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MELROSE ABBEY.

One of the most interesting spots in the Lowlands of Scotland is the quiet vale of Melrose, situated in the north of Roxburghshire. Picture to yourself the scene: a large valley, the gentle-sloping, yet lofty hills, covered on this side with crops and cultivated vegetation, on that, for the most part, with natural verdure; the silvery Tweed rippling at the bottom, with here and there a tributary burn: on the one hand, a little village of a hundred inhabitants, on the other, the town of Melrose; glance upward at the tri-peaked Eildon hills; follow with your eye the windings of the Tweed till the growing city of Galashiels bursts upon your view: then callous and indifferent to nature must you be, if no aesthetical emotions mingle with your sensations. But leaving the general, let us descend to particulars, and examine whatever is worth attention.

The town of Melrose itself presents little that is attractive to the sight-seer; a few crooked streets, a number of old houses with thatched roofs after the primeval fashion, three churches, several handsome private residences, a public square, in the centre of which stands an old wooden cross, a railway station, and a population of one thousand, are about the only possessions of which it can boast. But let not the lover of the marvellous or the picturesque turn away in disappointment: for here, comprised within these few acres of ground, exists an edifice, which for years has furnished material for the themes and praises of poet and novelist. This is nothing less than the old Abbey. Everyone has heard of Melrose Abbey; everyone has longed to visit it. Queen Victoria did not think it beneath her dignity to spend some hours within its walls; Sir Walter Scott considered it one of the chief objects of interest in his native land: whilst its beauty and grandeur have been immortalized by Mrs. H. B. Stowe and other writers of celebrity. But let us approach it and criticise for ourselves. Viewed at a little distance, it strikes the mind with a peculiar sensation: rugged and gloomy, the Tweed flowing past on one side, a street running by on another, surrounded, as it is, by dwellinghouses of no very florid order of architecture, it suggests the idea of an ancient Moslem palace in its decay magically transported from some Eastern capital to an entirely incompatible situation in a foreign clime, or of London Bridge as it will yet (?) be viewed by "Macaulay's New Zealander" standing close to its hoary ruins. It is indeed a relic of the olden times; seven centuries and more have elapsed since it was erected; yet still it stands, proudly and defiantly rearing its crest towards heaven, as if immoveable and eternal. Its architecture is probably of the Corinthian order; and for beauty and grace is considered the most perfect in Great Britain. Who the builders of such a magnificent fabric were, is a disputed question: but be they whom they may, they have left a monument of art which the sculptors of Greece itself might well envy. Its history is brief but interesting: it was built in the twelfth century, and occupied by monks until a reaction against Roman Catholicism began to spread through Britain: then

the Protestants, in their fiery zeal, in order that no traces of Papacy might remain in England, made it their business to destroy every convent and nunnery in the land: in this general work of destruction, Melrose Abbey did not entirely escape; and the loss of all its magnificently-stained windows, and robbery or breakage of several of the most faultless portions of architecture, tell a tale of misguided zeal, and fanatical superstition. The outside of the Abbey is beautifully ornamented: the windows, especially, adorned with every conceivable variety of sculpture, excite the admiration and envy of all modern architects. Here a fair head with flowing ringlets looks down from one of the gable ends: there a horrid countenance with diabolical features, glares at the startled beholder with a malignant expression. The solemn, the sublime, the beautiful, the grotesque, the horrible, and the ridiculous are mingled together in a felicitous combination, the one throwing the other into greater relief.

Melrose Abbey has been always a model of architectural design. New beauties constantly disclose themselves; and the more searching and critical the examination, the more perfect does the whole work appear. The celebrated architect of the monument of Sir W. Scott, in Prince's St., Edinburgh, had his talent nurtured and educated, perchance awakened, mainly by examining the beauties of Melrose: for he took it as his model, and amidst all his labours, never had its form, grace, and proportions absent from his mind. So much for the general appearance of the Abbey: let us enter it, and examine the chief objects of interest in the interior. As we stand beneath the arch which serves as a doorway, a feeling of awe steals mysteriously over us; we become conscious of the damp unearthly odour, the sombre, yet ghastly hue, the gloomy and unnatural effects of light and shade, the weird cornices and pillars, the flickering, fantastic shadows, the grotesque and ghostly pieces of sculpture, which characterize such relics of the past; above we hear the cawing of ill-omened birds, and the startling rustling of over hanging ivy; on one side the rippling of the glittering Tweed, on the other, the murmuring hum of busy life, faintly reaches our ears—while, directly before our shuddering eyes, darts, with an echoing whirr, the frightened bat, and a few steps off, ticks, in gloomy grandeur, the antiquated time-piece, upon which the lapse of centuries has made little impression.—Truly this is the spot for imagination and for poetic fervour; who can wonder that here was Scott's favourite resort, when he stood in need of inspiration from his Muse?—Silently. (save from the noise of the echoes which our footsteps call forth) we walk up the interior to the nave: but suddenly we halt: for here is the reputed resting-place of the great and mysterious wizard, Michael Scott: here lies he who, by his irresistible magic cleft the solitary peak of the Eildons in three, and whose skill, lore, and foresight, raised him to the rank of a prophet and a universal authority; so, at least, says the beautiful tale—and what tale, or legend, or tradition is there, however incredible, in which we would not, in such a situation and at such a time, place implicit faith?—Almost side by side with this mythical personage, commemorated only by a

roughly-hewn stone, nearly buried in the earth, lies the heart of Scotland's greatest conqueror, Robert DeBruce. Who knows not the story? In the Holy Land, in a battle with the Moors, far into their ranks Douglas hurled the casket containing Bruce's heart, which had been entrusted to his care: when the battle was over, he was found—dead, but clasping in his embrace his sacred charge. The casket was conveyed back to Scotland, and the heart of the hero of Bannockburn buried within these walls. *Requiescat in pace!*—It was the earnest wish of Sir W. Scott that Melrose Abbey might be also his last resting place: had the desire been acceded to, these walls would contain, side by side, the greatest conqueror, the most renowned sage, and the most illustrious poet and novelist, that Scotland has ever produced: but fate decreed otherwise, for this "last but greatest of the Borderers" was buried in the neighbouring Abbey of Dryburgh.—Immediately around the ruins of Melrose is a large burying ground, in which many an antiquarian has puzzled over the almost illegible inscriptions on the tomb-stones, some of which date back to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. And thus finishes our brief survey of Melrose Abbey.

PEREGRINATOR.

THE OPEN POLAR SEA.

As the fabled Phoenix rose from its ashes, so in the case of Arctic explorations, one expedition appears to rise out of the wreck of another, or rather like the monsters springing up from the sown teeth of the Cadmean dragon, every loosened spar and broken rib of the gallant bark which bore the "fated Franklin" has sprung phantom-like into "Arctic expeditions," to solve the mysteries of the Polar seas. Last year has been noted for the great number of such enterprises,—the results are not yet, however, seen. This spirit of enterprise ought undoubtedly to be encouraged, for "never venture, never win." The great "El Dorado" of search is the open Polar sea, and truly if such be discovered, all the labour and trouble of these adventurous heroes will be fully repaid. Now, it is as well to admit at first, that in the belief of an "open Polar sea," we are a little sceptical. And this scepticism was not allayed by reading, in so eminent a paper as the *Scientific American*, the intelligence and observations thereon, which for the benefit of our readers we quote. "In our Journal of Nov. 4th, we announced the welcome news that a region free from ice, of comparatively moderate temperature, had been discovered in the centre of the Arctic circle." The announcement referred to was as follows,—"A letter has been received from a gentleman on board the *Polaris* respecting the safe arrival of the ship at Uppernavik, and her departure thence on Sept. 5th, steering due north, all well. From Gotha, Germany, we hear of the German expedition, and its reported success in reaching the open Polar sea. The sea is reported to be free from ice, and swimming with whales." Many eminent men have argued for the existence of such a sea. Maury's arguments have made it by no means an extravagant notion to hold. But at the least, he has only made it plausible. Dr. Kane's standing on a shore and viewing the heavy green rolling billows chasing each other with all the dignity proper to a "birth" in a vast ocean, is an evidence which is rendered less effective by the statement that the temperature of these waters was about 36°. Sea water freezes at 28°. What is the reason that this warm bath does not modify the temperature south of latitude 80° more than it does? If this sea is polar, and if Dr. Kane stood on one shore a little north of lat. 80°, it is evident that its diameter must be, at least 600 to 1200 miles, not a small pond, and not so very liable to be unknown in its influence on circumjacent lands or seas. The temperature of 36° suggests a lake warmed after the manner of the Iceland

Geysers, and not an ocean. Maury himself admits that whales might pass from one side of the continent to the other without supposing such an hypothesis, by taking advantage of temporary openings of the ice which are so common in these regions. Nevertheless he thinks the existence of such a sea as very probable, and he accounts for it thus. A cold current flows down from Baffin's Bay and Davis' Strait until it meets the Gulf stream, and the fact that icebergs are sometimes seen to move north against this, proves the existence of a current running northward below, which as it comes from the south must be warm. This deep-sea current after passing through the straits rises to the surface in the polar regions, becomes cold and flows south, as the current already alluded to. Now just let us examine this hypothesis. The *Eclectic Review* of December has this item, "Animals native to the Arctic sea have been found in southerly latitudes, and to account for their presence in these regions, the existence has been assumed of a cold current far below the surface, in which the animals were drifted down." This modern assumption and the facts giving rise to it do not, evidently, strengthen Maury's position. Moreover, just now, Captain Spratt, an experienced marine surveyor, holds that no currents prevail in the deep parts of the sea,—that the conclusions recently arrived at are based on a mistaken interpretation of surface current phenomena, and this theory certainly gives no countenance to the great polar under current.

But for the sake of argument, let us grant Maury the probability of the existence of such a current in the lower latitudes. A very large body of water must move north for many hundred miles at the bottom of the ocean. But the question is, how is so large a body of water, as must be necessary to preserve a temperature above freezing in a large sea, where heat from solar influences is at a minimum, to press through the narrow Straits which modern discoveries show to exist north of Baffin's Bay? Behring's Strait, so narrow and so shallow, has not helped to solve the difficulty, while between Europe and Greenland, Captain Spratt at least, has found no such under-current. And again, supposing such a current to be found in lower latitudes, how can we understand the equilibrium of the ocean to be maintained when we imagine millions of tons of water between 30° and 40°, running for hundreds of miles, now in a broad current, again compressed by passing through narrow passages, under another heavy current at 28°? Sea water, we must recollect, has not its maximum density at 39° Fah. like pure water—its temperature of maximum density coincides nearly with its freezing temperature, 28° Fah. Although there should be no interruptions to such a current as the inequalities of its bed, among these arctic islands we can hardly suppose an immense body of light water to flow for hundreds of miles under a heavier body of water, until it reaches the middle of a polar sea, two or three thousand miles north of its starting point.

No doubt, seeing these difficulties in Maury's hypothesis, the above mentioned scientific paper, implicitly reposing confidence in the "report" of a correspondent, ventured on a theory of its own. We quote its own words, "The flattening of the earth at the north and south poles, diminishes the radius of our globe, and brings the surface nearer to the internal heat of the earth by thirteen miles; and our readers will understand that the comparative proximity of the open polar spaces, to the central fires, will make, unless diminished by other causes, an enormous increase in the surface temperature." What a scientific statement! Was the world cooled into a round ball, and then a chip thirteen miles thick chipped off from each pole, when the surface is brought so near the "central fires"? Our readers know that the shortening of the polar diameter of the earth is due to its centrifugal force, that a part of this centrifugal force counteracts gravity, and another part tends to transport the matter of the earth towards the equator,—and that this "transporting force" is

proportional to the product of the sine and cosine of the latitude of the place, and this product is greatest at 45° . From this it follows, that the flattening of the sphere is a "curved flattening" if such an expression be permitted, that the earth took this spheroidal shape as soon as centrifugal force came into operation; and consequently that the earth must have cooled in this shape. But before proceeding further, let us hear the remainder of this *scientific* argument. "Putting the solar and atmospheric influence altogether out of the question, the heat of the earth increases, as we descend, at the considerable rate of 27° Fahrenheit for many thousand feet; and the theory that the heightened temperature in the Arctic circle is more than sufficient to overcome the cold induced by the feebleness, and at the poles, the absence of the sun's rays, has always been regarded by physical geographers, as eminently reasonable, and is now, by actual experiment, *found to be true.*" From this we beg leave to differ. If there be in reality a permanently open spot in the Arctic seas, another theory must account for it, surely this one cannot. For, assuming the earth to cool in its spheroidal condition, which all must admit, that part of the earth's crust about the poles must cool more quickly than any other part, and consequently, here the surface would be at a greater distance from the "central fires" than in the tropical regions. The earth began to radiate its heat in every direction, from the time at which it began to cool. In the tropical regions the loss of this radiant heat has been counterbalanced to a certain extent by the Sun's rays; in the polar regions this compensation has been wanting. From this cause the cold crust of the Arctic regions must be thicker than elsewhere, and the Polar sea further from the "central fires" than the Atlantic.

We can imagine a lake, or a bay even, warmed in a manner perhaps not unlike the Geysers of Iceland, which are in so close a proximity to those regions, but as to the existence of a large open sea, caused by ocean currents, or by proximity to the interior heat, we must more than hint our doubts.

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE.

Our readers will probably be interested in a short account of this institution, which is accomplishing so much in the interest of science, and for the good of mankind. The will of Smithson, bequeathed to the United States of America a certain property in the city of Washington, for the purpose of founding an institution, for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men. To realize the desire thus expressed in the will, is the object of the institution, and its plan of organization is one that admirably effects this object. For the increase of knowledge, two methods are adopted. (1.) Men of talent and eminence are stimulated to original research, by offering suitable rewards for memoirs containing new truths. Each memoir so prepared under the direction and with the aid of the institution, is submitted to a Committee of men, eminent in the particular branch of which the memoir treats. If accepted by this Committee, the memoir is published as a "Smithsonian contribution to knowledge." (2.) A portion of the annual income of the institution, is set apart for researches in particular subjects, under the direction of suitable persons. These researches have been chiefly in the direction of the Natural History and Ethnology of the American Continent. Extended meteorological observations

have also been made, by observers under the direction of the Institute on different parts of the continent, and thus by a simultaneous record of weather-observations, advances are made towards solving the problem of American storms.

The work of the institution in this direction is not confined to these branches, but appropriations may be made to further special research in any subject according to the spirit of the bequest, as the Board of Regents may see fit. The results of these researches are published in the "Smithsonian contributions to Knowledge." The second object of the institution, as stated in the terms of the will, is the diffusion of knowledge. This is accomplished by the publication of a series of annual reports, compiled by men eminent in the different branches of knowledge,—summaries as it were of advances in science, thus opening the herbarium of the botanist, the laboratory of the chemist, the cabinet of the geologist and the observatory of the astronomer to the world. The Institution accomplishes this object also by its system of international exchange; it forms a link between the scientists of Europe and America,—and secures the co-operation of the whole scientific world in its noble work of diffusing knowledge. During the year 1869, one thousand seven hundred and thirty four different packages were forwarded to different parties in foreign countries, and two thousand six hundred were received at the Institution for parties on this continent. These packages pass through all the custom houses of the world free of duty, and are carried by the great ocean steamship companies free of charge. The exchanges consist principally of scientific publications, but specimens are also sent to the museums in different countries for which native specimens are asked in return.

The books received from all parts of the world in exchange for the publications of the institution, are deposited in the National Library of the United States, and form the Smithsonian section. It consists of collections of the publications of the learned societies in Europe, from their inception in the sixteenth century down to the present time. Thus a continuous record of the progress of scientific discovery in every country, from the revival of learning onward, is accessible to the people of the United States, and to all those who wish to co-operate in the work of the institution.

Out of the hundreds of specimens sent to the institution from various countries, a choice series is selected for preservation in the museum, and the remaining duplicates are labelled for distribution. In addition to this, the collections made by those who are employed by the Institution in particular researches, after they have been examined and monographs prepared, are also put aside for distribution to the various museums. By the co-operation of the Army Medical Museum, the Agricultural Museum, and the National Museum in Washington, the Institute has been able to procure suitable room for its splendid collections. These museums have in this way been enriched, while the objects of the Institute have been furthered.

Such is a very short and very meagre account of this noble institution, which is fulfilling to so large an extent, the desire and the will of its beneficent founder—Smithson.

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THE world cannot take long breathing-spaces. The merchant cannot rest, else he will be behind in the race for wealth and power. The artisan cannot rest, for there are hungry mouths to be filled. The artist must be at his work, for "art is long and time is fleeting." The student must burn his midnight-lamp, for the way is steep and hard—"there is no royal road to learning." Work is the common lot of all,—“the sweat of the brow” is the price of sustenance. It is right, however, that we have resting times. As the daring Alpine traveller stops in his toilsome journey and looks back upon the yawning abysses which he has crossed, and the dangers that he has escaped, yet is rewarded with a delightful view of valley and forest and distant sea, and nerves himself for the struggle to the summit, which he sees glittering far above him; so the student should have these halting-places from which he can look back upon the road over which he has travelled, getting inspiration from the retrospect, as well as from the prospect of greater heights and a still wider and more beautiful view.

The holiday-season—the resting-time—is past, but whether we have all had this pleasant retrospect and entertained such high hopes and formed such strong resolutions for the future, is not so easy to tell. In the most of cases, holidays are to the student what is popularly called a “fraud.” For a great many of us the only retrospect has been a review of the work of the preceding part of the term, while the main element in the prospective view has been the work that is to come and then the final trial at the end. The hardest work of the term is now before us, and our energies have been braced to meet it by the two weeks recreation which we have had. Among the many good resolutions which we always form at this time of year, has been one to be more systematic and punctual in study, and schemes have perhaps been drawn up for our guidance. These schemes are very well in their way;

an Alfred, a Benjamin Franklin, or a Newton, may have a systematic division of time and studies, but for the ordinary run of mortals it only results in irritation and disappointment, causing them to weep over the fragments of their broken resolutions and the weakness of human nature in general.^s The best resolution that we can make, is to work as well and faithfully as we can every day, and let every evening find “something accomplished, something done.” Students are sometimes apt to spend, in thinking of the magnitude of the coming examination, the time that ought to be spent in preparation for it. Let us drown all such thoughts as these in good, honest, work, and we will probably find, when we come to the real conflict, that we possess the charms, by which we can successfully overcome the dragon.

It is not our intention to repeat, what has again and again been uttered, viz.:—that debating is the best means of improving ourselves in speaking. The testimony of all who have been benefitted by it is sufficient on this point, as well as the illustrious examples of Canning, Sheridan and Burke, all of whom received their first lessons in a debating society. We wish to say something about the necessity of careful preparation before engaging in any debate. Now that we have two societies, a few practical remarks are perhaps the more necessary. With many of us, close reading and arrangement of thought is deemed of little practical value, if we judge from the speeches we often make. The opener strikes the key-note, and those who follow declaim in unison or antagonism. If we happen to be late, we consider it a sufficient apology for not engaging in the debate, that we did not hear the opener. One after another rings changes on the same idea, changing the phraseology only because we cannot remember the exact words of the fortunate propounder. This we think is a universal fault with all debates, either in colleges or elsewhere. We do not consider our debate as an exercise of study at all. “I did not think much on the subject,” “I am altogether unprepared,” “I would rather be excused till I hear what others have to say,” have become necessary preambles to disjointed and crude observations.—The college debate should be a “regular study” as much as any branch of university training, if not more; a certain amount of time should be devoted to reading and study on the subject to be debated, and also on others bearing on it. While we dislike “set speeches,” yet there must be a “checked course” if we would speak with any success.

We know of no mental exercise that requires more general information than debating. We must be able to meet assertion with fact, fallacy with logic, and poetry with rugged sensible prose. A good debater must be universal in his modes of thought and expression. If the subject requires close reasoning he must bring logic to his aid, or if it be of an emotional nature poetry must be evoked. In one word, we must have the best we know to say, and we must say it in the best way. To perfect ourselves in the first of these requisites, we must keep up a continual course of reading. A happy allusion, if well understood, is more effective than hours of labouring speech-making. Let us impress our

minds with the leading facts of whatever we read, storing them up for future use. For the second requisite we would suggest the study of ourselves more than others, of nature more than art. To speak well we must feel. Specimens of the best prose and poetry committed to memory, and recalled as prompters when we are speaking of like subjects, are very beneficial to a young debater. Not a repeating of them, merely a remembering. They will enable us to give a tone to common remarks which can never be otherwise acquired. And let it not be forgotten, that poetic sensibility is one of the chief sources of successful speaking. It gives grace to common prose,—a sparkle to the dull monotony of facts,—engages the attention of your hearers and gives an ease to every expression. It is the link that connects the members of a good speech, and is worth more than all the treatises and teachers of Elocution combined, in giving grace, polish, and declamatory effect.

In this age of free education and general intelligence nothing is more necessary than ease of expression, and ability to make ourselves understood by means of public speaking. Culture, education, and genius lose much of their weight without it. The best speaker is the most popular man of any community. He has more power than a writer. The speeches of Dickens were often more effective than his writings.

As students of this University, some of us soon to go out into the world, let us attend closely to this important part of education. Let us have more perfect preparation for all our debates. Dependence upon the inspiration of the moment is detrimental to every youthful speaker. The "thinking upon one's legs" without home preparation is a positive damage as it confirms the debater in loose habits of thought and expression. It is better to stand low in classes, as well as in final examination, than to acquire a stammering, coughing, disagreeable way of expressing ourselves.

CRAMMING.

While Education, in the commonly received acceptation of the term, is keeping pace with the progress of the age, it may be questioned with propriety whether real Education—mind training—is making the advancement it should, especially in collegiate institutions. In common schools a marked improvement in this respect has taken place within the last few years; teachers are recognizing their duty and conscientiously performing it; and instead of considering the young mind a receptacle, into which a few stale proverbs, grammatical forms, geographical commonplaces, and arithmetical rules are to be stowed away, to be drawn out and rhymed over with parrot like precision and intelligence when called for, they are beginning to realize that children are placed under their care to receive mental training which will fit them for the active duties of life, to have their minds strengthened by exercise, that they may come forth ready to think intelligently on any subject, explore unknown fields of knowledge, and evoke from Nature her long hidden secrets. So far as any improvement has been made in the right direction let us thankfully accept it and hope for still better things in future; and if even this change for the better could be seen in our higher educational institutions, where the value of the training depends more upon the student than the teacher, the

prospect would be encouraging. On the contrary, the painful truth forces itself on the mind of any one who carefully looks into the matter, that instead of being on the increase, the real mental training received at College is, as a general rule, decreasing, and the principal reason of this decrease is the practice of "cramming" which is so prevalent among the students of most collegiate institutions. To this also is due in great measure, the fact that many, who pass honorably through a course of collegiate instruction, under professors of the highest talent, and eminently qualified for the performance of their work, are found to be no better, sometimes worse fitted for practical life than those who have had few opportunities of obtaining an education, thus giving an appearance of foundation for the prejudice that often exists against giving the benefits of a collegiate course to young men who are not intended for a professional life.

In common schools nearly all devolves upon the teacher. Upon his mode of teaching depends, to a large extent, the progress of the pupils. In college the order is reversed, for while it is necessary to success that the professors be men of ability and liberal education, yet with the student it remains to say what benefit he is to receive from his collegiate course.

Some, from anxiety to get through with the greatest amount of work in the shortest possible time, others, laboring under a false impression that the more facts they can crowd in, the greater the progress, and others again, from a desire to make a fair show and come out with an honorable mention in the class, forgetting or neglecting the true end of education, cram in facts and formulae of all kinds, with little attention to their meaning, and in such a manner that they are of very little use to themselves or any one else, after the sessional examination is past. Using all the intellectual crutches of which the age is so prolific, they hobble along at a surprising rate, outstrip others of superior ability, who are patiently plodding through their work depending on their own exertions, and come out smartly at the close of the term; but when through college, ushered on the stage of active life, compelled to become actors in its scenes, their crutches are no longer available, and the mind, thrown for the first time on its own resources and forced to do its own thinking, is incapable of performing its part with satisfaction to itself or those with whom it comes in contact.

When a student finds that by a free use of Harper's Classics, Algebraic keys, and Mathematical Problems ready solved, he can with very little mental effort attain an honorable position in his classes, while without these helps he would perhaps bring up the rear of the pass list, the temptation is too often yielded to, and the mental discipline, to be obtained from dry, searching, study, is sacrificed for a little temporary honor, which he gets for having performed a mocking bird feat of mere memory, and which in after life he is unable to sustain.

The longer such help is indulged the more urgent does the demand become: and when such a course is pursued for any considerable length of time, it comes to be felt as an imperative necessity, till at length instead of an evenly balanced, well developed, vigorous mind, capable of being turned in any direction, and of grappling successfully with any subject at the bidding of its master, it remains almost a mummy of its former self, so enfeebled from constant dependence on others, that it is of little use to possessor or any one else, and so surfeited with cramming that its working power is almost totally destroyed.

A glutton is justly despised by all, and one whose appetite for stimulants has so far overcome him that he is unable to resist the temptations of the wine closet or grog shop, deserves the commiseration of those who are free from this bondage. While it would be scarcely just to place intellectual "cramming" on a par with excess in eating or drinking, as deserving

the contempt due to the one or the pity called for by the other, yet it has a no less injurious effect on the mind than gluttony and drunkenness have on the body. To a habitual epicure, whose surfeit is almost continual, all food soon loses its relish, the digestive organs worked beyond their power become enfeebled, the body prematurely decays and an untimely death is the consequence. To the student who passes through college as too many do, sacrificing all to present ease and position, preferring the feast of ready made thoughts to the profit of the mental discipline acquired by thinking for himself, and the honor of a successful examination resulting from an indiscriminate cramming of undigested facts, to real, lasting benefits, of dry, hard study, all severe mental exertion soon becomes irksome, the mind debilitated by excessive "cramming" and enfeebled by constant dependence on others, becomes dead to all the higher pleasures of real intellectual life. Eagerly swallowing second hand thoughts and neglecting the thorough study of any subject, he necessarily deprives himself of the pleasure that is consequent on the discovery of new ideas. The heterogeneous mass of facts "crammed" in without connection and often without being understood affords no real gratification in the acquisition or retention, and often fills the mind with an utter dislike for all study.

Passing creditably through college, perhaps graduating with honors, or coming out a prizeman of his year, our crammer goes forth into the world with a mind something like a hand organ, on which a certain number of tunes can be ground off, but which is of no use beyond that, instead of being like a well tuned violin from which with the stroke of a master hand he can evoke at pleasure strains of sweet and varied music.

OUR EXCHANGES.

The editors table is now pretty well filled with college literature, and we intend to take a short critical notice of the pile that lies before us. Happily, the functions of the critic and the original writer, are altogether separate and distinct, so that if our brother-editors retort upon us, we can take shelter under the saying of Disraeli, that "the critics are those who have failed in literature and art."

The magazines are for the most part creditable, though some of them would be better in the form of a paper. A magazine, to be tolerated at all, must have something fresh and good between its covers. The *Virginia University Magazine* stands at the head of those we have received so far. The number for December is especially good. There is perhaps a little too much poetry, but the prose articles are short and well written, and nearly free from what critics call ambitious writing. The work is on the whole creditable to literary novices. The *Brunonian* is well filled with good readable articles, but lacks the spice of variety. There is a predominance of machine-work,—the editors' quill is kept too busy, and therefore there is a want of freshness and vigour. *The Owl*, contrary to the character of that contemplative bird, is generally sprightly, and never heavy or tiresome. We have not received late numbers of the *Lafayette Monthly*, probably on account of a secession that took place not long since among the students of Lafayette, but we hope soon to resume its acquaintance. The *Denison Collegian* and *Beloit College Monthly* we cannot praise as magazines. If the students who publish these magazines would put their strength

into a good paper, they would turn out something more creditable to themselves, and more acceptable to outsiders.

Among the papers, the *Harvard Advocate* is *primus inter pares*. The special characteristic of the *Advocate* is a certain *verve* and literary knack, which might naturally be expected from the pupils of Lowell. The *Yale Courant* is not far behind the *Advocate*, and is more thoroughly a college paper. The *College Courant*, edited by graduates of Yale is, simply invaluable to any one who wishes to be informed on matters relative to the higher education. We are indebted to it for the greater part of our college news. *The Williams Vidette* has the richest dress of any of the college periodicals, and is equal to most in a literary point of view. The *College Argus* has improved in appearance as well as in matter this year, and is always welcome to our "sanctum." The last *Harvard Advocate* has the following *morceau*: "Tennyson, Whitier, Longfellow, and now and then Shakespeare, contribute largely to western college papers. The Psalmist sends in a squib occasionally." This puts very well the general characteristics of college papers in the Western States. There is too much of the strained, "highfalutin" style. There are two notable exceptions however,—*The Chronicle* and *The Tripod*. These we reckon among the best of our exchanges. The *Tripod* went down during the general crash in Chicago, but like a certain bird, which we hear a good deal of in connection with such matters, is up again, and looks and reads better than ever. Before finishing this short notice of our exchanges, we must speak of a publication which we receive regularly, and one of great value, viz.: the *Bowdoin Scientific Review*. It consists of reprints of articles by eminent men in every branch of science, and is a complete *répertoire* of scientific intelligence.

Personals.

CAMERON, '67—J. J. Cameron, M. A., contributes an article to the last No. of "Stewart's Quarterly" on the "Age of Speculation." We are glad to see our Alumni contributing to the literature of the land.

MCDONALD, '73—C. D. McDonald was studying law during the Summer in the office of D. Dickson, Esq., Pictou.

BAIRD,—Isaac Baird who attended several sessions at Dalhousie as an "occasional," is a "Theologue" at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

DUFF, '73—We are sorry to learn that Kenneth Duff, on his return from his home in Lunenburg, where he had been spending his Christmas vacation, was thrown out of the coach and had his ankle badly sprained so that he has not yet returned to his class. We hope to see him in his place again before long.

GEDDIE,—John Geddie who was with us for several sessions, is seeking his fortune in Manitoba. At last accounts he was at Fort Garry. *Semper floreat*.

MCDONALD, '67—We learn that Samuel McNaughton, M. A., is to deliver a course of lectures on Rhetoric, before a public institution in this city.

Dallusiensia.

A promising student of Ethics being asked the other day in what the Stoics placed virtue replied "*In the nature of things.*" Maybe so! We are waiting for more light on the subject.

THE "Junior Debating Society," noticed in our last issue, shall hereafter be known as the "Excelsior Society of Dalhousie University." It consists of Students of the first and second years in Arts, Science and Medicine. It was duly organized on Dec. 15th, '71. A committee then appointed to prepare a Constitution and Bye-Laws submitted its report, which was adopted Jan. 5th '72. The Excelsior society is now fairly established, and the prospects for the future are in every way encouraging.

A hat-store closed for half a century, has been opened and the old stock disposed of. So we judge from the styles seen among us since the Christmas holidays.

THE Seniors and Juniors met on Friday the 5th inst., adopted the report of the Committee appointed to draw up a Constitution and Bye-Laws, and formed themselves into a literary society, to be known as the "Kritosophian Society." After preliminary business there was a discussion on the "Elective system in Colleges." This discussion proved beyond a doubt, the benefit that will arise from the existence of two societies instead of one, as formerly. Though there were but few speakers, and the subject was not of a very interesting character, the debate was good throughout and revealed considerable speaking talent that had been kept down under the *incubus* of the old society. The *Critic* is an excellent institution, and adds much to the entertainment, as well as to the practical benefit of the several speakers.

SEVERAL bones were discovered while the recent excavations were being made in the cellar of the college building. The medicals look wondrously wise over the discovery.

WE have been forced to purchase shutters for our sanctum, as the "fair forms" that passed attracted the notice of one of our sensitive editors and unfitted him for his duties.

IN the recent debate of the Kritosophian society, the critic for the evening in reviewing the various speakers, expressed his opinion of one gentleman as follows: "And now we come to Mr. ———, who spoke very well, but kept his hands in the deepest recesses of his pockets, making all his motions with his head and the *organs pertaining thereto.*" We would suggest the propriety of appointing a committee to examine said speaker's ears and report as to their length.

A BIG senior, looking down from his elevated position on some diminutive Freshmen who were capering about the Hall, could not refrain from expressing his sense of his own importance, by calling the scene before him, "Democritus' dance of Atoms."

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following version of the 38th ode, 1st book of Horace, taken from an American magazine.

I hate this Persian gingerbread,
These fixins round a fellow's head,
I want the roses in their bed
All in a body.

Give me the Myrtle as it grows,
And let me take my sweet repose
Beneath the vine unless it grows,
And sip my toddy.

How is that for modern *Horatianism*?

Molecules.

De mortuis nil nisi bonum, has been adopted by the medicals as their motto, translated for the benefit of those who are not classical scholars as "nothing good in the dead but their bones."—*The Chronicle*.

AN exchange reports that Dr. McCosh of Princeton college, was vexed when the Sophomores returning from a fire woke him with the shout of "Jimmy!" and "come out, my fine Scotch laddie."

WE commend the following to the attention of the medicals: Does the funny bone in one's elbow derive its name from its connection with the *os humerus*?—*Virginia University Magazine*.

PROF. (in History Recitation),
Mr. C. "How many kings had Rome?"
"Sixteen, Sir."
"Name them."
"Aeneas, Ascanius, Romulus, Remus—"
"Well, Sir, that will do."—*College Argus*.

JENKINS says, "a coat of mail
Must be a coat of armor,
Deny it if you can;"
But Smith replies, "a coat of male
May be a coat of farmer,
Or any other man."—*Cap and Gown*.

WE have a Freshman who is so short that when he is sick he does not know whether he has headache or corns.—*Williams Review*.

WIDOWERHOOD.

And she was gone! I sat upon the hill,
Where we had often roamed of yore,
And watched the golden sun now slowly sinking,
And heard the surf beat on the rock-bound shore.

All else was still, save when the wind moaned sadly,
Amongst the heavy pine-boughs overhead;
It seemed as though they sang, in their low murmur,
A requiem for the dead.

My heart was filled with sorrow and with sadness;
I thought that I could never be consoled.
Still gazed I at the sun which now, fast disappearing,
Tinted the evening sky with gold.

And when 'twas gone, and darkness slowly settled,
Some spirit whispered in my ear the thought
That turned my sorrow into joy and gladness,
With boundless consolation fraught.

That though those brats at home should squall and quarrel,
And weary out my life in constant strife,
One way, one remedy, was left me,—namely,
To get another *wife*.

—*Harvard Advocate*.

WE acknowledge the following new exchanges: *The Tripod*, *Index Niagarensis*, *Torchlight*, *Kentucky Military Institute Magazine*, and *Brunonian*.

Business letters received since last issue, from C. Sutherland, W. L. Campbell, D. McDonald, (Inspector of Schools, Pictou,) Rev. J. H. Chase, M. A., Rev. J. C. Burgess, B. A., Rev. S. Houston, M. A., A. F. Nitchie, (McGill University).

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