

# DALHOUSIE GAZETTE.

NEW SERIES—VOL. V. }  
OLD SERIES—VOL. XII. }

HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 14, 1880.

{ NEW No. 7.  
{ WHOLE No. 125.

## NOCTURNAL REVELRIES.

“There was a sound of revelry by night.”

MAN is an animal to whose existence amusement is—well, hardly *absolutely* necessary—but certainly requisite in no small doses. Amusement he must have, and he accordingly obtains it, when, where and how 'tis at all possible. This when, where and how, certainly vary with the individual. Know a man and you can infer pretty accurately how he will amuse himself. But in one thing all mankind is alike. They seek their relaxation from the toils and cares of business, or study, as the case may be, by night. And therefore some one has called the human quadruped a night bird. Whether there is any peculiar influence in the “glare of the gas;” whether the artificial brilliancy serves to impart some of its influence to the revellers or not, it boots us not to enquire. We purpose no physiological or philosophical dissertation, but simply the blazoning forth of our vast experience in the matter. An one can cull any good from this article, well; if not—well also. But we fear that neither the regeneration or degradation of the *genus humanum* will result from our graphic portrayals; not, mark you, from the weakness of our pen—oh no!—but rather from the natural inborn leanings of earthly kin to things of the world worldly.

First comes the ordinary evening party, in which we have all taken part. In good sooth 'tis almost necessary to have one at least once a week, so accustomed have we become to these mild dissipations. And methinks for really genuine enjoyment an evening party of twenty or more has no equals. (*Nota bene.* An exactly equal division of the sexes being stipulated for.) Charming songs, pleasant dances, ravishing *tête-à-têtes* in snug corners on the stairs, enjoyable whist coteries, and an air of almost family sociability over all, render this species of revelry (undress) a thing to be looked forward to with expectation; to be looked back to with regret.

But the full dress evening party excels in misery, as its more humble relative excels in enjoyment. Cruel chokers, claw hammers, imprisoned hands and enamelled feet can doubtless be blamed for the exceeding hatefulness of these, which can hardly, methinks, be called revelries. Truly it could not have been one of these assemblies from which “S.” deduced the immoral argument in his article on dancing. For anything more unresponsive to a gentle squeeze, or more incapable of returning one, than a tightly-gloved hand is, surely, tolerably hard to find. In its *tout ensemble* the full dress party should be put down as being neither one thing nor the other. A dinner party without the dinner; a ball without the dancing, the numbers and magnificence may be aptly compared to it. Away with them!

But for real, solid, lasting enjoyment, the dinner party of twelve tops all others, provided certain rules are attended to. Let there be about a dozen; let all the company be acquainted beforehand, in order that they may shake down into their places without any needless delay. Then when the dinner is put on the table all will be enabled to devote their sole attention thereto. Yum! Yum!

With an ordinarily voracious dinner party a good square meal can be demolished in “less than no time.” Then the fair ones leave, and a half-hour of enjoyment ensues, in which the “friendly bowl,” the “feast of reason,” and the “flow of soul” hold the chief place. For there is nothing which sets one's bright idea, his wit, and his finer feelings in more active play, than an old champagne or a steaming punch bowl. List to the water drinker's fanatic cry. But we defy any one to show us a dinner party where the sole beverage was water, which could worthily receive the name. No; wine and wit and bright eyes are inseparably united. May they never be disjoined.

But now we betake ourselves to amusement on a larger scale and seek in the ball room that magnificence and effect which cannot be obtained



in less pretentious assemblies. For sociability it cannot of course be compared with its more humble but more enjoyable kin, the quadrille and evening party, but it abounds in amusement. And not the least mirth-provoking part of the whole night is the induction to the ball room. In the hall, brilliantly lighted and lined with servants, a scene of the strangest confusion presents itself. In the general eagerness to gain the ball room, friend gets separated from friend, turbaned *chaperones* call in cracked voices for help; desolate and isolated daughters seize in distraction the nearest arm; mothers scream, footmen laugh, fathers swear, while high above all comes the tramp, tramp, of the dancers overhead, who, having passed successfully through the ordeal below, are now enjoying their liberty to the lively music of fiddle, French horn and viols. Yes! he who makes his mind up can certainly enjoy himself at a ball. In the large company an individual almost loses his individuality and can give himself up to the whim of the moment without exciting general comment. He who wishes not need not dance. He who flirts can indulge *ad lib.* He who is learned can meet kindred spirits and in some corner discuss grave metaphysical questions. He whose penchant is blind-hookey or whist need wish no better opportunity; while there always remains the dance in which to plunge, when satiated with other amusements.

As we ascend the scale of nocturnal revelries we next come to the masquerade, the *bal masque* the—we had almost said—acme of enjoyment. In it all conventionalities are laid aside. All the usages of the world are discarded with the hard hat and black coat and the participator's fancy runs riot through all the rigs which have disfigured humanity in any other age than his own; and with their clothes he assumes, so far as he is able, their manners. The darkey guffaws and rolls out strings of broken English; the Irishman whoops and whirls his two feet of blackthorn; the knight strides along in knightly dignity; the devil glides stealthily about "seeking whom he may devour." All endeavour to personate, as far as possible, the character assumed, and the majority succeed for a time. But with the first measure of the music the assumed features are thrown aside like a mask. The fishwoman and the autocrat waltz on a perfectly equal footing. The nun, spite of her beads and bands, hangs confidently on an arm of the Prince of Darkness; fairy queens and hideous satyrs,

grinning clowns and staid divines, stately knights and ragged mendicants, all mingle as though it were natural and right that they should do so.

Another charm of the masquerade is that it brings one, as it were, into a past day, into an atmosphere of mystery and romance. The nearest and dearest friends may not know one another. The clown berates his brother and belabours with his bladder the father of his *fiancee*; the divine flirts with his sister and knows it not; the matador runs more than his professional risk in carrying away the owner of a pretty foot from a savage-looking duenna. And when the masques are laid aside what huge jokes, what strange situations are revealed. Taken all in all, the *bal-masque* is an inexhaustible fountain of fun and jollity and flirtations.

Closely allied to the masked ball is the carnival, an offspring of our severe winters. The only difference is that the ball is on ice, and the company on skates. Otherwise all that can be said of the one can be said of the other, save that equilibrium is a thing at times difficult to retain, which only adds, however, to the general fun. We saw a "Yankee Agent" sit down lately on the ice, so forcibly as to knock the roof out of a beaver, ruin an umbrella, and considerably damage a pair of specs. Still the onlookers only laughed and—laughed.

We could prolong this list of nocturnal revelries. But the where and how might take us into undesirable localities at undesirable times. Moreover, it would make this article undesirably long. So for the present we will stop short, and perhaps at some other day renew our consideration of man as a nocturnal being. SILENUS.

#### TERPSICHOREAN.

WHILE the gaiety and revel of Yule-tide were still in prospect, I sat me down and wrote a very mild condemnation of the popular dance. Excited, no doubt, by free indulgence during the holiday season, and anxious to defend the rites of his patron, Silenus rushes at my humble effort and attempts to demolish its statements. This attempt might have been expected, but the manner of it can only be explained by a consideration of the personality of its author—Silenus—"the tutor and constant companion of Bacchus." Is not the character of its champion sufficient to condemn the valse? And from such an antagonist can one be sur-

prised if he receive less than the fairest treatment? In the very first paragraph I find my truthfulness assailed, and the insinuation is flung at me that I practise what I preach against. I protest—but why should I spend time—no person is so simple as to be carried away by such paltry tricks. Then "Mephistopheles Terpsichoreus" declares that the quotations placed at the head of my article are "commendatory" of the modern dance. Shades of Moses, Milton and Wordsworth, are ye not disquieted in your Elysian slumber! Let us consider the aforesaid extracts *seriatim*.

1. David danced with all his might.—*Samuel*.

The king of Israel had just completed a great act of restoration, an act inspired by the intensity of his zeal for the pure and primitive worship of his people's God, and in the excess of his joy and the fervor of pious excitement, he "danced before the Lord with all his might." Remembering all the circumstances of the case, have we in the quotation the faintest commendation of the mad whirl of the ball-room?

2. On with the dance! let joy be unconfined!—*Childe Harold*

Silenus also has made use of this line, and for the better understanding of its force let us quote the period to which it belongs:

"On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;  
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet  
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet."

We know how the fate of Europe depended on the army whose officers were gathered in "Belgium's capital" "by night," on the 17th June, 1815—we know how the prowess of the bravest host is influenced by the bearing of its leaders—we know how, after a night spent unthinkingly in "dancing, drinking, laughing, quaffing," the weariness of the body has a corresponding effect upon the mind. Fortunate then for Wellington, for England, for Europe, that the midnight shout was drowned by that near and clear and deadly roar of cannon. Who is reckless enough to say that men placed in positions important and in peril so imminent have either reason or profit in the giddy dissipation of the dance-room?

3. Come, and tip it as ye go  
On the light fantastic toe.—*L'Allegro*.

This quotation I conceive to be generally misapplied. I think that its immortal author had no thought of any such motion as the "glide," but merely wished to indicate a cheerful and

joyous movement. The invocation, as all will remember, is not to the muse of the dance, but to the grace Euphrosyne, whose animating spirit was joy. The "light fantastic toe" is merely the antithesis of the face of Melancholy—"sober, steadfast, and demure." The joys pictured in this song are not at all like those which produce the vertigo whose evil effects Silenus deplures. They are the joys of quiet country life. Dancing is one of these I grant, but not the dancing against which I inveigh. There "many a youth and many a maid" dance "in the chequered shade" "till the live-long daylight fail," a slight contrast to the merry making which only begins when night has with her sober livery all things clad, and too often ends about the time when nature should be, not creeping to rest, but just awakening into the life of a new day.

4. Meanwhile welcome joy, and feast,  
Midnight shout, and revelry,  
Topsy dance, and jollity.—*Comus*.

5. Then our age was in its prime,  
Free from rage and free from crime,  
A very merry, dancing, drinking,  
Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time.—*Secular Masque*.

These lines need no comment. No person with less effrontery than Silenus would invite sane men of the nineteenth century to endorse any such conduct as they suggest.

6. Miriam "the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.—*Exodus*.

Here, as in the first extract, the dance is represented as the manifestation of religious joy, for the principal actress accompanies her timbrel with a psalm of praise for the deliverance of her nation, she says to her companions, who, let us remark, were not a mixed assembly, but were all women,—“Sing ye to the Lord for he hath triumphed victoriously.”

7. Dames of ancient days  
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;  
And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,  
Has frisked beneath the burden of four score.—*Traveller*.

Is this "commendatory" of the assembly from which all young children are excluded, and in which "gay grandsires" never, or hardly *frisk*? Perhaps Silenus thinks so, but I certainly do not. Now, having endeavoured to clear myself of the imputation of garbling the language of the mighty dead, let me say just a word or two about what I have already said, and what my friend has said about it.



He would have us believe that because a graceful dancer is also a graceful walker, we profit by spending a great deal of time in learning the art, and in practising the same until we arrive at such a stage that we may, by our god-like carriage, attract the eyes of Granville street critics—"a consummation devoutly to be wished for!" Granted that a man should make himself as agreeable as he may to the eyes of his fellow, and that a slouching gait is not pleasant to our senses, is there no way of attaining a graceful carriage except by persistently dancing into it? From the fact that I have seen excellent walkers, and many of them who would rather fly than dance, I am convinced that there is no necessary connection between grace in carriage and "salutation." A few lessons and a careful remembrance of them in our daily peregrinations will accomplish directly quite as much as may indirectly be derived from a persistent indulgence in "tripping folly."

Again I am accused of preferring the intoxicating stimulus of the wine cup to the innocent (?) pleasure of the waltz. I used the words "friendly bowl" to express the usual accompaniment of social intercourse, the dainties that are commonly found on the festal board; these may or may not include the fruit of the vine. But suppose they are only applicable to this latter, why should the use of wine give a sensible and moderate man a vertigo from whose effects he cannot recover for days?

There are two ways of meeting a statement of truth,—one is to cover it with ridicule, the other to exaggerate the expression of it so far as to destroy its force. In taking up the prejudicial-to-health argument Silenus combines both these methods, and in the end leaves my statement unanswered. I now repeat it. The modern dance is prejudicial to health; and let anyone who has breathed the heated air of a dance room for even a few hours testify of his physical state during the day following, and I venture to say his evidence will support my assertion. Let another speak of his headache the day following an "innocent" quadrille party, and even Silenus will admit that perhaps the vertigo developed by a waltz has effects which last longer than a few minutes.

By another distortion of my language I am made to consider dancers immoral. Far be it from me to say that my many good friends who delight to belong to the train of Terpsichore are not as pure in their thoughts and lives as I or

any sedate walker may be. I claimed that there was an inconsistency in the matter. I am as strongly inclined to that opinion as ever. And the recollection of the ways of my ancestors neither converts me from error (?) nor convinces me that a revival of their style of making merry would be beneficial to modern society. We have already looked at the evidences which Silenus produces from Holy Writ. We have seen that the references were in no case made to merry making or revelry—but that in every case the spirit inspiring the actors was that of piety and a desire to praise the Eternal King. I am sorry that my friend did not quote a few of his "numberless instances." I might then have been convinced. S.

### FUN.

HENCE loath'd Melancholy,  
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,  
In Stygian cave forlorn,  
'Mongst horrid shapes and shrieks, and sights unholy:

But come thou goddess fair and free,  
In heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,  
And by men heart-easing Mirth,—  
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest, and youthful jollity,  
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,  
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles.—*Milton.*

FUN is a funny thing when you try to think what it really is. A good definition would be somewhat difficult to give. Speaking from experience, we would define it to be a tickling nervous sensation, beginning about the region of the stomach and penetrating to the remotest corner of the human system.

Sometimes it opens fire by starting a smile at the corner of a man's mouth, which runs all round his face, brings a twinkle of light into his eye, and eventually produces a sort of honey-suckle emotion; at other times it causes indescribable convulsive contortions as if an earthquake were taking place within. As a general rule, the amount of fun is estimated by the magnitude of the grin, but a correct result cannot always be gotten in this way, for sometimes the bigger part of the grin is inside.

It has been said that fun is better than physic, and for our part when there is a choice between fun and Epsom salts, or bitter aloes, or cod-liver oil, we always prefer the former and consider there is quite as much virtue in it. We do not propose at present to enumerate a long list of the

fun-producing elements, but only to point our index-finger to what we call genuine fun, that which causes pain to no one. Fun for the boys and death for the frogs is lopsided, and there should be some consideration for the frogs, cold-blooded though they be. It can scarcely be considered funny to tramp on your neighbour's corns, though the peculiar expression which takes possession of his countenance during such an operation might be the cause of some merriment to the one, yet clearly indicates that there is pain suffered by the other.

Our idea of the pure unadulterated article is something like that which takes everyone by storm with the force of a hurricane, sweeping away the chilling shades of melancholy; dragging forth the soul from its hiding place; plunging it in a bath of glorious sunshiny sport; rousing up the whole inner and outer man; hastening even Moir's hot mutton pies to dissolution. We always considered it a special providence to Dalhousie's sons that Moir's bakery has been established over the way. We beg pardon for this digression. It is fun which brings a sickly smile into the classic gloom where it flickers for a moment with a ghostly gleam, and finally ascends triumphant to the lofty pile. It is fun which starts on its course upstairs with mathematical precision, wimpling away in circles, then flying off at a tangent, it goes bumping down the old stone steps; bouncing from the floor to the ceiling, at length it bursts through the cold unfeeling walls, rolling and roaring away down across every street, making the policemen fly to the cellars, for they prognosticate by the sound that there is a tremendous row up town; ultimately the echoes mingle with murmurs of ocean and are lost forever.

There appears to be a likeness between electricity and fun, as the latter seems to have two poles corresponding to those of the former; on the positive side we always classified the dry shampoo, the slide down stairs, and the preliminary exhortation by the gymnastic professor. In order to prove our assertion that fun has a negative pole, we will recall an incident of our school days.

One bright sunny morning as I was wending my way to the old brown schoolhouse, the thought struck me that it would be a dreadful funny thing to play truant, so instead of going inside I sneaked off and hid under an old bridge, anticipating a glorious frolic away down the

meadow. When I came out of my hiding place I could see one window of the school-house, and imagined that the master, as we all called him, stood there watching the bridge, so I was afraid to stir. Time hung heavy on my hands. Our lesson that morning began with the words,—

"Time's an hand-breadth; 'tis a tale;  
'Tis a vessel under sail;"

I kept thinking of these lines for some time, presently I remembered two more,—

"'Tis a torrent's rapid stream;  
'Tis a shadow; 'tis a dream."

Of all liars the author of such poetry appeared to me to be the greatest. Then I began to fear greatly lest a snake might come and sting me, and I should be found dead under the bridge, all on account of playing truant. My hair actually stood on end with fear. I crouched down in the mud scarcely daring to breathe, as I fully expected to see some slimy monster glide from under the old logs and swallow me up. However dinner hour came along at last. I just waited until the coast was clear, then bolted for home, but to my horror and dismay the master was there before me. In order to make a long story short, I received a due portion of slipper philosophy from the maternal side of the family, and also a goodly share of birch philosophy during the afternoon in school, so that I have considered myself somewhat of a philosopher ever since.

From the above we are convinced that our statement is fully borne out, and that there is a negative pole to fun beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Now, gentle reader, there are some things I would like you to try just for fun. Firstly. Take a good square look at the district schoolmarm as she comes into church after getting a new feather in her hat. Secondly. Step on the train of a young lady who has a fellow. Thirdly. Take a good look out of the corner of your eye at two William goats when in a combative frame of mind, and as they assume a perpendicular attitude hold your breath and do not say a word, but wait for the concussion of the resultant forces. Lastly, but not least. We wish you to try one thing by all means, just for fun, *i. e.*, kiss a beautiful blushing damsel without shutting your eyes.

Yours truly,

WILLIE WYMBLE.



## DALHOUSIE GAZETTE.

HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 14, 1880.

## EDITORS.

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WE trust that the want of a Professor of Elocution will not make any difference in respect to the prizes offered for competition in this branch. It is a matter of comparative ease for the student who has any ambition in this direction, to train himself, with the assistance of some guide on the exercise of speaking. Even during the professorship of our late instructor in Rhetoric we were of opinion that too little time was spared from the ordinary class work to devote to the work of elocution. But we believe that the necessity for private practice will now be greater than ever, as the usual amount of college training has been removed for this session at least. Now without some present motion the probability is small that this duty will be attended to. The student who has what he considers a large amount of classics and mathematics to prepare for the dreaded Ides will easily persuade himself that holding forth to the bed-post in the language of Burke or Sheridan is only a waste of time. But if the aforesaid exercise holds out the temptation of a prize at the end, affairs will appear quite different.

We do not make these remarks altogether in a selfish spirit. They are prompted partly by a

desire to see the ordinary Dalhousie student shorn to some extent of the faculty of making his fellow man miserable when he attempts to speak, and partly by a desire to give the donor the usual opportunity of exhibiting his generosity on Convocation day.

While on this subject it may not be out of place to entreat the students to turn their attention to something which savours of novelty. The Sixth and Seventh Readers are pretty well played out by this time, and all the ordinary American Independence harangues have lost their power to move through hard usage. Give us something new, gentlemen, and in this way make the competition interesting. It might not be a bad idea to look up a few speeches by some of our own orators, such as Howe, Johnston or Tupper. Why Nova Scotians must cross the line in search of eloquence when we have some limited supply of the commodity at home, is a conundrum we will rather suggest than attempt to solve. And don't give us *sermons*, please! Remember there is a place for everything, and few commodities have a greater faculty of getting out of place than sermons. Save them till you get to Pine Hill, gentlemen. The atmosphere out there is more healthy for such flights. We have observed that even the cats in that portion of our metropolis seem to have an unusual longevity of expression. Give us *speeches* by all means, and *fresh ones*.

THE History classes of the fourth year are still in abeyance, and it is generally understood that no oral teaching will be given in that department for the remainder of the session. There is every probability, however, that work will be prescribed from standard authors, from which the examination papers will be set. If the amount to be covered is proportionate to the time before the end of the term, there is not much anxiety among the Seniors for information immediately, but if that is not the case, it would be pleasant to know at once. The last seven

weeks of a term, when reviews are the order of the day, (and night too,) is not a very long period for the preparation of the modern history of Europe.

IT will be a satisfaction to our readers to learn that Dr. Lyall, Professor of Metaphysics and Logic, has taken charge of the class in Rhetoric. Of course, at this advanced stage of the term, it can hardly be expected that anyone could adapt himself to all the wants of the class. The students, however, are general in their praises of the method in which the class is conducted, and we can almost wish we were Freshmen again, to hear the text-book of our late Professor in Rhetoric analysed by the masterly hand of Dr. Lyall.

A COMMUNICATION which appeared in the *Acadian Recorder* of April last, touching the competition for the Elocution Prizes, which seems now to have become an institution of our College, gives occasion for a few remarks upon this subject. At that time the matter was fresh in our memories, and it is with a desire to excite an interest in a topic of some practical importance that we seek to revive it. We do it *now* in order that there may be opportunity for a change during the present term in the plan that has hitherto been in vogue, if it shall seem that the considerations which we may now or hereafter offer are of sufficient weight. It was urged in the article referred to, that, as the declamations delivered at the Convocation ceremonies were the only specimens shown to the public of the work which was done within Dalhousie's walls, and as this consisted simply in a rehearsal of the ideas of some orator, known or unknown, the public had reason to suspect that in other studies there was reasonable ground for complaint. The exercises might indeed be good of the kind, but to use a common expression, were of a very poor kind.

We think we understand the nature of the case well enough to inform the friends who patronize our semi-annual gatherings that the Elocution exercises have no relation whatever to the other work of the College; that the competition is open to any student, undergraduate or general, whether attending the Elocution class

or not, and that as a rule the prizes fall to students who are not, for the time, members of the Rhetoric class, *i. e.*, to those who prepare in private for the contest. This may be partly accounted for on the hypothesis that it takes one term to overcome that enervating *stage-fright*. Again, the introduction of this feature into Convocational proceedings was probably to increase the interest and variety, and could never have been intended to indicate that the successful speaker represented any other element of college work. Still we confess that some such criterion may not unnaturally be expected, and it is with the view of readjusting this anomaly and suggesting an adoption of the plan that is followed in most other colleges, that we ask the attention of those who have the power of effecting the desired end.

Let us make a stride in advance from declamations to orations, so-called. Let the grand ideas which many a school-boy in our Province could pronounce more "trippingly on the tongue" than our average graduate, be given up for such original rhetorical effort as may be in our power, and which will in some degree indicate the scholarship, style of composition and diction, and fitness for the rostrum which the candidate may possess. It does not seem that any argument can be required to indicate to any one of common understanding the advantages of the proposed plan. That there is a tendency in it to spread eagerness we admit, but the same influences which have operated in restraining us heretofore from that sort of thing will still be effectual, without doubt. The practical advantage which our plan has over the other is seen in this, that recitation is rarely turned to any other use than that of interesting the public in social entertainments, while the power of presenting our ideas before an audience enhances very much our influence and standing in society; the one is largely mechanical, the other exhibits freedom and naturalness; that is memory, and may not be even the opinion of the speaker, this is the exertion of every mental power, and is characterized by identity of interest between the person and the idea, by profound conviction and desire to convince.

The attention and criticism which are necessary to the production of a polished oration will weigh down all the intellectual benefit of one hundred memorized speeches, and the man who can express his own views without embarrassment will never be confounded by a declamation.



It might not even be prudent at first to venture into such an untried field as introducing the novice to the Convocation as the orator of the occasion, but if, as in the past, the Legislative Assembly room should be the scene of the polemical warfare, the contestant who could derive no inspiration from the associations of the hour, from the intellectual throng, from the historic surroundings which though dead still speak,—he, we say, might well question whether the platform was his legitimate sphere.

We are not, however, contending for show, but practical advantage, and we believe that a prize of judicious value offered by some of our friends, would have a very good effect. We do not ignore the claims of declamation, but we do insist upon the comparative superiority of the other system. The question may arise in what way the respective merits of contestants is to be tested. We see no reason why the present Elocution competition might not be allowed to cover the whole ground, so that at one meeting all competitors might be classed either as reciters of their own or of some one else's composition. An application of the system of examination which already obtains is all that is necessary.

For some years our College has been indebted to the generosity of the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia for Elocution prizes, and we believe their effect has been very salutary. Knowing, however, that his aim in this, as in so many more important channels of munificence, is the welfare of Dalhousie, we are perhaps hardly modest enough in venturing the suggestion that one of the Elocution prizes be given for the best oration. When this had been done once or twice tentatively, then there would be good opportunity for a comparison of the respective merits of the two claims. Of course the result will remain with the students, who, in cases of this kind may be considered the best judges, being guided by a sort of infallible instinct, which, however, will probably be best brought into play by the prospect of a prize. We may remark, too, that though it may appear that Freshmen would hardly compete to advantage or with a fair chance on this basis, yet we have found that the college year is no gauge of ability. It might be an improvement, however, to exclude Seniors and Juniors from any part in the purely declamatory mode, and invest them, willing or not, with the *virilis toga*. At the same time no general student should be eligible unless he is one of those who *must* wear a gown. Whether one

student should be allowed to compete in both classes is a doubtful question, but certainly not at one examination. We hope we have not been too dictatorial in making these remarks. We simply consider the plan as quite practicable and better by far than the present, and without any selfish interests or prejudice toward existing institutions, are anxious for its adoption.

E. C.

### "BUNCOMBE."

WE hear much in these modern times respecting the hurtful effects of certain classes of literature. A proportion of this complaint we corroborate with pleasure. Certainly there is a mass of printed material floating about the world which, to say the least, we would be better without. There are certain departments of reading, however, receiving the unlimited support of men who certainly ought to have sound judgment in these matters, which we believe are contributing their quota to the general fund of trash. One of these classes we wish to hold up briefly for observation. We refer to the juvenile Sunday School literature of the nineteenth century.

Necessarily these books treat largely of *good little boys and girls*. Now we have two objections to the aforesaid Sunday School book good little boys and girls. In the first place, they exist only in the sickly imagination of some fifth-rate story monger. And in the second place they present ideal sanctimonious juveniles, which can never be other than objects of contempt to any sensible real boy or girl. These youths ask their *mammas* sage questions which would puzzle a Junior in the metaphysical class. They allow non-Church-going urchins to pound them with perfect impunity, and during the operation are heard to murmur some scriptural text. They die as the gentle Spring is opening the tiny buds, leaving the reader in a state of perplexity as to how they had passed through so many previous gentle Springs.

Now all this may be very well; the weak point however, is that it exists only on paper. But seriously; we believe that there is nothing which can bring religion into greater contempt than by holding it up in unnatural and ridiculous lights. There are no such children. We are glad there are none such, and why sensible adults should place this nonsense in the hands of any child is a mystery we are unable to unravel.

But the above is our least objection to the current literature of this class. The following is the tone in which it appeals in large measure to the sympathies or feelings. Some Sunday School stripling, through the influence of a band of urchins who do not attend the aforesaid place of instruction, has been persuaded against the orders of his *mamma* to go for a swim on the Sabbath and of course is drowned. These yarns are presented as warnings of Judgment to youths who show a disposition to enjoy themselves on that day against the orders of some saintly maternal. It is an old truth that fools madly rush where angels fear to tread. On whose authority, we would ask, is doctrine as above taught? The irreverence which ignorantly ascribes such dealings to Providence is only equalled by the stupidity of those placing such caricatures before the observation of children. Far better, we believe, to let a boy fly his kite or spin his top all day Sunday, strongly though we disapprove of these proceedings, than to imbibe such monstrous beliefs concerning the dealings of Divinity, which in any case are beyond the cognizance of humanity.

The history of man furnishes numberless cases of lives devoted through long years to the work of evil. We look back over the record of such names as Voltaire, Paine, Hume, Mandeville. Who can estimate the evil growing out of the seeds which those men have scattered broadcast on the fields of time? All our loftiest ideas concerning virtue, morality and Deity they have ridiculed and despised. In their systems they have degraded every sentiment of nobility and of honor. Notwithstanding, who can point to any special dispensation of evil in their history. And yet these sage philosophers of Sunday School notoriety gravely order the Judgments of Heaven to fall on a child who under temptation has momentarily disobeyed his mother, or been rather thoughtless on the Sabbath Day. With these remarks we leave the reader to ponder, trusting that a new and more common-sense era may yet dawn upon *some* departments of literature.

J. F. D.

### ASH WEDNESDAY.

FOR the benefit of our Non-conformist friends in particular we quote Chambers's Encyclopædia on the above caption:—"Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, so called from the R. C. ceremony of strewing ashes on the head

as a sign of penitence. This custom, probably introduced by Gregory the Great (590-604), was sanctioned by Pope Celestin III. in 1191 and afterwards generally prevailed. Before mass, the ashes were consecrated on the altar, sprinkled with holy water and signed three times with the cross while the priest recited the words "Memento quod cineres, et in cinerem reverteris!" ('Remember that thou art dust and must return to dust.') Next they were strewed on the heads of the officiating priests, the clergy, and the assembled people. The ashes were said to be those of the palms consecrated on the preceding Palm Sunday. The Protestant Church in Germany does not celebrate Ash-Wednesday. In the Church of England it is observed by the stricter members, but without anything of the ceremony from which it derives its name; and the commination—a series of denunciation against impenitent offenders—is appointed to be read in the service for the day."

The observation of this holiday at Dalhousie is much approved by the students, although we do not think the professors are unanimous in their praises. It serves, however, to indicate that Presbyterian influence is not predominant, of which we hope our carping contemporaries will make a note.

### THE GREAT PYRAMID OF CHEOPS.

WE had the pleasure of listening to Mr. Fraser's justly celebrated lecture on the great Pyramid of Cheops. Seldom has it been our privilege to spend an evening of more intense interest than that on which the wonders of this massive structure were recited in our hearing. The speaker in language which it is difficult to doubt, demonstrated many of the important facts of science from the language written by measurements upon this mountain of masonry. All the striking events of human history, past, present and future, he reads from this record on the rock. We do not profess to be able in any manner to criticise his conclusions. If they are just we see here without exception the wonder of wonders. If their only aim is a display of human ingenuity, we still must regard the great pyramid as a subject of intense interest.

*A Junior* having considered a lecture in Physics is puzzled to understand under what division of energy the power of brandy comes, potential or kinetic. Such a *Sage-wit* should be awarded a leather medal.



## OUR EXCHANGES.

WE have religiously refrained from making any pointed reference to the many good qualities which are so obtrusively apparent in the GAZETTE, for you know, dear reader, without any reminder from us, that Geo. Colman's verse in the Epilogue to the "Heir at Law" meets our case exactly,—

"On their own merits modest men are dumb."

Still even modest individuals have a kind of longing in their nature for a recognition of their virtues by others. Now the base treatment we have received from some of our college exchanges almost ruffles our angelic disposition, almost forces us to swear by our socks (a system of profanity borrowed from a brother editor) to suffer no longer; but our better self gains the ascendancy. Shall we attempt to retaliate?

"Never, tho' our mortal summers  
To such length of years should come,  
As the many-winter'd crow  
That leads the clanging rookery home."

We smile as modestly and as blandly as of yore, and take up our editorial pen and begin our work of love.

The *Brunonian* is interesting and unpretending.

The only copy of the *University Magazine* that we have received has made a good impression.

The *Tablet* is as puerile and ungrammatical as ever. We have lost all faith in vacation turkey.

The *Bates Student* has donned a new dress and is in every way greatly improved.

The *Archangel* contains much excellent poetry—contributed by Tennyson and Tom Moore.

The *Beacon* has won the good will of its readers by discharging a number of the theological editors, whose performances in the domain of wit have during the present session been most excruciating. Pope is right. Men may have more wit than does them good.

We have been trying our best to gain a sweet word from the editresses who conduct in so praiseworthy a manner the *Portfolio*, but our efforts have been ineffectual. We have exhausted our vocabulary of praise upon the *Portfolio*; still our fair sisters attack us in a most

shocking manner. In the words of Voltaire, "Perhaps we are both of us mistaken."

Notwithstanding the machinations of the Dec. "devil," the *Acadia Athenæum* comes forward at the beginning of 1880 with as much conceit as if this was not Leap Year. And a Female Academy adjoining!

"Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,  
All but the page prescribed, their present state."

We would have our Acadian friends remember that discretion is the better part of valour. The *Athenæum* contains a notice of the establishment of closer relations between the College and the Female Seminary. This is the superlative degree of reckless daring. An old work contains the following, which we bring to the notice of our friends: "Albeit, it has now become a part of the common lawe in regarde to social relations of life, that as often as every bissextile year dothe return, the ladyes have the sole privilege during the time it continueth of making love unto the men, which they doe, either by words or lookes as to them it seemeth proper; and no man will be tilled to the benefit of clergy who doeth in any way treate her proposal with slight or contumely." Take notice, dear friends, and govern yourselves accordingly.

The *College Olio*, with less reason, displays more conceit, if possible, than the *Athenæum*. Some of our readers may remember the warm debate between two professors of Laputa, as to the most commodious and effectual way of raising money without grieving the subject. One proposed that a tax should be imposed upon those qualities of mind for which men chiefly value themselves. The amount of each man's tax to depend upon his own estimate of his endowments. Such a system would be financially ruinous to the conductors of the *Olio*. If the highest tax were to be put upon those individuals of the masculine persuasion who are the greatest favorites with the other sex, as one of the professors recommended, our Ed. would be driven into bankruptcy instanter. The *Olio* is nothing if not poetical.

"Do not, boys, oh do not swear,  
When you find your feet in air,  
And you're sitting plump and square  
In the mud up to your hair."

Let us now embrace our antiquated friend, the *Niagara Index*, which cometh from Our Mother of Angels, Suspension Bridge. Why it is like embracing an Egyptian mummy. We are sorry

that we tried the experiment. The *Index* whines at the GAZETTE in a most heart-rending manner, so we must be mild and merciful.

"Much-complaining mortal, pork-and-treacle waster,  
Pretermit thy whining, wheel thine ear-flap toward us,"

and listen to our advice and you'll be virtuous. The "Professor at the Breakfast Table," tells us that a tortoise is fond of its shell, but if you put a live coal on his back he crawls out. The coals from out the fire of our affection are slowly but surely doing their work at Our Mother of Angels. But Oh! the *Index's* poetry is too much for our piety. It is a cross breed between the "Three Black Crows" and "This Pig Went to Market." Our poets—and their name is legion—are willing to supply the *Index* with original poetry on the most reasonable terms. Saturday is grinding day. All orders promptly filled. A small advance is demanded for Sunday grind.

We are completely overwhelmed. The *Eastern Chronicle* has seen fit to read us a lecture upon total abstinence in matters political. It throws in gratuitously a few general directions for our guidance in conducting the GAZETTE. We are everlastingly obliged to the editor of our eastern contemporary for his magnanimity. His extensive experience, as chief manager of a large publishing establishment at Port Hawkesbury, Cape Breton, gives his words prodigious weight. We also respect his years. We shall ever take him for our great ensample.

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime."

Listen to his fatherly admonition.

"The Dalhousie College Gazette indicates no small promise on the part of the students who conduct it. But we must admonish the youngsters who write for it, that, for the sake of their own character, they should not employ their periodical to circulate the vile falsehoods of a paper of the stamp of the *Halifax Herald*. In the number for January 17th occurs the following, 'It has been said to the honor of one of Nova Scotia's gifted statesmen, that while he occupied the proud position of Minister of Militia, his mind soared above the trivialities which have given so much trouble to Webster and Worcester.' The writer of this sentence, which he deems so witty, ought to have known, and if he did not the editors ought to have been able to tell him, that it has long been proved that the story of the Minister of Militia's bad spelling was a pure fabrication of that disgraceful sheet."

It is very unusual for us to notice the puny criticisms of such journals as the *Eastern Chronicle*; but in this case we make an exception. Physiologists tell us that stupidity saves some men from going mad. The individual who takes offense at the obscure reference in the above quotation, will never make a decent subject for an insane

asylum. The rejection of the article on "Original Poetry," because it contained a passing allusion to what some one else had said about a late Minister of Militia, would have displayed contemptible bigotry, on the part of the editors. Judging by the tone of our contemporary's criticism, the chief complaint is that our contributor got the substance of the offensive paragraph from the *Halifax Herald*. Now we have no power to keep our contributors and the public in general from reading "that disgraceful sheet;" and if we did possess the power and did choose to exercise it over the patriarchal editor of New Glasgow, the *Eastern Chronicle* would suspend publication in a week. His chief nourishment is drawn from the city papers. The very issue in which he attempts to admonish us contains a long editorial article copied from the "base" Conservative organ. In short, the most readable portions of our contemporary are borrowed either from the *Halifax Chronicle* or from the *Herald*. We hope to hear no more idiotic ranting about the politics of the GAZETTE, for we have published nothing of a political character in the past, and we shall be equally careful in the future.

## SODALES.

ON Friday evening, Feb. 6th, Sodales Society met in class room No. 1, President in the chair. After the usual preliminary exercises, it was moved by Mr. Landels and seconded by Mr. Dustan that the next Friday be devoted to an entertainment of musical and literary character. After some remarks on the above subject, the debate of the evening was called. The question was as follows:—"Is a Prohibitory Liquor Law advisable for Canada?" The first and fourth years took the negative side, and the second and third years the affirmative. Mr. Dustan, who opened the discussion for the negative, remarked that he was strongly opposed to the use of alcohol as a beverage, and would second any scheme which might be suggested for the removal or mitigation of this evil, but that in his opinion the proposed law was utterly impracticable for the following reasons,—it was going beyond the just range of law; it must in any case fail to accomplish the desired end; it would put a premium on smuggling; it was advocated on an erroneous principle, &c.



Mr. Costley responded for the affirmative. He was inclined to question the proposition that such a law was exceeding the just bounds of law, and thought that it was as fair to legislate against this as any other vice. He pointed out the evil that was following the importation of liquor, and argued that some active measures were necessary in this case. Mr. Cameron waxed eloquent in disproving a statement of the first speaker's, to the effect that it was not strictly liquor, but the excessive use of it, that was injuring the country.

Mr. MacDonald in replying, remarked that he had not come here to listen to temperance harangues, but to debate the question on broad principles. He pointed to certain of the States in the Union which had proved the efficacy of this measure. Mr. Lord showed a disposition to "go for" all the preceding speakers, and also advanced some strong arguments for the affirmative. Mr. Calder made a few very temperate and appropriate remarks on the negative side. He held that the measure was good, but that the country was not yet prepared for its application. Mr. MacNally spoke on the same side. His remarks were as usual somewhat *strong* and inclined to the *boiling point sermoniac!* His heads were *rather* numerous, his conclusions *rather* distant, and his practical applications *rather* ghastly. The vote being taken resulted in a majority for the negative.

We were glad to notice the large gathering on this evening, and trust that the enthusiasm may be kept alive for a few more weeks. A little more preparation on the part of *some* students would have a beneficial effect on the logic and even rhetoric on these occasions.

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## INNER DALHOUSIE.

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ALTHOUGH the examinations are eight weeks distant, signs of fear are visible in the faces of the less courageous students, while the stout-hearted think not of the evils approaching, but consider that "sufficient for the day," is enough of evil in itself.

THE howls which daily resound through the halls when the *Sophs* are let out, called forth the remark from the Prof. of Mathematics, that they would be soon qualified to enter a menagerie.

WHO would have thought it! Pity the teacher and take pity on the scholar! The student with the *gesticulating ear* is taking lessons on the piano. He that hath an *ear*, &c.

OUR *Neptune* does not compare favourably with the "deep and dark blue" ocean. He is altogether too *dry* and *green*.

A *Soph* looking over his room-mate's text-book in Physics, which professed to be an elementary work, remarked, while his heart went *pitter patter*,

"If this be elementary,  
Preserve me at the *supplementary*."

How'ard it is for us to keep a calm exterior when a *Junior* who ought to know better asks us a question such as this: "If I kiss a young lady by mistake, is that a *blunderbuss*?" He should be sent hence without the benefit of clergy.

ONE of the *Sophs* is a great dabbler in Chemistry. He is exceedingly fond of it: nor does one ever see him but what he has with him a chemical compound of which sulphur is an important element. Phew!

THE *Sophomore* Class in Mathematics are just commencing the study of Logarithms. One can now hear them remarking to each other that such and such a thing is as easy as rolling off a *log*. The simile strikes home at once.

STUDENT translating: "*Et agnum et dominum reddam mortalibus miserum.*" "And I will make both the sheep and its master the most wretched of *men*." Whereupon the Professor remarked that he must be a very *sheepy* student.

A POOR Senior has acquired such a frenzy for his studies that he barely attends one class *per diem* at the College. Should he by chance do this, he rushes home to his work immediately afterwards and consequently is hardly ever seen in the Humanity class. He will surely die soon.

*Cosine* is at his old tricks again. He says that he never saw any one in whom the equation to the curve is so clearly manifested. For this reason he has made up his mind. He intends to buy a valentine of her in the shop and send it to her through the post. She will recognize the valentine and his love will be declared. The curtain will fall on the happy scene of the *Sine* and *Cosine* joined together in the bonds of love. We wish all happiness to the mathematical family *in prospectu*.

THE students were startled recently at seeing a "tired" man lying full length on the door step in front of the College, with a gingham umbrella in one hand and a package of bread and butter in the other. The students at first thought he was *Neptune*, but it was explained to them that *Neptune* lived on *molasses* only, and therefore he could not be the man. But there was a remarkable likeness, though.

TWELVE numbers of the GAZETTE are issued every Winter Session by the STUDENTS of Dalhousie College and University.

### TERMS:

One collegiate year (*in advance*) ..... \$1 00  
Single copies (each)..... 10

Payments to be made to J. Davidson, Financial Secretary, and all communications to be addressed to "Editors DALHOUSIE GAZETTE, Halifax, Nova Scotia." Anonymous communications can receive no attention.

Printed by the NOVA SCOTIA PRINTING COMPANY, corner of Sackville and Granville Streets, Halifax, N. S.