there is no coldness or repression of feeling.

The pleasing, wherein the interest turns on the unexpected return of a son who has been given up for lost, and the difficulty of breaking the joyful news to his mother. M. Coquelin takes the part of "Noël," a faithful servant of the family, to whom the son first reveals himself and whose embarrassment and perplexity under the trying duty which devolves on him are the chief humorous touches. Exquisitely portrayed they are; as might be expected, for it is his faculty of exciting sympathy and interest by comic acting almost pathetic in its reality that has won for M. Coquelin his present position as leader of the *Comédie Française*. In dealing, however, with M. Coquelin's company we cannot, as in most cases, after dwelling at length on the "star," dismiss the other actors with a brief word. For this is the next prominent characteristic; the perfect balance and symmetry of the representation as a whole. There is no such thing as what we are accustomed to call a "support," for the play appears rather as a living organism than as a lay figure propped up on stilts.

The joy, almost agonizing, of the mother when her son is at length actually in her presence, was at once boldly and delicately manifested. With a fervour which few actresses could venture to imitate, she clasped him passionately to her breast, and kissed him again and again on the face, head, and neck, as if to assure herself that it was indeed he. Her daughter's demonstrations of delight, more child-like and direct, were most winning. Mlle. Kerwick, who played the part, captivated the audience by the manner in which not only her face but her whole body seemed to respond to her emotions.

Molière's well-known "*Les Précieuses Ridicules*" was also played on Monday night. M. Coquelin in it appears as an impudent and shallow-pated valet who assumes his master's place and clothes, and visits the fiancée of the latter as the *Marquis de Mascarille*. The character is most opposite to the previous one, and it would be impossible to say in which M. Coquelin was most at home.

"*Le Mariage de Figaro*" which was given on Tuesday night, was undoubtedly the most successful performance of the visit. Even for those who knew no more French than Figaro did English, the action was so continuous and varied that they could follow the thread of the action without difficulty, while the wit of the dialogue made it doubly enjoyable for those who were fortunate enough to be able to keep pace with the rapid movements of the Gallic tongue.

To attempt in the small space available to give an adequate idea of the ever-changing situations which distinguish this comedy would be impossible. The grouping and careful attention to the stage effect were even more noticeable than on the previous evening, greater opportunities in this line being offered by the large cast of characters and the kaleidoscopic manner in which they were ever changing their relations.

"*Mlle de la Seiglière*," which was given on Wednesday night, can hardly be said to be an interesting play according to our ideas, although it has held the French stage for considerable time; and as whatever merit it may possess lies not at all in the action but in the dialogue, the finer points of which must necessarily be thrown away on the great majority of an English audience, it is not at all surprising that it fell somewhat flat after its predecessors. It required all M. Coquelin's histrionic powers to redeem the performance from mediocrity.

J. H. M.

What promises to be an interesting addition to the ordinary issue of the *Nineteenth Century* will be a supplement to the March number of a series of papers by eminent American educators on the relation of examinations to education. The same magazine has introduced a new style of reviewing books. The editor has asked certain of his friends to send him from time to time notices of books which they may consider worthy of bringing to the attention of the reading public. Mr. Gladstone contributes one of these notices and the report that he intended to do so was the occasion of the remark that "if you want a book to sell get Mr. Gladstone to write an introduction or notice for it."

THE VARSITY.

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ANONYMOUS ATTACKS ON SIR DANIEL WILSON.

The last few months have seen Sir Daniel Wilson the object of various anonymous attacks, and indeed have offered a very fair illustration of the manner in which such attacks generally proceed. Last fall it was announced that a Professor was to be appointed in English. A great shout was raised of "Canada for Canadians." Dr. Alexander, a Canadian, was appointed, and immediately the whine arose of "Toronto for Torontonians." It was very quickly discovered, however, that this pathetic appeal was not at all likely to rouse great public indignation, and accordingly "Torontonensis," possibly one of the Toronto graduates for whom Toronto University is supposed to exist, hit upon the device of reverting to the past appointments, some of them made before Sir Daniel became President and asserting that in them had been manifested unswerving hostility towards any Canadian who had presented himself as an applicant. The late Professor Young and Professor Baker were cited as examples. Both wrote letters to the *Mail* emphatically denying the truth of the assertion. "Torontonensis," however, was equal to the emergency. Evidently, he said, it was the good nature of these gentlemen and their mistaken though laudable sense of loyalty to their President and their University which led them to make the denial. Sir Daniel condescended, and we think unwisely, to publish an explanation. This, too, "Torontonensis" set aside with noble scorn, and was proceeding to adduce other names when he was suddenly and very properly cut short, by the Editor of the *Mail* prohibiting further correspondence on the subject.

* * *

Shortly after this Professor Young was taken suddenly ill, when immediately "Argus" came forward, charging Sir Daniel with complicity in a plot to secure the Chair of Philosophy for a personal friend, who would thus be placed in a position to succeed to the Presidency, should Sir Daniel retire. We have already in a previous number called attention to the extreme impropriety of the time chosen for this supposed revelation, a time when the then incumbent of the Chair of Philosophy was lying in a critical state afflicted by an illness of but a few hours' duration; circumstances which made the attack a virtual accusation against Sir Daniel of speculating and trading on the possibility or probability of the speedy demise of a life-long friend and co-worker, whose vigorous health at the supposed time of the plot gave no ground for believing that he would not enjoy several more years of uninterrupted usefulness.

Quite recently the *Mail's* correspondents have returned to their tactics of raking up supposed hostility to the appointment of members of the staff, this time, however, branching off to the Medical Faculty, and describing him as having vigorously opposed the appointment of Dr. MacCallum, though what reasons moved him to assume this attitude does not appear. Now if such opposition did exist, surely the time for protesting against it was when the appointment was made, and not several years afterwards. But so far as we are aware, no voice was raised against Sir Daniel at the proper time and this is sufficient to justify the assumption that the present attack is the work either of a personal enemy or of one of those weak-minded persons who are always ready to join any agitation, however ill-grounded and unjustified.

Were these accusations true; had the President of the Provincial University been guilty of degrading his position to an engine for assisting his personal friends or satisfying grudges against personal enemies; then surely those who had detected him in such malpractices, those who had discovered that thousands of dollars of the public money were being misapplied, that the whole educational system of the Province was being debauched; surely, we say, these men would have had the courage to come boldly forth, would have stated the grounds for their belief over their own name, and even at the expense of some personal inconvenience have claimed and received the gratitude of all interested in education for their unselfish championship of honesty. As long, however, as these revelations are made over childish *noms de plume*, as long as assertion and re-iteration are offered as proof, as long as the ordinary forms which should govern even the exposure of abuse are neglected; so long must we regard them as the creation of disappointed ambition or personal malice, not to be placed for an instant in the balance with the long, honourable and useful life which Sir Daniel Wilson has devoted to the cause of education and the advancement of Toronto University.

* * *

It is quite possible, however, that these appeals to local prejudice may have met with acceptance from many disinterested persons, who either are not acquainted with the facts, or have not given them sufficient consideration. Many even of those who do not join in vituperating the President and heartily disapprove of the conduct of the present correspondents of the *Mail*, are inclined to believe that Canadians have been neglected, and above all that Toronto graduates have been badly treated.

Why not, it is said, when all else is equal, follow the principle of Canada for the Canadian graduate? Now no one will for a moment reject this position, but when we look at it in a practical light we must be convinced that the chances of all else being equal are exceedingly small.

It will be evident on the merest reflection that it will be very occasionally that a man who has simply graduated at a Canadian University will be at all fitted to instruct or guide those who are pursuing the same course. Even though he supplement this with private study, he will find that he is treading on ground which it is not entirely within his powers to cover. For in Canada we have no institutions, such as exist in England, Germany, the United States and elsewhere, where men are guided and assisted in acquiring a complete mastery of the specialty to which they have devoted themselves, and accordingly Canadians who wish to make the highest branches of teaching their life work are forced to go abroad to completely fit themselves for this duty. If we take into account the small number, until quite recently, of those that have done this, we shall not find that they have been unrecognized in University appointments.

It has been cast up against the President that he has been unable, during all the years in which he lectured in English, to prepare a man to fill the chair in that department. The answer to this is obvious. Toronto University does not profess to train professors. Her function is to teach her sons to think for themselves, to train their reasoning powers, to widen their intellectual sympathies, to help them to live a broader, deeper, fuller life, to make them good citizens, in a word, to make them men. In striving after this end, she does not require to furnish them with the complete mastery of all the details of the course of study which they have chosen; a mastery requisite in the preceptor whom they follow. If she has given them good mental muscle, if she has awakened in them a healthy interest, she has done her duty. Just as, to use a homely illustration, an instructor in gymnastics would be considered to have worked well if his class turned out with well-developed thews and sinews, even though they were utterly unable to take up the instructorship in their turn.

REFORMS IN THE SCHOOL OF SCIENCE.

In our College News column we print a copy of a petition signed by 58 students, the total number of those studying Engineering; and sent to the Board of the School of Practical Science. As will be seen on perusal their demands are

moderate and reasonable. Briefly, what they ask is to be furnished with printed examination papers instead of having the questions written on a blackboard or copied on a printograph, both clumsy and imperfect methods; to have the examinations held in a well-ventilated hall with comfortable seats; to have the old custom of suddenly springing the examinations on the students abandoned, and to have a complete and final time-table posted a fortnight before the holding of the Easter examinations and a week before the Christmas examinations; and that the rules and regulations of the School, which have hitherto only existed by oral tradition, be reduced to print and incorporated in the prospectus of the School.

These conveniences are such as are afforded to students in both Arts and Medicine and should certainly not be denied to the members of the School, where the numbers are large and constantly increasing.

All that is sought is to reduce to a minimum the amount of time and worry necessarily expended in the mere execution of formalities, to lessen the friction to be overcome in simply running the educational machine, and thus leave more force and energy for the accomplishment of its true work.

As regards the plan of surprising the students with the examinations, it has presumably been pursued with the idea of preventing cramming at the last moment, but it seems to be based on a false conception. Even the most thoroughly prepared student, if he is to do himself justice, cannot dispense with a careful review of his work immediately before an examination, in order to refresh his mind on details which he is not expected to carry with him into the practice of his profession but which it is impossible to avoid demanding in an examination.

That the rules and regulations governing the School should be set down in black and white, would seem to be as much to the advantage of the teachers as of the pupils, in fact it is difficult to understand how they have got along without this very necessary guide-book.

We are glad to learn that the Board has expressed itself in sympathy with the demand for these much needed reforms, and that they are now only awaiting the sanction of the Minister of Education for the slight outlay involved. Indeed, it is said they are prepared to go the students one better and abolish the Christmas examinations altogether.

KEEP OFF THE GRASS!!

It is much to be regretted that men will not keep off the lawn at this time of the year. As soon as the snow begins to disappear, students hurrying to and from lectures commence to grade two convenient roads across the turf, converging to a point in front of the door. This is no doubt advantageous, considering that life is short, but it is exceedingly detrimental to the condition of the lawn. To be in good trim for the purposes of the coming sports, it should be left alone till the ground dries, and the grass grows.

One would think that those interested in athletics would be the most scrupulous in observance of this. But, strange to say, baseballists, with misplaced enthusiasm, may be seen at practice every day on the muddy sward.

We should look before and after and foresee that when we really want the lawn in good condition we shall regret our present thoughtlessness.

COMMUNICATIONS.

THE Editors are not responsible for the opinions of correspondents. No notice will be taken of unsigned contributions.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—In a former letter I endeavoured to show that the Literary Society was in a very critical state. I saw reason to believe that the recently formed Class Societies would usurp the work which the older society had performed none too well in the past. I even hinted that but two alternatives lay before us, either we must dissolve the Literary Society or it would gradually die out of itself. The former of these alternatives seems certainly to me to be preferable. But is there no other way out of the difficulty? On further consideration of the matter I am disposed to think there is.

The Class Societies, as I before said, have already been formed. Since the writing of my last, I understand that the Class of '92 has had a most successful meeting, at which the programme was partly *literary*. Let these societies become as literary as they will. Let them have meetings say every two weeks. An afternoon would probably be the most convenient time for the holding of the meeting. Essays, readings, and debates might be indulged in. There is no reason why political subjects should be tabooed. General discussions also might take place on those subjects which spring up every year affecting us as students, not a little, although to the outer world they may seem somewhat trivial. Such subjects rarely come up before our Literary Society. We feel that there we should discuss weightier questions, although, perhaps, most of our time is spent on much more trifling ones. Each Class Society meeting every two weeks, all its members who so desired would have ample opportunity for gaining practice in speaking.

The General Society might then meet once a month, every Class Society contributing to the programme. Suppose, for example, that the Fourth Year furnish an essayist, the First Year a reader, and that the debate be between the Second and Third Years. The performers on these occasions should not be appointed by the General Committee of the Literary Society, but should be elected by their respective Class Societies. It would then be considered an honour to take part at the meetings, which it certainly is not now. The speakers might choose their own subject for debate, as is now done for the public debates. This would add greatly to their interest in the affair. We could not, of course, at the General Society discuss questions of Canadian party politics, but if we were able to discuss these in our Class Societies every two weeks, I am inclined to think we would eagerly welcome a diversion. I have often thought that our not discussing political questions is not such a serious evil as is sometimes represented. What does militate against our success as a Society is the feeling that we are placed under a restraint. Were this restraint removed our eagerness to discuss politics would probably rapidly diminish.

It may not unreasonably be asked, how can all this be brought about? In reply, let me just say how this can *not* be brought about. It cannot be brought about by being made the platform of a party at the annual elections. Party elections, although they may manage to impoverish us and to bring into the coffers of the society much money which is *not* needed there, seem to me to choke the higher aspirations of the society. As long as party elections exist I believe what was said last year will hold true. "Through party elections much available interest is expended for the sole purpose of procuring voters, neither deserving of the franchise, nor wise in its use." But as long as we do have party elections, I think that it will do the society less harm if we divide on such questions as the enlargement of Residence, the levelling of the lawn, or the forming of an athletic association, for the success or failure of these schemes can in no way injure the Literary Society, while if, *as a party*, we bring before the society any scheme for its reform, we at once turn many against it, and thereby postpone indefinitely the time when we shall be able to procure the requisite two-thirds majority to carry it through. How, then, could such a reform as is here indicated be affected? In some such way as this. Let those who are interested in its accomplishment talk it up amongst their fellow-students; let them ask the General Committee to set aside some night early next term for the alteration of the constitution, and there let them bring forward a detailed plan. The society might be divided into four sections, corresponding to each of the years. Provision might be made by which each of these sections could hold regular meetings, elect their own officers, etc. The constitution of the society would not only have to be revised, it would have to be rewritten, a much less cumbersome affair might be substituted. The name of the society might still be preserved; there is no reason why that should be changed. Many graduates would feel that they had lost a friend were they to hear that the University College Literary and Scientific Society was no more. I must ask my readers' forbearance for bringing this matter before them so late in the term. But believing that the advocating of such a reform prior to an election would be unwise, and hoping that next term may find me elsewhere, not here, I had no choice in the matter.

T. C. DES BARRÉS.

ROUND THE TABLE.

This is *par excellence* the age of school-books. Nay, we believe we can go further and say this is the golden age of school-books. For a golden age is ever the sunset glory which heralds the decline of day, the hectic flush of the consumptive patient which precedes decease; and we are of opinion that school-books, at least such as they exist at present, are not destined to continue to play such an all-important part with the young generations of the future. Now it has ever been that institutions, which, though to the careless eye at the summit of their greatness, still show to the penetrating observer symptoms of approaching decay, have turned with a wistful fondness to their early history, as though they could restore their failing powers by contemplating the relics of their vigorous though uncouth youth.

* * *

In accordance, then, with this view it will not be out of place to afford a glimpse of the hand-book from which the Puritan Fathers nourished the intellectual youth of New England, a recent reprint of which book, truly extraordinary to our modern eyes, has lately come in our way; and apart even from the historical significance which, as we have indicated, we attribute to it, we think that a few quotations will prove interesting. The full title, for apparently the compilers sought to kill the proverbial two birds with one stone and instil the alphabet and theology at one fell swoop, is "The New England Primer, improved for the more easy attaining The True Reading of English, to which is added The Assembles of Divines, and Mr. Cotton's Catechism."

* * *

The first part of the book, which altogether is not larger than 60 pages of 24 mo., is devoted to the usual alphabet, followed by words of one, two and three syllables, and then come the lines intended to stamp the initials of the different words on the young learner. Instead, however, of the familiar "A is an Apple as round as a ball," we have the more sober and impressive:

"In ADAM'S Fall
We sinned all."

And soon, instead of "G is for Garden where fairy flowers blow," we have the sombre lines, to which is prefixed a picture of an hour glass:

"As runs the GLASS
Our life doth pass."

Modern horn-books appeal to the carnal senses with, "O is an Orange so soft and so sweet," but the stern Pilgrims conveyed the lesson in the implied warning:

"Young OBADIAS,
David, Josias,
All were pious,"

the picture illustrating which shows three unhappy looking young gentlemen with extremely big sceptres and very uncomfortable crowns.

The simple couplet,

"Young pious RUTH
Left all for truth,"

serves to impress the letter R on the budding intellect, the "all" in the engraving being a sort of dog-kennel, utterly devoid of all seductive ornament.

The book then gives the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, the creed, &c; and afterwards a short account of the martyrdom of Mr. John Rogers in the reign of Queen Mary, which serves to introduce some pages in verse of advice to his children which he wrote some days before his death. The appended woodcut represents the unhappy martyr in the midst of a conflagration that strongly resembles a lunch-basket bedecked with ostrich feathers, while two colossal guards stand by, armed with gigantic partizans, and gloat in a hideous manner over the young recipients of the advice, who are assembled to witness the misery of their parent.

The volume is concluded with "The Shorter Catechism," whose brevity we that have never seen a longer can hardly appreciate, and a series of questions and answers described by the somewhat picturesque title, "Spiritual Milk for American Babes, drawn out of the breast of both Testaments for their soul's nourishment."

* * *

Fidelis, reviewing Archibald Lampman's poems in the *Week*, touched upon two interesting and debatable points in literary criticism. In dealing with his purely descriptive poems, as "Among the Timothy," "Winter," "Winter Hues Recalled," she remarks, "While there is true and delicate description, we miss *something more*, something which would have given the description greater value. . . . It is indeed a common tendency among some of the most popular poets of our day to fall into the old Greek habit of resting in 'Nature,' instead of fulfilling the nobler functions of *interpreter*, without which Poetry is 'divine poetry,' no longer."

* * *

We cannot praise her dispassionate review too highly. Indeed, elsewhere she does full justice to the harmony of his delicate description, and reminds us without telling us so that our own review was inadequate in this respect. But the principle that she advances will repay examination if we attempt to apply it to all poetry.

* * *

We have all been somewhat spoiled by the poetry we inherit from the first decades of this century. Fidelis, it is evident, demands the presence in large quantities of something wherewith to dilute the too strong essence of unadulterated Nature, or to support this spirit once deemed so strong when she totters. She tells us not whether it be the milk of human kindness or the foam of human wrath that best attempers, in Swinburnian phraseology, the wine of divine song; whether she prefer Byron's message of wrath to mankind framed in a tempest setting of thunder, or Wordsworth's aphoristic purpose, assisted by the presence of some field-daisy, which submits to be thus apostrophized—

"May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee!"

Was it not Swinburne who said, certainly with a measure of truth when comparing the different attitudes of this century's poets towards Nature that "Wordsworth uses her as a vegetable fit to shred into his pot and pare down like the outer leaves of a lettuce for didactic and culinary purposes?"

* * *

But omitting much that might be said of this great poet's method of viewing Nature and of the worshipful homage that his contemporaries paid to her, we ask if it is not well that a young writer should confine himself for the most part to pure description? With this limitation set upon himself till his hand grow strong, he will escape all aphoristic tendencies, and cannot at either extreme of Nature-worship be offensive. Nature has too often been made a peg to hang the eloquent robes of misery upon, or a scare-crow for the rags of scanty ideas.

* * *

Victor Hugo speaks of the song within us that responds to the song without, and prays that his own verse may be at least the echo of an echo. Mr. Lampman has not always aspired even to this degree, but has devoted himself for the most part to the faithful painting of the song without us. If he had done no more he would have achieved much by the certainty and refinement of his touch. But the force of Fidelis' objection is broken where she admits in some of the poems the presence of the two essentials of human sympathy and description. Can we ask for more? Must a poem of fifty lines contain all excellences, and must we look for tragedy when laughter asserts that we are present at a comedy?

* * *

Readers of "Among the Millet" will see in how far her objection is valid. Some of the poems are entirely free from reference to humanity, but are certainly worthy to live by their own beauty as pictures. In other portions of his work there are also visible signs of a future mastery over subjects with a dash of human interest.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE NEWS.

ALL reports from Societies must reach us by noon on Thursday to insure insertion.

COLLEGE COUNCIL.

A copy of the following resolution, which was adopted at a meeting of the College Council held on the 4th inst., has been tastefully engrossed and forwarded to the family of the late Professor Young:—

“The Council of the University College avail themselves of the first meeting since the decease of their esteemed colleague, Dr. George Paxton Young, to record their sense of the great loss sustained alike by the Faculty and the students in his death.

“The attractive personal qualities of Dr. Young, conjoined with his integrity and sound judgment, rendered his presence always welcome at the Council Board; and his courtesy in every personal relation with his colleagues won the esteem of all.

“To the students of the University the rare perspicuity and inspiring enthusiasm of his lectures, and his kindly sympathy in all his private intercourse with them, had endeared him no less. His death is deplored alike in the interests of the University and of the Faculty and students.

“The Council desire to convey to the members of the family of their lamented colleague the sincerest expression of sympathy in their great bereavement.”

PUBLICATION OF PROF. YOUNG'S WORK.

Many of our readers will doubtless be glad to hear that arrangements have been about completed for the publication of a selected portion of the late Professor Young's literary and philosophical remains. Dr. Young left nothing ready for publication; but many of his note books have been found, all written in a system of shorthand invented by his grandfather. An old schoolmate of Dr. Young's has furnished the key, and it is expected that Mr. J. G. Hume, '87, an old and favourite pupil of the late Professor's, will undertake the editing of his works. It is to be hoped that those who have this matter in charge will spare no pains to see that this is done. We feel sure that were any guarantee fund requisite it could be easily raised amongst his old pupils.

LITERARY SOCIETY.

St. Vincent's Hall: Friday, March 22. We held our elections to-night, voting as our party might be for Federal or Progressionist, generally ploughing a straight furrow on one or other side of the fence. The polling arrangements were beautifully conceived. The graduates and impostors were sifted by the Curator through the side door. The rest ran the gauntlet or rather bored and tunneled through a foot-wide entrance in a corner of the Hall. Some non-graduates chose a middle course by slipping through the windows behind the Curator's back and into the polling booth. But the more regular and manlier course was to go through the narrow pass. There was no particular difficulty in this except that about fifty sinewy students were standing on the same square foot in front of the defile. Some Progressionist hats were trampled into paper pulp by the majority,—a symbol of the party's fortunes. Some Federal coats were each made two coats,—a presage of a doubling of the party's numbers.

One bystander crossed the street and asked a student if the meeting was about the Jesuits, so much did it take on the likeness of an assemblage of law-loving citizens.

There were votes, straight votes, crooked votes, posthumous votes, votes by men in the antipodes. For information as to next year's committee consult the Federal ticket. As the Progressionists claim to be joint tenants, with a right of survivorship of Messrs. Barker and Haggerman, it may be allowed that they have one aggregate man on the committee.

The following is the official statement of the result:—

PRESIDENT.

W. H. Smith, B.A., M.D. 286
H. H. Dewart, B. A. 208

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT.

W. G. Fortune..... 211
J. J. Ferguson..... 163

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT.

J. W. Scane 237
D. Walker..... 136

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT.

G. A. Badgerow 228
W. W. McRae..... 141

RECORDING SECRETARY.

J. B. Peat 226
W. H. Graham 144

SECRETARY OF COMMITTEES.

P. White..... 222
R. H. Knox..... 146

TREASURER.

W. Hardie..... 224
H. C. Pope..... 144

CURATOR.

A. T. Thompson..... 220
G. R. Faskin 144

COUNCILLORS FIRST FIVE ELECTED.

T. H. Hagerman, 2nd year 318
T. B. Smith, 4th year..... 229
G. A. M. Young, 3rd year 229
T. M. Bowman, 3rd year 218
H. R. Wales, 2nd year..... 207
D. C. Ross, 2nd year 150
W. Black, 4th year 145
A. W. MacMurchy, 3rd year..... 139
E. B. Merrill, 3rd year..... 137

There was no contest for the position of corresponding secretary, L. F. Barker having been elected by acclamation.

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE.

The following is a copy of a petition which has been sent in to the Board of the School, signed by all the students of Engineering:

To the President of the Members of the Board of the School of Practical Science.

The petition of the undersigned humbly sheweth:

Whereas, it has been customary in the past to dictate examination questions to the students or to write them on the blackboard, or to write them and reproduce them by means of a printograph or some such contrivance; and this not only necessitating a great waste of valuable time, but also being the cause of many mistakes, your petitioners humbly pray, that in the future all examination papers set for the students of the School of Practical Science shall be printed from type.

Whereas, certain examinations have been held in the draughting-room of the School of Practical Science at desks altogether unsuitable for writing at, your petitioners humbly pray that in the future the students of the School of Practical Science at all examinations may be supplied with suitable desks and seats.

Whereas, in the past, at certain examinations, the examination hall has been extremely cold, and this being the cause of not only much bodily discomfort, but of much mental worry, preventing the concentration of thought upon the examinations, and also in many cases causing colds and sore throats, your petitioners humbly pray that in the future the temperature of the examination hall be not less than 60° Far.

Whereas, it has been customary in the past to give notice of examinations only a few days before the holding of the examinations, your petitioners humbly pray that in the future a complete, accurate and final time-table of the examinations be posted up in the School of Practical Science fourteen days before the holding of the Easter examinations, as is done in the case of the examinations of the University of Toronto, and seven days before the Christmas examinations, and that a notice of all books of reference required at the examinations be posted with the above notice.

Whereas, ignorance of rules and regulations governing the

students of the School of Practical Science has been the cause of much misunderstanding and of not a little unpleasantness, your petitioners humbly pray that rules and regulations governing such matters as the times of the year of examinations, the percentages required in the examinations, the number of supplemental examinations allowed and the times of holding these supplemental examinations, the number of drawings to be sent in and the times of sending these in, and all rules and regulations governing the students of the School of Practical Science be printed and be obtainable.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

MODERN LANGUAGE CLUB.

The Club held its closing meeting in the Y. M. C. A. hall last Monday evening, the President in the chair. Several resolutions were brought in recommending changes in the curriculum, over which considerable discussion arose.

As the constitution provides that a week's time shall elapse between the nomination and election of officers and as it was also necessary to elect the officers last Monday; the constitutional lawyers of the club were non-plussed, till some genius discovered an expedient worthy of a parliamentarian. He moved that the Society shall consider a week to have elapsed between the nomination and the election, and being supported by the audience, thus gravely blotted out seven days from the calendar, notwithstanding a protest that this action brought examinations a week nearer. What effect this rash proceeding will have on the working of the universe, remains to be seen.

The officers as proposed and elected are as follows:

Hon. Pres., W. H. Fraser, B.A.

President, W. H. Graham.

Vice Presidents, Miss Lawlor, C. A. Stuart.

Rec. Sec., A. Shiel.

Corr. Sec., A. M. Stuart,

Councillors, 4th Year—W. C. P. Bremner, R. J. Bonner.

“ 3rd Year—Miss Keys, A. P. Northwood.

“ 2nd Year—Miss Hillock, A. L. Lafferty.

The proposed action of the Club regarding the position of History, Ethnology and Civil Polity on the Modern Language Curriculum was then considered. Mr. Rodd moved, and Mr. Ferguson seconded a motion to memorialize the Senate to have these subjects removed from the course, and to have Italian and Spanish placed in a more prominent position in it. The full text of the petition which space will not allow us to publish this week, will appear in our next issue.

CLASS OF '87.

An informal meeting of the members of the above class was held last Tuesday evening in the Y.M.C.A. building, to discuss the feasibility of organizing for a permanent society. A provisional committee, consisting of A. H. Young, R. L. Johnston, J. A. Ferguson and W. H. Hunter, was appointed to draft a constitution and report to a meeting to be held next Wednesday evening in the same building.

CLASS OF '89.

The Fourth Year met in the Y.M.C.A. hall on Wednesday last, in response to the call of the Executive. The President, took the chair. The main business transacted was the arranging for the Class Dinner, which it was decided to hold on the evening of Commencement Day, June 7th. A large committee was appointed to canvas the Year and find what the attendance would be at such a dinner as that proposed. Several other details were dealt with after which the meeting adjourned.

K CO. ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of the Company was held in the Residence dining hall, Capt. Brock, Lieuts. Coleman and Badgerow, Serjts. Crooks, Mustard and Patterson and a large number of the Company were present. Capt. Brock occupied the chair.

Serjt. Mustard and Corpl. McLaren were instructed to procure a copy of the photograph of the part of K Co. which served in the North-west, and to have it placed in the armoury.

The company voted an appropriation of \$30 to the Company and \$10 to the Regimental prize funds. The following recruiting committee were appointed: Lieuts. A. Badgerow, Pte. Wiggins, Pte. Ferguson, Pte. Kirkpatrick.

The Band Committee have asked the Company to guarantee \$150 to the support of the Regimental Band. Discussion on this point was deferred until the Company should meet again.

The meeting then adjourned.

ECONOMIC SEMINARY.

The Seminary has met seven times during the present term on successive Thursday mornings at 9. 15 a.m., under the presidency of Professor Ashley. The following subjects have been discussed:—

Feb. 14—The Greek and the Modern Conception of the State—Mr. Boyd; the Communist of Plato and Aristotle's Criticism of it—Mr. Brydone. Reporter, Mr. Dwyer.

Feb. 21—The Mediaeval Theory of Usury and Interest—Mr. Hall; the Mediaeval and Modern Theory of Price—Mr. Des Barres. Reporter, Mr. Mallon.

Feb. 28—The History of Rent—Mr. McKay; the Theory of Rent—Mr. McEvoy. Reporter, Mr. A. T. Thompson.

March 7—The Stages of the Mercantile System—Mr. Peat; Adam Smith's Arguments for and against the Mercantile Theory—Mr. Segsworth. Reporter, Mr. Sinclair.

March 14—The abstract arguments for and against Free Trade—Mr. Smith and Miss Scott. Reporter, Mr. Proctor.

March 21—The “iron law” of Wages—Mr. Wilson; the Wage-Fund Theory—Miss Willson. Reporter, Mr. Hall.

March 28—The Industrial Revolution of the 18th century—Mr. Faskin; the Factory System in England and Ontario—Mr. Woodruff. Reporter, Mr. McEvoy.

At the concluding meeting on April 4, papers on the Postulates of Abstract Political Economy will be read by Mr. McKay and Miss Scott.

CRICKET.

It was intended to hold a Cricket meeting in Residence on Wednesday last, but it was found necessary to postpone it till next week, when the medical examinations will not interfere with the attendance. The base-ball tour will not seriously interfere with the Club's prosperity for the coming season, as many enthusiastic cricketers will be left behind to sustain defeats or maintain the reputation of the University. We stay at home this season and should receive visits from Galt, Guelph and Hamilton whom we visited with mixed success but unalloyed joy last June. It is also intended, after the usual season, to form a Rovers' Team, composed of graduates and undergraduates, which will make an extended trip, but in what direction it is not yet known. A selection of material could be made able to stand on even terms with any town combination in Ontario, and the success of this venture should determine whether or not the enterprize be an annual one.

Y. M. C. A.

A. T. Thompson led the Y. M. C. A. meeting on Thursday and spoke on the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. He was followed by G. B. McClean.

At the business meeting held afterwards nominations were made for the following offices—president, 1st and 2nd vice-presidents, treasurer, recording secretary, and two councillors. Elections will be held next week.

On motion of J. B. McClean the question of appointing a General Secretary for full time at a salary of \$500 was brought before the meeting. An amendment referring the whole question to the special nominating committee was moved by T. C. Des Barres, but a second amendment by W. C. Ewing was carried by which further discussion was adjourned till next Thursday at 4 o'clock. This hour was named in order to give sufficient time to do all the business coming up at the annual meeting.

The committee appointed to nominate a general secretary for next year consists of Geo. Logie, W. H. Graham, W. G. W. Fortune, W. R. Rutherford, C. A. Stuart, A. P. Northwood, and J. McCraney.

The Class of '87 will, it is understood, meet on Wednesday evening next at eight o'clock in the Y. M. C. A. hall for the purpose of organizing a class society. When will '88 be heard from?