

DALHOUSIE GAZETTE.

NEW SERIES—VOL. II.
OLD SERIES—VOL. IX.

HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 3, 1877.

NEW No. 6.
WHOLE No. 88.

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DALHOUSIE
GAZETTE.

NEW SERIES—VOL. II. HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 3, 1877. NEW No. 6.
OLD SERIES—VOL. IX. WHOLE No. 88.

TENNYSON AND LADY CLARA
VERE DE VERE.

I have met with several expressions of admiration for Tennyson's poem to Lady Clara Vere de Vere; but no one so far as I know has touched upon the point which gives it, its (to me) most delightful interest, and as I am anxious that it should be noticed I am moved to attempt to set it forth myself. Its admirers seem all to have ignored a later poem addressed to the same high-born maiden and entitled "The Old Seat." The two are exactly alike in form and metre but the contrast in tone between them brings out so vivid a touch of human nature that I am never done amusing myself with it. The first is full of strength and fire but it is manifestly the utterance of disappointed passion and contains all the absurdities and extravagances which such an utterance may be naturally expected to contain. The other was evidently written long after when his anger was burnt out and dead, and when his love had asserted its claim to be, if not a real existence, at least a memory. It clearly proves that several things said in the first are to be taken at a discount. For example when he says in the first:—

"Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown,
You thought to break a country heart,
For pastime ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled,
I saw the snare and I retired;
The daughter of a hundred Earls,
You are not one to be desired."

and in the second, years after, remember:—

"You mind the time we sat here last,
Two little children lovers we,
Each loving each with simple faith,
I all to you—you all to me."

which are we to believe? Clearly he was not wholly "unbeguiled." Yet who would not talk

just as he did? I mean in the same spirit, not necessarily with the same power. For hear him:—

"Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates,
Is not more cold to you than I."

But we cannot help thinking that the lion on the old stone gates would not trouble himself much to tell her how cold he was. He would not seem very anxious whether or not she were impressed with the extent of his pride and disdain. Notwithstanding this, who can resist the matchless vim and animus (English fails me) of these lines? How magnificently those two last ring upon the ear! Again, how stingingly he refreshes her memory concerning the death of young Laurence, "that across his throat" and the "certain truths" which his mother spoke:—

"Her manners had not that repose,
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere,"

What, save that incomparable pride of his, can be finer than this?

"Trust me Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The gardiner Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent."

Truly genius can ennoble anything. But in the aftertime all this is forgotten, and the love which was hidden by a deep cloud of anger is seen clearly through. Anger has given way to fond reminiscence and perhaps regret.

"Ah! Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
We sit together now as then;
I press your hand, you meet my glance,
We seem as if we loved again.
But in my heart I feel the truth,
The dear old times have passed away:
The love that once possessed our souls
We do but simulate to-day."

Did he not say before?—

"Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms."

What about her now? He has evidently forgotten her. Did ever yet a man who get the mitten (or whatever the technical phrase is) fail to conjure up some delicate being with whom he fancied himself in love, and in whose behalf he was ready to fight it out to the bitter end against the nefarious machinations, devices and conspiracies of the bestower of the mitten aforesaid, and all her infamous clique? But the finest touch of all is that indicated by the word "simulate." Why should they "seem as if they loved again." They could not be to each other as though they had "never met or never parted." They could not love again. Perhaps it was not so wholly simulation as they thought. Perhaps certain undefined recollections stirring in the hearts of each gave it a peculiar delight that would have been entirely wanting otherwise. But I cannot explain it. I only know that it seems to me most intensely natural.

The poet does not, however, spare the lash of satire even now. But there is no animosity. He takes rather a philosophical view of the case. He says:—

"Since last we met my lady Vere,
You've grown in years and culture too;
And putting childish things away,
Have ceased to be sincere and true."

This change took place, it appears, after their last meeting, and, I suppose, after the former piece was written. But that is aside. What I want you to notice is that he also says:—

"Still Lady Clara, Clara dear,
Beneath your finished mask I see
The gentle heart, the honest mind,
That made you once so dear to me."

And this after he had said:—

"Were you Queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind."

and—

"Pray heaven for a human heart."

If Jove laughs at lovers vows, I fancy he must occasionally indulge in a smile at their anger. It is certainly much more amusing to mortals. The satire is very much more effective now, although scarcely so brilliant as before. It is more effective now, because more calm and just; just as Gibbon's quiet contempt is infinitely more effective than Collier's desperate and despicable attempt to get up a laugh at Julian the Apostate's pride in his unkempt hair

and inky fingers, because he does such noble justice to his good qualities. Before, he taught us to respect his antagonist by the vigor and energy with which he struck, now his touch is masterly. She might smile at the former and think she had had the first and hardest blow; but the poet has manifestly the advantage in the latter. Formerly he talked wildly of her high birth. Now he seems to have forgiven or forgotten the offence. Then he said:—

"Of me you shall not win renown."

Now he says:—

"Of me win all renown you may."

And in addition to all this he promises that as soon as she shall give indications of a more settled line of policy,—

"Then we will come and see this place,
And sit together as of yore."

As yet, however, there are no such indications and meanwhile he says:—

"Bring all your practised charms in play,
Shoot all your darts—they cannot hurt;
For when we meet I clothe me in
The proved chain-armour of a flirt."

There is much of truth in that word "proved." Still I would caution any of my young friends who do not thoroughly understand the business against applying it too literally: it might lead them astray.

No man can, I think, read the poems without seeing that the picture of a man with his heart full at one time of angry passion and at another of soft reminiscence is in both cases complete; not a touch is wanting; not a touch is wrong. I do not imagine that Tennyson wrote them so intentionally. To do that would cost even Shakspeare some thinking. Besides it is evident that if he had so intended them he would have placed them together, and in some way, indicated their relation. I rather think them nature itself than nature copied. I opine that there has been something corresponding to it in the poet's experience. Not a very serious matter, perhaps, for poets often build very largely upon a very slight foundation, yet serious enough to have an appreciable effect upon his temper for—perhaps a fortnight.

As it was absolutely necessary for me to illustrate my position, and I know the general reader is too incorrigibly lazy to turn up my references, I could not avoid quoting largely. Nevertheless, I hope he will, the next time he takes down his Tennyson, study the subject further for himself.

McD.

MUSIC A HUMBUG.

READ BY S. D. SCOTT BEFORE THE EXCELSIOR SOCIETY.

WHEN I denounce music as about the greatest humbug of the day, I express an opinion which, though shared by a few, is yet by no means popular. In fact, the discoursing of music has become so universal that it may seem strange to some that it should be considered an evil. I fancy there are those in this room to-night who will look upon this as an attempt at a joke instead of an humble complaint against the usage of society in this particular.

Every body is supposed to be fond of music. If he is not, he is of course defective somewhere. Now, no one likes to be considered deficient in anything, so we all profess to enjoy it. He who takes this stand, then, runs the risk of being laughed at as an eccentricity, or reprovved and admonished as a heretic. But a heretic, after all, is only one who holds opinions which the world-in-general does not hold; and since the past tells us that the world-in-general is as liable to be wrong as right, there is nothing alarming in the name. The world is like an old maid,—she has her pets; like Aunt Tabby's cats, they are generally neither very ornamental nor of any possible use, but no matter, she has them and always had them, and she is down on the man who steps on their tails. One of these favourites is Music. Notwithstanding the divinity that doth hedge it, we will take the liberty to consider this subject a little.

In the first place, I have sundry charges to prefer against "The Heavenly Maid," after which we will see what she has to say for herself. Well, what is Music doing for us? It is using up our time. This is a serious accusation, because we don't have much time to waste in this world of ours. Well, no lady is considered accomplished unless she plays. How much practice does it take for one to reach the standard required? Two or three hours a day, for three, four, five, or six years, if the student has an ear and is clever; otherwise it takes longer, or she never reaches it. This at a period when her time is the most valuable, when her mind is the most susceptible to mental culture, and her company the most sought after. If she chose to study, what an amount of useful information she might acquire, or should she choose to devote

her leisure hours to society, what an amount of happiness she might bestow on her friends. But it can't be. No matter how much our young lady detests the piano, no matter if she wishes to improve her mind in other respects, society requires this of her, and what else can she do? In after life she looks back on those wasted hours and thinks of what might have been, while she cannot help regretting the piano as to her at least the thing that "is but hadn't ought to be." Then it wastes the time of the listener. These women must utilize their knowledge somehow. They do it this way. When you call on them they play for you. When they go to parties they take turns at the instrument. When the dishes are to wash they have to practise the new music. In short, when they ought to be doing something else they play. You call on your lady friend. There is her instrument in the corner. She plays well and wants you to ask her for a piece, would almost take offence if you didn't. All the time she plays you have to listen. You can't well talk to her in the meantime; that would be rude. You can't lay back and study up your sermon for Sunday, or plan some way to raise the cash for your washerwoman: she is looking at you too closely out of the corner of her eyes for that. You lose the hour you were saving for a quiet talk, and go away feeling injured, but not knowing where the fault is. At least you wouldn't have known but for this paper.

Music forms a large part of the programme in all our parties. We go to a party. We don't have the time to go to many; or perhaps we don't often get an invitation;—so when we do go we want to have a good time. We want to see our friends and make new ones, to be sociable and indulge generally in the "feast of reason and the flow of soul;" but we are introduced to a feast of melody and a perfect flood of sound. No matter if we sigh for a famine of the one and a drought of the other. The world is against us. The time for reform is still ahead. But they say the most of the company like it, and they defend their conduct on the theory that it is the greatest good to the greatest number.

But the good is only a negative good at the best, to all except a very few, while to those who have no taste for music it is a positive evil. The music lovers could pass the time away quite pleasantly by indulging in the feast and flow afore mentioned, while the performance entails on those, who, like myself, are so unfortunate as

not to have an "ear," an amount of actual suffering of which only those who have "no ear," can have the faintest conception.

It is said that a man has to swallow a peck of dirt in his life. Perhaps he has also to swallow so many tones and semi-tones, quavers and semi-quavers. Well, if it be so, I certainly think we ought not to be obliged to take them just at the times when they are the most likely to lie heavy on our stomachs.

Anyway, I protest against it. I have been a sufferer by this, and am likely to be again. Sometime I may "learn how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong," but I have not learned it yet.

Then see the expense of it. Every well regulated family must have its piano, or organ, or melodeon, or accordion, or fiddle, or jews-harp, or tin-whistle. These are not got for a song. Then you see what the music costs—and the music-teachers. We all know that many men pay for all this who can ill afford it; but that tyrant society decrees that their girls are outlandish and uncultured unless they can play. No father wants his girls looked down upon. So he buys an instrument, engages a music-teacher, mortgages his property, and quietly moves in the direction of the dogs. The girls are sorry, but they can't afford to be behind the times. Only the wealthy can afford to be singular. People of no particular importance dare not disobey its rules.

But not only is our time and money being expended for music, but at present there is an influence from it that is undermining the morals of us all. We must not only listen to these performances, but we must praise them. We hide our feeling of disgust and ask for more. We must feign pleasure and say that we could listen to that for hours, when we feel as if we could scarcely stand it another minute. This, allow me to say, is lying. Conventional lies they may be, but so much the worse for the convention.

Many a time and oft I have said, "Thanks, you play very nicely. Do, as a special favour to me, play something more." When, if I had been like George Washington, for example, so unfortunate as not to be able to tell a lie, I should have said, "There! that's through with, I was getting sick of it. Now do, for pity's sake shut that thing up and come away." Yes, it is wasting our time and money, depraving our morals, and spoiling our girls by taking their attention away from that which is calculated to make them useful and agreeable.

Moreover, people as a general rule do not like so much of it—only when they make it themselves. Did you ever notice members of a choir, how uneasy and fidgety they are if they are not helping? Musicians never like to listen to any one else. From an old school book which I used when I first crept unwillingly to school, I used to read, "The cock crows in the morn because he loves the sound of his own voice." That is one great secret of the popularity of music; I imagine that most people get tired out at a concert long before it closes—all but the performers. That is when I feel like quoting,

"Swans sing before they die. 'Twere no bad thing
Were certain folks to die before they sing."

But I may be told that everybody plays and sings. Well, that's what is the matter. If nobody did, this paper would hardly have been read to-night. If only a few did, the rest of us could stand it; but it is the extent of the evil I am complaining about.

Well now, what is all this about? What is music? The question is easy. It is a noise,—nothing less I am sure, nothing more—a harmonious noise perhaps, and pleasant to some ears, but after all only certain vibrations of the air. It appeals to the ear alone, consequently the pleasure derived is purely sensual. Talk about its influence on the mind, and how it stirs up the fine feelings of our nature. Say

"Music has charms to soothe a savage,
To rend a rock or split a cabbage"

But tell me if you can, did it ever do anything of the sort to your certain knowledge? Who ever saw savages soothed, or rocks rent, or cabbages split by any such application. Josh Billings wisely says, "Give me a bullet for the Indian, powder for the rock, and vinegar for the cabbage," but music does not appeal to the mind, it contains no ideas. It appeals to the senses just as a smelling bottle or a chew of tobacco does.

To a person who has no ear for music it does not appeal at all, only as any other tumult does. Then all this sacrifice of time and money and the rest is for an empty sound. But Shakespeare says something about music which we must notice,—

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.

Let no such man be trusted."

Now, with all due deference to the opinions of Lorenzo, I beg leave to differ. I never noticed

that people who have "no ear" are less honest than singing-masters. How about "honest Charles Lamb?" Read his essay on ears. I might mention as a contrast to him the man who started a singing-school, not a hundred miles from here, and who having music in himself, *was* trusted. Where is he now? Let echo answer if it likes, but even echo cannot answer where the articles are which he carried off with him, or when he is coming back to settle his little bills. Perhaps he was "moved by a concord of sweet sounds," if so, that "concord" would confer a favor on the citizens of that place, if it would move him back again. I don't deny that music may wake up old associations, and make us feel soft and that sort of thing. An old tune our mothers used to sing may do that I allow. I have been softened in that way repeatedly myself. But it was the associations that did it. The spoon our mothers fed us with, or the shingle with which they spanked us would produce the same feelings.

Really I cannot think of anything that Dame Music can say for herself, only that she is of long standing and very respectable. The traditions of the fathers are in her favor, and that forcible argument of the Ephesians, "Great is Diana" may be used, but certainly she can show no good cause why she should not be dealt with according to law.

In the next place it would be well to consider how Music became so popular. We can ascertain this by tracing its rise and progress. Five thousand years ago there lived a man named Jubal. All that we are told of him is that he was the father of all that handle the harp and organ. Whether he lived to see the folly of his children does not appear. Let us hope that he died before he saw what his family were doing to torture posterity. So then we have traced our musical friends back to a common parentage, and shown that the high-born lady presiding at the magnificent instrument is really sister to the ragged hand-organ man in the street below.

In the early ages the harp, the organ, and timbrel were only used to celebrate some victory or triumph. Thus we see Miriam singing the song of triumph, and playing a timbrel accompaniment, after the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea. So also Deborah's song at the defeat of Sisera. And many of the Psalms of David. Also we find the daughter of Jephtha going out to meet her father with "timbrels and dances," when he was returning from the slaughter of the

Ammonites. Notice also that the Hebrews when they were conquered refused to sing and hung up their harps on the willows. They were intended only to celebrate victory.

I can sympathize with poor Jephtha as he saw his only daughter coming toward him with her timbrel in one hand, and a stick to beat it with in the other. Hear what he says, "Oh, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, thou art one of those that trouble me."

We see, then, for what purpose Music was intended. Well, people like to sing of their achievements and victories. We can understand how the songs would grow loud and the music furious when there was really no very great cause for joy. By degrees they would carry it so far as to sing and play when there was nothing to exult about at all. We have a thousand analagous cases in modern history where the sign is preserved long after it has lost its real significance. In this case the transition was perfectly natural, and argues no intrinsic merit in Music itself. For instance, we have here in the Excelsior a habit of stamping our feet and clapping our hands when a member finishes a speech or makes a joke. This at some remote age in the history of our Society was intended for applause, at least I have it on good authority that it was so meant. But now we stamp and clap whether we appreciate the thing or not. Now, if we carry this out to its natural conclusion, it is easy to conceive of our coming here and having an applause meeting, when the programme would be nothing but the stamping of feet and the clapping of hands, interspersed with laughter and an occasional cry of "hear hear."

Thus I have explained how Music became so popular. I have already trespassed on your patience, so I will take another time to consider the proper measures to be taken to bring about the much-needed reformation.

Meanwhile, we will look forward to the glad day when men shall learn war and music no more, and all the instruments of melody, from the big German organ, down to the school boy's jews-harp will be hung on the willows till the hands of the performers forget their cunning.

SOME of the active spirits in the Medical College have given proof of their skill by the resurrection of the two-years-buried Æsculapian Society. May its new lease of life be long and vigorous.

DALHOUSIE GAZETTE.

HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 3, 1877.

EDITORS.

J. McD. SCOTT, '77. J. H. CAMERON, '78.
W. SCOTT WHITTIER. EDWIN CROWELL, '79.
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CONTENTS.

Tennyson and Lady Clara Vere de Vere.....	61
Music a Humbug.....	63
Editorial.....	66
Dirt continued.....	67
An Intellectual Savings-Bank.....	68
An Old Gaelic Bible.....	69
Correspondence.....	70
Our Societies.....	72
Dallusiansia.....	72
Acknowledgments.....	72

THE value of reading is a theme on which considerable has been said ere now by writers and speakers, but the importance of the subject is such as to warrant us in calling attention to it once more. To the manual labourer it has been said, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;" but to the mental toiler the injunction is "give attendance to reading." That utterance of Bacon's "Reading maketh a full man" has been proved true through precept or example by almost every author of note since his time. Pope, in his boyhood, after repeated disappointments with his tutors, made up his mind to study on a plan of his own, which he did by "devouring all books that he could procure." Charles Dickens—if we are to take the history of David Copperfield as an account of his own young days—cheered his spirit crushed by the tyranny of the Murdstones, and enlivened his fancy in the company of Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, the Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe. Macaulay, while at College, on account of his amazing knowledge of History and English Literature gained for himself the title "omniscient." Byron was still in his minority when he composed his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," yet

what an intimate acquaintance with the poets of his own time does that wonderful satire show. He was familiar with the writings not of the celebrated alone, he made them *all* "pass in long review" "From soaring Southey down to grovelling Stott." Those men were readers from their very infancy, and what "full" men they have been, all know. The text above quoted appears to be directed specially to students. To us it is of prime importance to give attendance to reading. We remember the advice of Chief Justice Young given at the opening Convocation of last Session: "Young men, give an hour or two each day to the study of the best English authors." No student can afford to disregard the injunction. Whatever his aim in life be, a knowledge of the literature of his vernacular is an invaluable acquirement. The man of reading is the man of intelligence. He who intelligently reads whatever he can, and whenever he has opportunity, will in the course of a lifetime gather a mass of general information, which is not "definite and dense ignorance," his mind will not be a depot full of "learned lumber," but a casket stored with gems of thought. To the young man intending to be a speaker or writer, an acquaintance with the great literary productions of his native tongue ceases to be an accomplishment, it becomes simply an indispensable. Study of standard authors is the only means by which we can improve our style, or hope to attain anything like proficiency in the art of composition. Mr. Marsh in his "Lectures on the English Language" remarks, that English is spoken with eloquence and accuracy by fewer natives than any other European language. Strange though this may sound to us, we need not wonder at it when we notice that colleges and institutions of learning almost wholly neglect its study, giving the largest share of their energy and time to teaching the dead languages. In our time there is somewhat less importance attached to classics than formerly in the Old World Universities. We do not trouble ourselves with

making Latin verses; the epithet of scholar is not as in Sydney Smith's time reserved for him alone who writes on the Attic reduplication; we have no enthusiast whose *beau ideal* of human nature is a knowledge of the Greek language; the end of our existence is not altogether to conjugate, decline, and derive; nor, do we think less of a great man's actions, if we are sure that he does not know how to give the parts of one Greek verb. Yet, though we have to some extent written Ichabod over the Classics, we think that still this particular branch of learning claims more of our attention than is due, especially as many illustrious examples have proved to us that a familiarity with it is by no means essential to eminent success in literary pursuits or in oratory. We believe, looking at the matter from a practical point of view, that much of the time spent over Homer and Euripides, would be much more profitably occupied in conning the pages of Shakspeare and Milton. We do not wish to be understood as speaking contemptuously of classical learning. We believe that some knowledge of Greek and Latin and especially of the grammars is a *sine qua non* of scholarship. What we object to is the degree to which that knowledge is made the "one thing needful." Our position is, "We love not Classics less but English more."

Our students as a class are fond of reading, but many of them who would gladly avail themselves of it, are frequently compelled by force of circumstances to deny themselves that means of improvement. The press of work during the winter session demands the whole of their time. In summer the majority of them engage in teaching, or some business by which they can procure the needful for the coming winter. If they have any leisure, it is spent in preparing for History and Geography examinations in the fall. There is then very little time left at their disposal for the study of subjects outside of their regular work. An undergraduate must either neglect his work and content himself with a low standing if he wishes to "give attendance to read-

ing," or, foregoing all external means of intellectual culture, confine himself to his prescribed studies, and apply himself to these alone. There are very few who have the courage to face "thirty all round," and, consequently, they choose the latter alternative. But there are many (the greatest number we believe) who would not choose either course if they could in any way help themselves. How then shall we find a solution of this difficulty? How can a student retain his standing during his college career, and at its close carry with him into the world a knowledge of the Belles Lettres of his native tongue. The best remedy we can suggest in the case is to introduce the study of English Literature into our curriculum, making it optional with Latin or Greek during the last two years of the B.A. course. The third year might be devoted to Old and Middle English, and the fourth to the study of standard modern Authors. By making the practice of essay writing an important part of the exercise of these classes a mental training would be afforded to students which in its practical bearing would be invaluable. Such an arrangement as we propose would give wider scope to individual tastes in the selection of studies, and if once effected we have no doubt of the benefits that would accrue from it or its popularity.

DIRT CONTINUED.

WITHIN the last few months I have often asked myself,—What, now, could I offer as a contribution to the GAZETTE? The subject that occurred to me was dirt. I was not a little surprised to find that another student had turned his mind to the same theme. However, we treat it differently. I do not stand up for the rights of dirt, but merely meditate on its nature and habits. In offering the public a second dose no apology is needed, for dirt is an important substance; it is the raw material of man.

Dirt is found in most countries, and has been known from very early ages. It is a small thing, yet in some places it assumes great proportions; and though humble in its character, and quiet in its habits, it sometimes rouses the

uglier passions of man's nature, and puts him to a good deal of trouble. It generally flourishes on the outside surfaces of things, sticking to them in a thin layer. It can not only lie on the top of an object, but often clings to its bottom and sides. Sometimes it becomes incorporated with the object or person upon which it finds an abode.

Where dirt comes from it is hard to say. It collects even upon vessels out at sea. Yet I do not suppose that it grows spontaneously. When a room is swept, it seems, indeed, to be created upon the spot. Yet it really is brought out of the carpet by the broom. One of its grand peculiarities is that you cannot finally banish it. The carpet must always be swept again. The life of man is a prolonged struggle with dirt.

The way to get rid of dirt is to wash the object with water. I am persuaded that the reason why this plan succeeds is the following:—The dirt becomes wet, and in that state may be induced to leave its original resting-place. Of all objects the human hands and face ought to be the cleanest; for nothing, unless it be the pebble on the sea-shore, gets so much washed. Indeed, some people wash their faces to the neglect of the rest of their bodies. But I am convinced that it is an erroneous practice, for clothes do not keep out dirt,—it penetrates everywhere.

Out of doors everything appears to be clean. The dust does not gather on the trees and fences as it does on the tables and chairs. Perhaps the reason is that the wind does not let it rest. But I think that there is a better reason. What we call dirt in the house we do not call dirt out of doors. For if we did we could never clean it up. We would have to root up the whole soil, for what is the world made of but dirt?

Dirt triumphs in the end over the works of man. As a city declines the dirt in it increases. In London and Paris there is not much dirt yet. In Rome the dirt is accumulating. In many eastern cities, such as Troy and Nineveh, the dirt has conquered and now reigns over them, layer upon layer, supreme. In Babylon there is nothing but dirt left.

Whatever has but dirt into our heads, it is not our Alma Mater. Thy bright, youthful walls, thy sprightly pinnacles, Dalhousie, could never suggest such a subject. Nor yet the Grand Parade nor the urchins that play upon it.

AN INTELLECTUAL SAVINGS-BANK.

At the recent meeting of Convocation, three subjects of great practical utility, and of vital importance to the success of the University of Halifax were introduced as "notices of motions."

"Dr. Honeyman gave notice that at the next meeting he would move that Convocation is of opinion that the Senate should confer degrees in Science and prepare a Science Curriculum; and also that the Senate should grant certificates of proficiency in special branches of Science, e. g., Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, &c., to teachers and others who pass a satisfactory examination in these special branches."

It has been observed by many that most of those who graduate from our Colleges, on entering some profession, or otherwise, neglect to prosecute their studies any further. To prevent this, the Dr. would have a School of Science established and a Science Curriculum prepared, inviting to a study which is the most fascinating, the most useful, and fast becoming the most popular of all studies, and in which without prejudice to professional subjects, our graduates and middle-aged men could and would gradually win honours and degrees in addition to their A. B.

"Mr. B. Russell gave notice that he would move that Convocation is of opinion that it is very desirable to bring into early operation the provisions of Section 36 of the University Act, by granting certificates of proficiency to all persons who shall pass satisfactory examinations on the subjects prescribed, the matter to be so regulated that a student who shall have obtained at intervals certificates of proficiency in all the subjects embraced in the examinations necessary to any degree, shall be entitled to obtain such degree just as though he had passed in all the subjects at one time."

It would be safe to say that there are in Nova Scotia two hundred young men and as many young ladies who would pursue some special study to a high degree of efficiency, were a sufficient inducement held out to them. Further, I conceive that the honour of Certificates or Tickets from the University of Halifax, together with the pecuniary advantages resulting, would be all the inducement required. There are many young persons who though they are unable to go to College, yet could spend two or three hours a day in private study. Such study properly encouraged would in the aggregate quite equal without lessening the work done in the Colleges. At present very many young ladies and men seeing that they cannot overtake all the studies of any University Examination, spend their little spare time in foolish amuse-

AN OLD GAELIC BIBLE.

In the Library of the Presbyterian Theological Hall of this city there is a volume of peculiar intrinsic and historical interest. We have reference to (N. 6. 1.) the Gaelic translation of the prophets, published in Edinburgh in the year 1786, "by request of the Honorable Association for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland." The older editions of the Gaelic Bible had a fair share of barbarisms and misrepresentations; but that of which this volume forms Part Fourth is the best translation of the Word of Truth yet given to the Highlander in his native tongue. Its language is perspicuous, terse, pithy and mellifluous; "it reads like blank verse," as a distinguished scholar once remarked to us. One great fault it possessed in the narrow views of the General Assembly of those days: that of being a faithful translation from the original, exhibiting the results of the laborious textual and exegetical criticisms of Hebrew scholars; in short, of not being a translation of the Authorised English Version, from which it varies, more or less, in almost every verse. The Church authorities, conceiving that inconvenience might arise from too widely-differing translations being in the hands of the common people, caused this edition to be bought in and shortly afterwards issued a new one more in unison with King James' Bible. Consequently, copies of this most accurate and idiomatic Gaelic version are very scarce—so much so that neither Horne nor the writer on "Gaelic" in Chambers' Encyclopedia seemed to have possessed any knowledge of its existence.

The present volume bears on its title-page in elegant handwriting, "*Le Cleir Albainn ùir*," i. e. the property of the Presbytery of Nova Scotia—doubtless, the Associate Presbytery of N. S. formed in 1795 by Rev. Messrs. McGregor, Brown and Ross. For a period of about fifteen years after the formation of the Presbytery this copy was almost the only one of the Bible in Gaelic within its bounds; for very few of the edition of 1796 reached this country and not until after 1810 was an adequate supply received. We need not, therefore, be surprised at the inscription upon the fly-leaf in the same handwriting: "*Air a thabhart an iasad re se fichead agus deich làthan*," i. e. Lent for a period of one hundred and thirty days. Had this book a voice to relate more of its his-

ments. Just as in former times many who saved small sums, seeing no chance of becoming capitalists, spent it the more readily. But now that there are Savings-Banks; these small sums are economized until the depositor encouraged by the gradually growing capital at his disposal makes still greater accessions to it.

In like manner let us have an Intellectual Savings-Bank. Let every young man feel that if he spends his spare moments for one or two years, in some favourable study and acquires an exhaustive or very fair knowledge of it, his country will publicly give him due credit. Thereby an immense stimulus will be given to mental effort in the Province, such as will make the University a great blessing. And why not eventually give to such students a Degree without the imposition of a second examination in those subjects in which they have already been tested? For it can easily be demonstrated that any student having gone over the various subjects of any Degree and having passed a severe examination in them individually, would have as much or more mental training than a College graduate; and be mentally a stronger man. And seeing that in his case the discipline of work would be combined with study during a longer course of years, his knowledge would be more practical and better balanced. Indeed it would be from such men that the country would largely derive its backbone.

Consequently the idea of Lawyer Russell should receive the most hearty support. Lastly,

"Mr. B. H. Eaton gave notice that he would move that Convocation is of the opinion that, the Senate ought to so frame their curricula of studies by means, in certain cases, of equivalents, that the way to academical distinction may be as fully open to women as to men."

That the ladies of the Province should have been overlooked in the scheme of the University, is altogether amazing at the present day. The Senate cannot well do otherwise than set themselves right without delay on such an important point.

B. McK.

THE Æsculapian Debating Society of the Halifax Medical School has been reorganized lately with the following officers:—*President*, Kenneth McKenzie; *Vice-President*, F. W. O'Brien; *Sec'y*, M. Chisholm; *Managing Com.*, Thomas Malcolm, Willis B. Moir, and A. S. McInnes.

tory, it could doubtless tell us of many a soaking from rain both on the tent-board at great open-air gatherings on sacramental occasions and in the poorly constructed log houses of the early settlers of Pictou County, and of being carefully read and, probably, transcribed by many devout Christians.

In view of the Revision of the Authorised English Version, it is fervently to be hoped that the General Assembly will reverse its former order, drop its revised edition and re-issue the translation of 1786.

G. L. G.

DEAR GAZETTE:—

I WAS very glad to see that in a recent issue you took up the subject of the standards of requirements for teachers in our public schools. The question decidedly wants ventilation. In addition to the alterations in the present standard proposed by you, I would like to suggest a further change in the syllabus for Grade A, viz., to make French or German, or both, as might seem best, alternative with Greek. Though this proposal may seem startling at the first blush, nevertheless, I am convinced that there is much to be said in favor of it, and with your permission, I will state the reasons which lead me to believe that the change would be a beneficial one.

It is a fact to be regretted, but which is likely to remain a fact in spite of our regrets, that to the majority of young men engaged in teaching in the Province, the profession is only a stepping stone to something, I will not say higher, but more lucrative, than the office of pedagogue is now, or is likely to become. The object with which teaching is taken up by the greater number of young men is to save a little money, and, if looking forward to a professional career, to gain time to study the subject matter of the profession to which they intend devoting themselves. If, while accomplishing both these designs, they can at the same time acquire such an education as will at once render their teaching more remunerative, and be of permanent value to them in after life, they are likely to be more eager in the pursuit of knowledge than if the subjects insisted upon were calculated to be of no further use when teaching had been laid aside—save, of course, the indirect benefit which every well-directed mental effort confers by disciplining and strengthening the intellect. I take for granted that no argument is needed

to show the superior *practical* (so called) benefit resulting from an acquaintance with French or German over that obtained by a knowledge of Greek; and as, to a large proportion, if not a large majority of our teachers, practical knowledge is the great desideratum in mental acquirement, it follows that the modern languages would be studied by them with greater avidity than the classical were both upon a par in point of remunerative value in our educational syllabus. So far, then, as our male teachers are concerned, the results of the change are likely to be, (1) direct advantage to the teachers themselves, and (2) a clear gain to the public at large by furnishing an inducement to the teachers to qualify themselves more thoroughly in the branches to be taught.

To the pupils, the change would be still more beneficial. Of the boys at our county academies the proportion intending to matriculate at any of our colleges is small compared to the number of those intending to engage in mercantile pursuits. To the former, of course Greek is an essential; to the latter the smattering of that language commonly acquired, is not calculated to be of the slightest benefit. Lads preparing for college will be none the worse for an acquaintance with French or German, if, indeed, these be not compulsory or elective subjects for a matriculation examination; while to the larger number of boys looking forward to a mercantile or manufacturing life, the immense superiority of the modern over the classical languages will be conceded by every one. This latter class, too, is increasing yearly more rapidly than the former; for the number of boys convinced that an acquaintance with French and German is money in the pocket, as well as knowledge in the head, is growing steadily. The modern languages are become almost a necessity to success in trade or manufactures, and it is but just that the large number of lads intending to engage in one or other of these great staple industries should have *their* interests consulted, as well as the handful of boys preparing to study for the learned professions.

As for the girls, argument to show the desirability of the change is useless. The day of Lady Bacons and Lady Jane Greys is past. Girls do not want to learn Greek, and if they did they would be unable to, for our college doors are barred against them. A smattering only of Greek is all that it is possible for them to acquire, and a smattering of Greek is worse than useless,

--it is time wasted that might have been profitably employed. The difficulties of Greek are so great that unless studied for a considerable length of time, under a competent instructor, the pupil is unable to continue the study by his own efforts. But in the case of either of the other proposed modern languages, by the help of some of the admirable text books (and *keys*) now in use, and a few months' instruction in the pronunciation and chief grammatical peculiarities, a student, (or studentess) of moderate industry and capacity, can make sufficient progress in the language to read it with ease, though not, of course, to write and speak it with fluency. Moreover, if in the constitution of our county academies, the intellectual needs of any one class of pupils more than another ought to be considered, that class should be the girls. Boys desirous of higher education have access to our different colleges. For the great majority of our girls in the country, and for that matter in town as well, the public schools are the only means of acquiring culture; and it is therefore but just that *their* wants should be attended to as well as those of their brothers. Again, girls as a general rule attend school much longer than boys. It is no unusual thing for a county academy to number among its pupils ten or a dozen young ladies of from fifteen to twenty years of age. Boys are commonly taken from school at a much earlier time of life. It is certain that all, or nearly all, of the former would devote much of their time to the modern languages in the event of their introduction into our public school system. Of the latter a fraction only study Greek, and of that fraction a large proportion terminate their studies after acquiring the veriest smattering of that most difficult of languages. Obviously then the teaching of French and German would yield a much larger return in the amount of knowledge and culture disseminated amongst our young people than is at present obtained from the teaching of their classical rival.

One other class likely to be benefitted by the change I must mention before closing this long-winded epistle. The persons who would rejoice most in the substitution of the modern languages for Greek, are our female teachers. As every one knows, these outnumber by far the male teachers employed in our schools. They are, many of them at least, fully alive to the dignity and importance of the profession to which they belong, and devote themselves to it with an

earnestness and enthusiasm deserving of all praise. Anything calculated to still further increase the efficiency and zeal of this large body of lady teachers, should therefore be warmly supported, and such, I am convinced, would be the effect of the proposed alteration in the syllabus for grade A. One word by way of digression. The Council of Public Instruction are certainly short-sighted in not encouraging, by means of money premiums, teachers to continue their studies after being once enrolled in the ranks of the profession, and so qualify themselves to pass the examinations for the higher grades. Every one possessing the slightest acquaintance with educational science must be aware that the teacher whose knowledge extends beyond what is absolutely requisite for the purposes of tuition, will, *ceteris paribus*, be a much more efficient instructor than the one whose acquirements are limited by the necessities of actual school work. Teachers should therefore be encouraged to qualify themselves for the higher grades (1) by grants of governmental money, and (2) by making the subjects requisite to pass in the higher examinations such as are likely in themselves to prove attractive; and this second ground brings me back to the subject of my letter. Most, if not all, of the arguments I have already urged in the case of male teachers apply with equal, or greater force to the female. They, too, prefer studying languages likely to be of lasting value to them, to spending their time and energies in acquiring a superficial knowledge of a language for which, probably, they have no liking whatever, and which they would, beyond doubt, discard immediately upon an abandonment of the teaching profession for a "permanent engagement." It is unfair to our lady teachers to make imperative for examination, a subject, an adequate knowledge of which, so far as they are concerned, can only be gained by expensive private tuition. And girls, as compared with boys, are at this special disadvantage, inasmuch as, while in the latter a knowledge of Greek is looked upon with favor, and as a highly elegant and desirable part of a gentleman's education, Greek in a lady is, by the bulk of mankind, (and *womankind* also) considered a very unladylike accomplishment, and too often confers upon its fair possessor the reputation of a blue-stocking, and feminine prig. French and German labor under no such disadvantage. Both languages, the former particularly, are considered as appropriate to the fair sex as music

or drawing. The most thorough-paced utilitarian, though speaking with undisguised contempt for Latin and Greek, and "such like stuff," has still unbounded respect for a knowledge of French and German. I am aware that much of the above argument will apply equally well to Latin. But to remove this language from the syllabus would be impolitic as well as impossible; the difficulties of the language as compared with Greek are less, and a knowledge it can be more readily acquired. In short, while as regards male teachers, some objections to the change can be raised, in the case of female teachers everything appears to be strongly in its favor.

To recapitulate briefly:—the alteration will be advantageous to male teachers by affording to many of them a more congenial field of study; to the public and the male scholars by supplying the educational needs of the mercantile and manufacturing classes; to the female pupils by enabling them to prosecute, in our public schools, a much-needed and much-neglected branch of education; and to our lady teachers an opportunity of at once rising in the ranks of the profession, and at the same time possessing themselves of an elegant and useful accomplishment. At all events, the subject is one that will well bear discussing, and I trust that this communication may have the effect of directing public attention to a change so desirable as the one which, however feebly, I have done my best to advocate.

F. H. BELL.

DR. J. G. MCGREGOR meets with deserved success in his efforts to diffuse scientific knowledge by "Popular Lectures on Physics." His class room is packed on Monday and Friday evenings of each week.

THE lecture course of the Y. M. C. A. proves a success at every step. "The Candle of Bohemia," as held up by Dr. Burns, was brilliant. Mr. Hannay's "One Hundred Years Ago," contained many facts worth remembering. To expect an exhaustive paper on such a subject would be unreasonable.

Our Societies.

THE *Kritosophian* had a lively discussion last Friday evening about the "strict morality" of the English chase. B. McKittrick led off with a calm and well-woven argument showing the cruelties of the hunt. W. S. Whittier responded. The vote showed a minimum majority against the opener.

Excelsior, on the same evening, revelled in a general entertainment, comprising Original Papers by S. D. Scott, R. Emmerson and F. Chambers; Recitation by J. R. Fitzpatrick; Readings by S. Keith, E. Crowell and H. Whittier; Music by W. R. Kennedy and J. W. McIntosh.

Dallusiensia.

ONE of the Graduates of '76 is said to be tolling a Bell (e) at Shelburne.

Professor (to student with his head in a sling) "What do you understand by accusative of closer definition? No answer. "Well, knocked out as to his eye is an example." Even the Professor laughs, but there is no chance to retaliate.

A FAMILY of golden-haired girls who live in a house surrounded by evergreens, were described as being evergreen out of doors, ever-red in the house.

'Twas a Junior who got out of bed, muttering "Diantre, French at nine," and just discovered as he finished his toilet that 'twas Sunday.

AMAZED Clerk (to student) "No, we don't keep "Harper's Ferry" here.

A MEMBER of the Physics Class puts a book under his lamp to raise the oil when the wick burns short.

ONE who narrowly escaped being jostled into the cemetery by the measles and a city doctor, complains of a reaction in the form of an aggravated attack of impecuniosity.

Tutor in French.—Will you please translate the sentence beginning—J'avais laplume souvent à la main, parce qu'il n'y avait point, &c.

Junior.—I often had the pen in my hand, because it had no point.

A FRESHMAN has the conceit to think that he has the worst cold in Halifax.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

D. C. FRASER, Esq., B. A., \$5; E. H. Owen, Lunenburg, \$1; G. H. Fulton; B. A., \$1; J. R. Noonan, Esq., \$1; Geo. J. Morrow \$1; Rev. H. B. Dickie, \$1; W. A. Mills, \$1; W. D. R. Cameron, \$0.25; Rev. Thos. Sedgewick, \$1; Geo. McMillan, B. A., \$1; Dr. Avery, \$1; R. C. McRae, \$1; G. P. Murray, \$1; Angus McMillan, \$1; J. H. Cameron, \$1; McKenzie '78, \$1; McQueen, '79, \$1; Kinsman, '80, \$1.

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