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Poetical.

Merry Christmas All!

Be merry all, be merry all!
With holly dress the festive hall,
Prepare the song, the feast, the ball,
To welcome Merry Christmas all.

And, O! remember, gentles gay,
To you who bask in fortune's ray,
The year is all a holiday,—
The poor have only Christmas gay.

When you the costly banquet deal
To guests who never famine feel,
O spare one morsel from your meal
To cheer the poor at Christmas deal.

So shall each note of mirth appear
More sweet to Heaven than praise or prayer,
And angels, in their carols there,
Shall bless the poor at Christmas dear.

For the Irving Literary Gazette.

"It Might Have Been."

The poet sings the mystic lay with tears!
In the depth of his poetic heart he buries
the sad strain, and in moments of inspira-
tion and thought he recalls it in some of
his most glowing productions, and paints
the heart's dark, reproachful despair in
these four words of anguish, "It might
have been." They sit like a gloomy spec-
tre around the graves of our heart's hopes,
and form the funeral wreath of the purest
inspirations of our existence. It might
have been! oh, what a story of anguish is
breathed in these expressive words; they
tell of blighted hopes, blighted not through
the fiat of an unconquerable fate, but hopes
blighted, crushed and buried that might
have been realized. In one moment of
human blindness we dash the silver goblet
of earthly happiness aside, to drink the
bitter dregs of misery, while with breaking
hearts we murmur, "It might have been."

We turn aside from the garden where
withered lie the fairest flowers of our dar-
kened lives—and, like the country maiden,
take up the burden of life thinking only,
"It might have been."

What disappointment, what sorrow, or
cruel blast of adversity's surging billow is
not multiplied ten-fold when the reproach-
ful voice of conscience whispers, "It might
have been."

But how could we know that the tide
of cruel fate would rush back upon the
pebbly beach of our bright and happy
lives, and sweep into the sea of sorrow all
of our brightest hopes and highest aspira-
tions? How could we know that the
chain of our lives was joined link by link
together, like the flowery chain woven by
childhood's hand, and that if we hastily
broke one link, the whole chain is undone
—our life forever blighted. How could
we know that in after years we would look
back upon our youthful days, and gazing
sadly upon the closed volume of happiness,
wail in broken-hearted anguish, "It might
have been."

How many of the world's noble sons,
with high hopes and glowing ambition,
obey the sublime injunction, and "Go forth
into the world's broad field of battle" with
firm purpose and fixed resolve to conquer,
and now we may see the star of inspiration
gleaming upon the brow of yon pale youth,
who starts out upon this uncertain career

clothed in the beauty and strength of high
resolve and lofty purpose, and with "Ex-
celsior" for his watchword, how faithfully
has he striven to overcome all intervening
obstacles, and by some deed or work of
intellectual or physical prowess, to win the
loftiest niche in Fame's temple, and to
transmit a name to be loved and honored
by posterity. This beacon has guided him
onward; this goal pointed to victory and
renown; this end actuated him to labor and
exertion, which, ah, bitter, bitter thought,
have been in vain; and now, when he draw-
eth nigh to the end of his wearisome jour-
ney, he hath to repay him for all of his
past efforts only the sad conviction that his
life has been a failure, his glory only a
name. Over him rush like a wind that is
keen, cold and relentless, thoughts of what
might have been, and the weight and woe
of his life, all the dreams that had faded
all the hopes that had vanished, all his life
henceforth a dreary and tenantless mansion,
haunted by vain regrets and pallid, sor-
rowful faces.

But he must go on, finish that sunless
journey which he hath begun; no faltering
footsteps now; he must go on, though he
pass over the graves of his dead hopes,
and hearts of the living, and disappointed,
and crushed in hopes, he can only sigh
forth to the listening winds, "It might have
been."

There are a thousand standpoints in the
lives of us all where we pause bewildered,
and, looking back sadly, oh, so sadly, "It
might have been." The world is full of
misspent lives, of sad regrets and useless
reproaches, and the sunlight of many a
mortal's day is filled with the sad and
mournful symphony which sings of lost
chances, of unaccomplished deeds, and of
crushed hopes, while upon the dying ear
falls ever the reproachful whisper, "It might
have been." Oh, this might have been,
how sad, how piteous the strain; how the
voice trembles when it utters the words,
for it is but putting the saddest of the
heart's history in the saddest of words.

If we take this little phrase in a histor-
ical sense alone, and think a moment upon
the numerous ends that might have been
wrought out in the material world of all
nations, we may in some slight degree be
able to grasp the idea of such impressible
force and strength. We may feebly judge
of the possible plain of untraversed glory
and renown, and of unexplored honor. We
hold our breath with admiration, and some-
times with horror, whilst listening to their
deeds of bravery and ambition, and, in
spite of our better thoughts of humanity
—we can but admire the noble heroes who
have in their time held the whole world
under sway—and played with the glory of
nations as a child plays with a toy. But
when we think that never yet in the world's
past history has any ruthless conquerer
done all he might have done, we may well
tremble when contemplating the evident re-
sults that would have transpired, had the
prowess of their minds full sway. Thus
we might take the career of Napoleon Bon-
aparte, a career unparalleled in the annals
of history, both for the number and rapid-
ity of his victories. It would be useless to
attempt to touch upon his career, for who
does not know the details of this mighty

man's history? who is not aware that the
whole European world was combined to
keep under the fiery spirit that would have
made slaves of nations; and who does not
know that combined Europe, upon the
bloody battlefields of Jena; Eckmuhl and
Lutzen, were defeated by his single and
undaunted power. But after the fatal
march to Moscow, and the terrible conflict
upon the banks of the Beresina river,
where, wearied out with a hopeless march,
starving and freezing, the army of Napo-
leon contended with forces that represented
the most powerful nations of Europe, and
by the force of numbers alone, we at last
beheld the victor vanquished, and Napoleon's
dream of glory at an end. Sadly, mourn-
fully, the scene changes, and our imagina-
tion turns from victory and glory to defeat
and despair, from the glorious rising of the
"sun of ascendancy" to the sudden sinking
of that magnificent orb behind the storm-
clouds of adversity.

West of that country of bluest skies and
brightest flowers, that far-land of pictures
and poems—washed by the surging black
waters of the Mediterranean—is an island,
of itself of no importance, for it is barren
of all productions, and of but small dimen-
sions, and but for an event would have
scarce found a place in the pages of history.
Now its name is immortalized, its shores
surrounded with a halo of glory which the
storms of unborn ages cannot obliterate—
for did not the waving boughs on the island
of St. Helena form the prison bars where-
upon the hopes of the brave and watchful
Napoleon beat their wings in sorrow? Was
it not there that the restless and
hardly confined fire in the heart of this
great man burned itself out in fiercest long-
ing to be free, that he might conquer the
whole world, as the Hero of Macedon had
done before him. Useless, useless longing,
oh brave Napoleon, for thou canst only
stand with knit brow, compressed lips and
flashing eye, in the ancient castle of thy
imprisonment, and, while listening to the
gloomy dash of the wild waves upon the
cruel shore, think madly of what might
have been.

How many are the cases where proud
ambition, held back by the restraining hand
of power, has smothered its hopes and as-
pirations in obscurity. How many proud
heads bowed with grief and humiliation?
How many proud hearts broken from dis-
appointed ambitions? How many heroes
lay their heads down to die, and, with the
last throb of their broken hearts, answer,
"It might have been."

What was thy life Oh! starry Galileo?
The dark and hideous halls of the Inquisi-
tion, loom up in the shadowy distance,
kindly telling thy story. Was it not in
thy brain that the glittering star of inspi-
ration held lordly rule, inciting thee to dis-
covery and invention, which from their
very grandeur, were doubted and scoffed at
by the poor deluded world, wrapped in the
darkest veil of ignorance and superstition?
We see thee standing before thy sombre
clad judges in the halls of the subterra-
nean prisons of Spain, while the threats of
cruel torture, warn you to recall the stub-
born doctrines, that had set the world on
fire; again and again we see thee brought
before thy persecutors, until at last, the

glorious thoughts and inventions, the sub-
lime inspirations of thy wondrous mind—
succumbed to suffering nature, and thou
wert forced to utter, the hollow, meaning-
less words, that arouse your life study and
strict research, the long weary nights spent
in wandering through the intricate mazes
of mathematical rules, to have been in vain,
that the earth did not perform its daily
revolutions, and that your theory was the
wild and improbable chimera of a diseased
brain. It was not until he had laid his
head upon which the snows of over seventy
winters had left their trace, in the silent
grave of a strange clime, that the theory of
the mighty astronomer was proved and es-
tablished. Then, when too late to sooth
the sorrowing genius, or to place the laurel
wreath of success upon his brow, the world
rose up, and called him great. Had not
this bright light been quenched by the
rude hand of persecution, who knows what
wonderful discoveries might have followed;
who knows what sublime thoughts were
buried in the grave of the aged and perse-
cuted Galileo? Many have been wafted
out upon the ocean of Eternity, unrewarded
for years of toil and suffering, until death
has received them in his cold embrace, and
then, when the weary ones are at rest,
Fame awakes to scatter far and wide their
laurels, little thinking, "the soul whence
these high gifts were shed, in adversity, did
faint in solitude." Earth has returned to
earth, but their memory has not faded with
them. They are not forgotten. Forget-
ten! oh how sad the sound! how the heart
shrinks at the thought of oblivion, of liv-
ing unknown, unloved and unnoticed, of
dying unpraised and unepitaphed. But
though no "storied urn," and "animated
bust," marks their final resting-place, though
they sleep alone, with nature's gems, ca-
ressing them, and with bright stars, the
"Forget-me-nots" of angels, keeping night-
ly vigil o'er them, they live with us still in
their deeds of valor and virtue, in their
"thoughts that breathe and words that
burn," and though late,

"The ivy and amaranth in graceful sheaf,
Twined with the laurel, fair imperial wreath,"

doth crown the graves of those once so
neglected—fit emblems of their glory, which
will ever bloom bright and verdant while
time continues to advance upon its tireless
pinions. Though they did not all they
might have done, yet dying they left be-
hind them footprints on the sands of time,
which the mightiest wave of adversity's
surging billow cannot wash away.

Mysterious life! how full of sorrow, and
disappointments! how few ever have their
hopes realized! for man is never satisfied,
and is ever wishing on, on "Though every
wish is but wishing new pain,—and turns
into sorrow as mist turns into rain."

Strange is the mystery of the heart of
man, with its quick instincts! Strange is
the life of man, with changes so sudden
and sad! Strange that the fairest flowers
bloom but to fade, the sweetest songs are
warbled to die away in the echoes of the
past. Strange, strange, the noblest souls
live but to learn to die, and that life in
brightest phase is but a breath of wind, whose
music is sad and beautiful, and whose chord
is the key note of frozen hopes, varied by
the sad, sad cadence, "It might have been."

For the Irving Literary Gazette.

English Words and English Spelling.

It must be apparent to any one who has given the subject any thought, that the spelling of words in the English language is an unaccountable and a most unreasonable arrangement of letters, and not only are there presented strange combinations, having different sounds when preceded by different letters, but the single letters are greatly encumbered by having so many sounds attributed to them.

Such is our language as we find it, and of which we feel that we are justly proud; not of the characteristics above named, but of its flexibility and powers of expressing delicate shades of thought. When we consider the great number of people who speak and use English to-day, does it not seem that the language ought to be as nearly perfect as it is possible for the most learned men to make it? That it is not so now is evident to even a careless observer.

The people who speak English are great both in numbers and intelligence, and it can truly be said that wherever they live, saying nothing of other nations, there is the greatest advancement and improvement. They devote freely their time and means to the accomplishment of every good enterprise. An illustration may be found in the recent transit of Venus, when they directed the expenditure of money and the employment of the brightest intellects to obtain data for the purpose of repeating calculations which were already reduced to a fraction of a second, and after all not to change the course of Venus nor modify the heat of the sun, but for the sole and laudable purpose of promulgating accurately scientific knowledge. In machinery, also, inventive genius is ever on the alert to find some new appliance, the merit of which shall be the saving of valuable time and labor.

Forming our judgment from these data, we would expect to find the medium for recording the thoughts of these people a model of eloquence as to its form and suitability for the purpose intended.

Our native language is a part of ourselves, and we would not be understood as being so unnatural as not to revere the medium of our first utterances, for as to its capabilities as an agent, we believe that by means of it a clear and forcible expression can be found for every thought of the human mind, but we also believe that it is exposed to serious objections on account of many silent and otherwise superfluous letters, and the arbitrariness and want of uniformity in the pronunciation.

We must recognize the basis of truth upon which are founded those ridiculous expressions of foreigners about our native tongue. We have all heard of him who was endeavoring to arrange, according to some principle, the pronunciations of English words, but became hopelessly entangled with *tough*, *bough*, *dough*, &c., but we have never heard that any devotee of this kind of pronouncing ever gave a reason for this seeming nonsense that was in the least degree satisfactory. But it is not worth our while to quarrel with those who had the making of our language if we manifest our satisfaction by allowing it to go unimproved from one generation to another.

Recent agitation on the subject of reforming these evils has caused many to hold up their hands in holy horror at the idea of thus invading what they regard the sacred precincts of language.

Those who entertain these misgivings forget that the form in which we are now accustomed to seeing any given word is not of necessity the form in which it was first known, or in which it has remained all the time. Our word *again*, for example, which

we frequently use, and which we feel we could scarcely recognize by any other form, has during its history exulted in the several euphonious spellings, *agen*, *ougen*, *ougean*, *ongegn*. If, therefore, we should adopt another or return to the first, it would not manifest any special want of reverence for custom. The objection is analogous to that made against the late revision of the New Testament, which loses its weight when we consider that there have been many translations, and that what it was proposed to revise, as to translation, versification, &c., was not Divine but human. When we come to consider the relation subsisting between written and spoken language, we find that language in its essence is spoken, and that what is written is only an arrangement of symbols, by which we represent the sound expressed, and thus record and preserve them for future interpretation. This, then, seems to be the sole use of the written characters, and in the accomplishment of that purpose the customary use of silent letters, or those not pronounced according to their natural sounds, is not only useless but unreasonable and vicious.

The fault is by no means trivial when we remember that both natives and foreigners are expected to spend much valuable time to acquire this artificial way of spelling, and he who fails to do that and spells naturally, is adjudged ignorant regardless of his other attainments.

To one orthodox and highly cultivated, it would be almost equivalent to an infliction of the disease itself, to hear the word Phthisic spelled *Tizik*. And yet why not? The former does indeed retain the form of the word in the Greek from which it is derived, but scarcely a shadow of the sound. It appears that the importance is placed not in the word itself or the sound, but in the written symbols which arbitrarily represent the sound. If there is necessity which we do not grant, of preserving the form, there is certainly strong argument for retaining the pronunciation. The cry is raised by those who object to any change, that we could not then, trace a word to its source in any other language, nor distinguish the proper meaning when a single sound should have a single spelling. This objection seems at first to be valid, but when weighed it is found wanting. There is a class of words of which *philosopher* is a representative to which the first of the above objections applies, but since the *ph* in English is intended to replace only a single letter of Greek, and since our letter *f* adequately expresses the sound, the word would certainly be as faithfully represented if spelled *filosofor*. So far from there being any trouble to assign the proper meaning when words like *meet*, *meat*, *mete*, are spelled alike, we do in writing habitually derive the meaning from the context, and then the spelling from the meaning.

Although the present spelling is sometimes exceedingly strange, yet it would possess a merit which it does not now do, if it were uniform. Take such words as make use, consecutively of *i* and *e*, as *believe*, *deceive*, *retrieve*, a contemplation of which is only calculated to make one hesitate, and wonder whether in the next word of the kind suggested, they should be placed *ie* or *ei*.

An adept in spelling has kindly informed us however, that where both are used that one comes first which occupies a place, in the alphabet, nearest to the letter which next precedes it in the word. How clear! How charming! We can admire the mental penetration of the man who discovered the rule, but such devices of language are not calculated to inspire enthusiasm.

One thing that has impressed itself upon my mind, while writing the above, is that in Latin and Greek, the accentuation is

sufficient to indicate the pronunciation, but in English every word that offers the least opportunity for digression, is accompanied by a bracketed pronunciation, which is a positive confession that it is not called as it is spelled, and before Mr. Webster or Mr. Worcester tells us, it is impossible to know what letters will be silent, or what unexpected terms may be put upon the syllables; see *subtile*, *subtle*, *corpse*, *corps*. We do not wish to be understood as recommending that words be pronounced in every case as they are now spelled, for this would be going from bad to worse, but that wherever practicable words be spelled as they are now pronounced and we believe there would be *meny les objekshuns*.

G. W. D.

For the Irving Literary Gazette.

MYSTERY.

The subject of our essay is boundless. The more we seek to fathom its depths, the more we are baffled and mystified. One strata opens to our struggle only to be succeeded by an innumerable supply of others, still harder to penetrate. Everything with which we are brought in contact, from infancy to manhood, speaks only of Mystery. The God whom we adore, the sun that sheds her radiance over this vast world, tells us of nothing but Mystery. When we are launched forth upon the tempestuous sea of existence, on which so many barks are bearing their cargo of human lives, and in which so many proud ships have stranded and wrecked, we begin our exploration. As long as life continues we carry it on with never a cessation for rest or recuperation; and we quit our toil only when the grim and shadowy hand of death has snatched us from our associations here below and placed us where all mysteries are solved or where the wicked are forever damned. There seems to be a pleasure in the constant envelopment of Mystery and the uncertainty with which we are surrounded. "No man knoweth what a day may bring forth." The morrow can and will care for itself. We may work and toil and strive, but our efforts will be unavailing unless aided and abetted by some higher power, some power which we can not understand. The farmer can only place the seed in the earth and trust to some influence which is above his comprehension for the germination of the production of a fruitful harvest. Sometimes Mystery becomes a pain instead of a pleasure. When war with its desolating and despoiling hand sweeps over our land, when some who are near and dear to us depart to present themselves as so many stones in the barrier between their foes and their firesides, when father, brother and husband have left us to offer themselves as a sacrifice upon the sacred altar of liberty, when mystery surrounds their whereabouts if alive, where and in what condition they are if dead, where the spot is where mother earth has covered them with her clods, then it is that mystery begets anguish of soul. Mystery is also for our advantage. What a sad state would the world be in if each knew his fate! What chaos would be produced! What misery occasioned! The joy of this world would be enveloped in the darkness of despair. No cheering ray of hope could find a resting place in our bosom. No soothing hand or cheering word could make our griefs less poignant, since we would know that our days were numbered, that soon we would stand before the tribunal of a just God, when an account must be given for every idle thought, word and deed. Our days would be spent in melancholy and our nights be wasted in gloomy foreboding. How much suffering is prevented by a merciful providence in withholding this gift from us. The man ambitious for

renown upon the battlefield would be intimidated, if a picture were presented to his gaze, wherein are shown forth the weary marches that must be borne, the bloody carnage that must be combated, the many months of lingering illness in the noisome hospital, aye, and the very gaws of death which were opening to receive many a sufferer and bear his spirit away from the strife of the battle-field while his body is consigned to a soldier's grave, with only "Unknown" to mark the spot. As we stand upon the shore of some apparently limitless watery expanse, we behold a most perfect example of mystery. We may sail over its surface with emotions of joy, we may gaze upon its troubled heavings when lashed to fury by some passing hurricane with fear and reverence, but nevertheless we do not understand it. The weather-beaten sailor after an experience of fifty years upon its briny depths, is as profound a stranger when he bids it farewell as when as a fore-mast-hand he first trod the deck. Despite the old proverb, in this case familiarity does not breed contempt. We may drag its bottom with the fisherman's net or gather treasures left by the reflux wave but nevertheless there lies concealed beneath its emotionless surface curiosities and wonders which eye hath not seen nor imagination conceived of. Thus it is in regard to everything around us; all are hid beneath the coverlet of mystery. Thus it HAS BEEN in all ages past. Thus it WILL CONTINUE to be till time shall cease its flight and be replaced by the joy or sorrow of an unending eternity.

It is not only among the college boys on our side of the water that the hoodlum element occasionally prevails, but the Scotchmen who seek after knowledge seem to be quite as much afflicted in that direction. The latest demonstration is in Edinburgh University. On a recent Saturday afternoon, when Lord Rosebery delivered his inaugural address as lord rector of that institution, the young men gave him what would in this country be called a benefit. The report of the proceedings sounds like that of one of our own collegiate festive occasions. As Lord Rosebery and other eminent gentlemen went to take their places on the platform, the students lay in wait for them with pea-shooters and handfuls of beans, mingling their exercises with musical combinations of psalms and scurrilous songs. They gave the rector what is popularly known in collegiate circles as a "squeeze." This was in effect similar to the recent "sitting on" the faculty of Hobart College in the State of New York, except that the Hobart boys laid their professors down flat on the campus, while the young Scotchmen stood their rector up in their midst and turned him round and round, exerting a pressure on him which almost broke his ribs. When prayer was offered by a dignified doctor of divinity Young Scotland sent up amens and its "Hear, hear," with deafening volumes of racket. The conferring of degrees was of necessity a dumb show, for the uproar was such that not a word could be distinguished. When the new rector stepped forward to make his official speech he was greeted with the well-known song, "For he's a jolly good fellow." Notwithstanding this, he told his uproarious hearers that this was a proud occasion for him, though he admitted that he was somewhat embarrassed by the peculiar nature of the attention paid him. While the benediction was being pronounced the students gave three rousing cheers for the new rector. When the meeting was out the audience became a mob, yelling and hooting like wild savages. The boys are evidently picking up a good deal miscellaneous education.

Written for the Irving Literary Gazette.

The Formalities of Swearing.

The people of the United States, are, I think, more than any other a swearing people. The almost boundless ramifications and demands, our Federal, State, County and Municipal Governments, have made customary among us an amount of oath-taking greater than is known in any other enlightened land. This is a condition of things which may well cause a devout or thoughtful man to reflect whether this frequent and oftentimes careless application of oaths to judicial and political affairs is not a prostitution; whether our reverence for them and their dignity is not lost when they become too familiar; whether, if we could diminish their number we would not add solemnity to the remainder. I do not raise these questions for the purpose of answering them. The object of this article was at first merely to set before the readers of the *Gazette* a few of the oaths commonly taken in this State in order to show that our law-givers had framed them in language suitable to their dignity and sanctity. For instance, could any thing add fulness or force or beauty to the oath administered to our grand jurors?

"You shall diligently inquire, and true presentment make of all such matters and things as shall be given you in charge, or shall otherwise come to your knowledge, touching this present service: The counsel of the State of Maryland, your fellows' and your own, you shall well and truly keep secret: You shall present no person for envy, hatred, malice or ill-will; neither shall you leave any one unpresented for love, fear, favor or affection, or for any hope or promise of reward; but you shall present all things truly as they come to your knowledge, according to the best of your understanding; so help you God."

Or in what could the following be improved, as an oath to the petit jury about to try a man for felony?

"You shall well and truly try, and a true deliverance make between the State of Maryland and A. B. the prisoner at the bar, whom you shall have in charge, and a true verdict give according to your evidence; so help you God."

Then too our Constitution seems to me to meet the necessities of the case exactly in the following oath to be taken by all who may be elected or appointed to office in the State, before they enter on the discharge of their official duties:

"I—, do swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States; and that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of Maryland, and support the Constitution and Laws thereof; and that I will, to the best of my skill and judgment, diligently and faithfully, without partiality or prejudice, execute the office of —, according to the Constitution and Laws of this State; so help me God."

These are fair, simple, and appropriate, being the fruits of civilization and peace. Unhappily all the oaths which have been written for men to take have not been so. Odious and tyrannical test oaths have been contrived for the persecution of minorities and conquered factions from time to time, and have often remained in force laws after the passions which bred them have died out.

It is useful and interesting to inquire concerning oaths, what is their origin, what is their real meaning, and what is their general effect? First, of their origin—is it human or divine? All the records of history are full of oaths. The Bible itself contains many. There is the beautiful invocation of Ruth; and the scarcely less beautiful declaration by which Eli bound the little Samuel. Abraham took oaths,

lifting up his hand to do it. The Angel in the Revelations swears by Him that liveth forever and forever that time shall be no more. Even the great God is represented as swearing by Himself unto Abraham, as he could swear by none greater than Himself. All through the Old Testament there are oaths recorded; and they do not impress us as frivolous. But they are not peculiar to the Good Book. Classic literature is also full of oath-taking. Homer's heroes, like the army in Flanders, swore terribly. Helen swore fidelity to Menclans, and if she had kept her oath what woes might have been saved the Greeks and Trojans! Men and women swore by the names of the gods. The gods themselves swore by the waters of the Styx. Numa swore by Fides, Socrates by the dog. The Romans sometimes swore by their swords or their Caesars, and once in awhile a warrior swore by the quiver of Diana. The Egyptians swore by cats, dogs, snakes, and even onions. In China a saucer is broken, and contracting parties swear to be broken like it if they lie. In India they cut off the head of a rooster with the same sort of an imprecation. Among us, deaf mutes, when they wish to quiet all doubts of a statement, swear to its truth by blowing into their fists.

The frequency of swearing in the Sacred Record, and the universality of the custom among men, might lead us to suppose that it is of divine origin, and was suggested to men before their separation at Babel; and that like the traditions of the creation, the great flood, and other Bible stories, it has clung to them through all changes of place and condition. It is, however, a much more legitimate inference that the custom is an effect of sin, since all races of men seem to require some compulsion to make them tell the truth when their interests are involved; and that when Jehovah made use of it, He did so merely to impress His hearers, who were given to doubting His promises. Certainly the New Dispensation does not encourage the habit. "Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Following this teaching the Christian Fathers cried out against a multitude of oaths. Augustine sums up his creed in these words: "False swearing is fatal, true swearing is dangerous, swearing not at all is safe;" while Chrysostom, he of the golden mouth, said that "swearing took its beginning from want of truth and punctuality."

Many Christian sects yet hold that an oath is an abuse of the name of God, and the law has respect for their scruples, allowing them "solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm," instead of swearing.

Second, of their real meaning—

There has been much metaphysical discussion as to whether oaths are religious affirmations or invocations to God as a witness. Are they imprecations for the wrath of God upon him who swears falsely, or mere promises to be truthful by the help of God, who has promised to help us in all proper ways? When we solemnly swear that we will do thus and so, "so help us God!" what God do we invoke? Is it the God of vengeance and hate, or the God of love and mercy and helping power? Do we swear as in the old Italian code, by the God who avenges? or as the old Anglo-Saxon kings were adjured, by the grace and mercy of His Son? Perhaps the best interpretation is that which mingles the dread of His power to punish, with thankfulness for His willingness to help.

Third, of their general effect—Does their use tend to the keeping of obligations and the telling of truth? In the main I think it does. Many men who do not

scruple to lie in their ordinary conversation are very circumspect under oath. Yet I cannot but feel that so much swearing does, in some measure, at least, destroy the force of the oath. Then, too, the manner of administering it has much to do with its impressiveness and solemnity. Who has not been shocked by the irreverence and frivolity of some of our court officers, who run over oaths with such haste and indistinctness. One might say that such frequent and trivial swearing is no swearing at all, and that by extremes it comes near the Scripture injunction, "Swear not at all."

Governments condemn things, carbonian, nihilists and secret societies generally, because of their mystic oaths. But do governments set the example? Some wise writers, like Bentham, hold that oaths are repugnant to the Christian religion, and wonder that under such a religion they should be so common.

However this may be, something more than a sense of right or honor has been found necessary to hold men to the truth, and hence our statutes are laden with oaths at every page, and, like the ghost in Hamlet, moan "Swear! swear!" A STUDENT.

For the Irving Literary Gazette.

THOUGHTS.

Not thought—not deep, profound, hard thought—not the directing of the mind, but its wanderings; merely those light, airy nothings that flit through the brain and are gone almost before you can recognize them, and not an essay on these; not even an attempt to define them; only a few of them, jotted down during a half hour's idleness, and this rescued from oblivion, to bore you, gentle reader, should you not instantly turn your eyes from this to a worthier column.

I have been looking over a College catalogue with a lady friend, and just before I left she said:

"What does that little star mean by some of the names? Oh, yes, I see, he's dead."

It was lightly, thoughtlessly said, and in the same tone, another was mentioned as farming. She didn't mean to be heartless; she only didn't think.

Yes, he was dead. I knew him well—a fine, noble boy—a promising young man, and dead, with a tombstone, and a little star in the College catalogue to mark his memory. He was born, he lived a few years, he died, he is forgotten, and had he lived longer he would only have died somewhat older. When alive, wherever he moved he always seemed to himself to stand under the keystone of Heaven's grand arch. The world was to his mental, as well as his bodily vision, a circle, with himself at the centre, just as it is with you and with me; but he died, was buried, and is forgotten; such will be your fate and mine. Take from the broad bosom of the Pacific one drop of water; the billows surge in a storm or sleep in a calm just as before; so will the world be when we leave it.

"The gay will laugh

When we are gone, the busy brood of care
Plod on; and each one, as before, will chase
His favorite phantom."

Such a fate is sad, sad to think of; yet could we wish it otherwise? For example, how would you like, just because John, Henry, James, Thomas, Jonathan, Peter or Paul, whom you never saw or heard of, has shuffled off his mortal coil, to have to go grieving all the rest of your life? How would it suit you because Maria Ann Stubbs, great-grandmother, was scalped by the Indians, a hundred years ago, to sit in your room and blubber the remainder of your days?

Then why wish others to do it for you?

The truth is, you are worshipping at the shrine of that little omnipresent God, self, who, with the "Almighty Dollar," rules the world.

Selfishness, the meanest, lowest, and, alas, the most common of all vices; we each of us have a streak of it down our backs, a yard wide and extending from a foot above our heads to the ground. It varies in quality from that of the pure egotist, who would burn his neighbor's house to cook himself an egg, to that of the great philanthropist, who leaves a million dollars to a college, which is to stand as a lasting monument to his name. Many a patriot, so-called, has only acted as such to obtain "A name that will live forever, like a wreath of immortelles."

Many a politician thinks only of a fat office when he bewails the sad state of the country. Many a minister looks more to the money he is to obtain than to the souls he is to win. Oh, self, self, self! the ruler of the world, we all adore thee.

And now this same deity, selfishness, admonishes me that it is time to bring this rambling composition to a close. I am tired, after a hard day's work at my lessons, and I see that my half hour has passed. For once I will be candid, and confess that this is the cause of my stopping, not the fear of my boring you. R. Y.

We append the following, which was enclosed and not marked private.—EDS.

MESSEURS. EDITORS:—It's all bosh—all effect. I never had that conversation over the catalogue with a lady— I wish I could say there are no stars to any of the names, but that part is true. I have been at this not half an hour, but six long hours on a stretch, and not idle, but sitting scratching my head and cudgelling my brain as hard as I could. It was not written at night, and I have not stopped because my time is up, but because I have said all I can say, and am tired. My fingers are inky up to my wrist, and half of my hair is pulled out. Let me hope that, under these circumstances, you will accept the enclosed document, and give me the pleasure of seeing my thoughts in print. If you do so conclude, please send me two dozen copies of your valuable and interesting paper, for which enclosed find two cents. I want to mark this production around with a blue pencil and mail it to my numerous friends, after the manner of older and more eminent authors than

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT.

The Meaning of "Bonanza."

It is a Spanish nautical term, meaning primarily a fair and hence a favoring wind, but is employed by the Mexican miners to designate the period when they are in good ore, or in bonanza, in contradistinction to in borasca, or poor ground. It has been borrowed by our miners and given a more comprehensive significance, and, like many other words taken from foreign languages, has come into popular use to designate in a vague and general way any big or lucky stroke of fortune.—*Leadville Herald*.

The term "dry goods," although generally supposed to be of American origin, is in fact English. A report of a committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1745 to inquire into certain smuggling practices reads: "From Yarmouth the principal officers give account that on 22 October 112 horses were landed on the beach near Benaire with dry goods, by upwards of 90 men guarded by 10 persons with firearms, and on the 20th of the same month 40 horses were laden with dry goods at Karsley by riders well armed."

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MILES & SCHAEFFER, - - EDITORS.
GEORGE W. TODD, ASSOCIATE EDITOR.

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The mind of the student, in its confinement to study and occupation with things more real, is always forgetting the pleasures of the past and looking forward in anticipation to the joys that are to come. Scarcely had the prattle about vacation ceased to be the topic of discussion among the students, and autumn's hoar-frost had stripped nature of the beauties with which spring and summer had adorned it, when Thanksgiving was uppermost in their minds, some anticipating a few days with their friends and parents at home, others waiting in fond expectation of receiving boxes with dainties and luxuries from their distant homes, and a few good natured ones who are more easily satisfied, seemed perfectly contented to spend their short holiday at College, and luxuriate in picking a few chicken bones, which at that happy season constitutes the "big dinner" of the boarding school. This, too, with its pleasures and feasts has passed, and its delight is only deepened by the thought of the approaching Christmas, whose coming shines in the near future, indeed is almost upon us, and is greeted by young and old with bright hopes and happy memories. On every side we are reminded of its coming; the churches are being decorated with those evergreens whose rich colors are unchanged by the winter's frost and cold, the young and gay are trimming their Christmas trees and clothing them in beautiful array, the students, with jubilant hearts and a kind farewell, are departing for their homes; a few passing snow-flakes also tell of the approach of Christmas, when by the song of the sleigh bells, "We are lulled with sounds of sweetest melody."

This is indeed a season of delight to all. Not only does the student lay aside his book and go home to seek his pleasure and repose for his fatigued mind, but the laboring man puts away his tools and goes out in search for happiness and rest for his weary limbs. Westminster is also putting on her holiday appearance. The shop windows are stored with Christmas goods, and on every side the squeal of the fatted pig and quack of the domestic fowl may be heard to lament its coming. And now, fellow students, as you depart for your respective homes, take with you the interest of your College and Society, and return loaded with subscriptions for the GAZETTE, and you will take with you our best wishes for a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

Association.

There is displayed in the character and disposition of all persons a desire for social intercourse, even from their earliest existence. The varied forms of human attachments confirm the truth—that man abhors solitude and longs for the companionship of friends. This serves to form a basis for society, and to the elevated standard of social condition do nations, to a great degree, attribute their national prosperity. To attain and to preserve this prosperity, the young, in whom are to be contained the germs of moral excellence for the future, who will become the framers of society should have the advantage of good moral companionship. We are naturally creatures who imitate. To follow the example of an associate is but a characteristic of our race. The child in its infancy is actuated by force of example to imitate in its innocent prattle the sounds communicated to it by its parents. While the habits and morals are being formed in young persons their companionship should be carefully selected and strictly surveilled; a degree of moral influence should be thrown around them, not only in home life, but in the associations they form separated from those ties. The teacher and instructor bear the responsibility of a moral guide. Our schools and colleges, wherein are being developed the latent faculties of the youth, should be centres around which cluster elements which are calculated to inspire the young man with noble aims and aspirations in life. The downfall of many who are now the inmates of vicious haunts, and grovelling in the lower grades of society, can be traced to the undue influence for evil exerted by boon companions. Visit the cell of the drunkard convict and hear the evidence he adduces to establish the fact. While those honored and esteemed by the community attribute to their early training for good, their present position of eminence and respect. Society has its varied grades, in accordance with the wealth, education and influence of the persons composing it. In European countries, where there is fostered the aristocratic forms of government, those who belong to the aristocracy claim to be the higher in grade, and mingle exclusively among themselves; while in our own country, where are displayed sentiments more democratic, there is a more firm and general commingling of the people.

Yet the proverb, "Birds of a feather flock together" may be observed in the workings of modern society. Men of education seek companionship among the educated, those of dissolute habits among the reckless and merry, those of a philosophic turn of mind among scientists. Every young man and young lady should cultivate the qualities of entertainment, which is so needful to the persons who are to be thrown into the society of others. This intercourse and exchange of sentiments between the sexes, to produce a marked effect upon them, the young man feels a certain amount of polish to be obtained, and is restrained from a life of folly by the influence exerted.

Literary Notices.

The Century Magazine for the month of December is a very interesting number. It opens with an article on the Supreme Court of the United States by Smalley, giving description of the workings of that tribunal from its beginning. There are also engravings of deceased and of the present incumbents of the Court. The *Led-Horse*, a romance of the silver mines by Mary Hallock Foote serves to entertain as well as to instruct the reader. The *Taxidermal Art* is the title of an article by North.

The initial number of the *Tangent* is on our table. It is an interesting little sheet published fortnightly at Evanston, Illinois, in the interest of the North Western University by the Class of '85. Though small as yet, we are certain from the interest manifested in its editorials that it will be kindly received. Its salutary is spicy and to the point.

We have just received a copy of the December number of the *Universe*, a new magazine just published at St. Louis, Mo. It opens with an interesting article on "Travels in Scotland" by Rev. W. W. Boyd, and is interspersed throughout with Christmas tidings. The *Universe* is in every respect an excellent Magazine, handsomely covered, with choice subject matter well arranged.

Sibley's Farmer's Almanac for 1883 is one of the best catalogues of its kind we have seen. It contains a number of excellent essays on the culture of special crops by noted agricultural writers, rendering it instructive as well as a valuable book for reference.

We have just received the first number of "The Parrot," a monthly journal published by the "Parrot publishing company" of New York. In it is contained an entertaining story portraying the misery of the Irish peasantry during a famine, together with a salutatory and other interesting matter in which the Parrot is represented as speaking. This is an interesting journal and adds another to the many periodicals engaged in the diffusion of knowledge.

Our ex-active members and Alumni, in thinking over those to whom they shall send Christmas presents, should not forget the Society in whose halls they spent some of the happiest moments of their College life. If there is no other Christmas gift, fellow Irvings, which you can bestow, give us at least your aid and support in publishing the GAZETTE.

Purchase your Christmas suit at the Excelsior Clothing House, corner Baltimore and Light streets, Baltimore, Md., the largest and finest clothing house in the city. Its windows are always attractive, and its counters laden with clothing of superior quality.

Our exchanges for the month of December are slow coming in; we suppose they will come filled with Christmas tidings.

Receipts for November.

W. M. Gist, D. E. Goodwin, G. Y. Everhart, Miss Jennie Bowen, Miss Kate Dickerson, Dr. W. K. Fringer, Jno. N. Henman, Miss Ida Hubbard, Miss Kate Purnell, Samuel Roop, Miss Laura Stalaker, Samuel Thomas, E. White, J. W. Miles, Mrs. Mary E. Yingling, Miss Blanche Zimmerman.

If those of the Alumni who are so fond of criticising the GAZETTE would send us a written criticism with some suggestions as to how it may be improved, it would be far more appreciated.

Eighty marriage licenses have been issued in Carroll county since September 1st.

Browning Entertainment.

The people began to assemble in College Chapel early on the evening of the 15th to witness the entertainment given by the Browning Literary Society, and continued to gather until 7½ o'clock, promptly, at which time the curtain was raised and displayed a neatly arranged stage with a handsome background, upon which was written in beautiful letters—"A Merry Christmas." Below this was a star, representing the Star of Bethlehem. The programme was introduced with a chorus by the entire Society, after which Miss Jessie Smiley, in a few appropriate remarks, welcomed the audience, and extended special greeting to her sister Societies, the *Philomathean*, *Irving* and *Webster*, in the order named. The ladies were assisted in the tableaux by several gentlemen from the Senior Class, all of which were admirably represented. Miss Mattie Boyle read, in an excellent manner, a selection entitled "Hannah Jane," and Miss Annie Ames rehearsed, with no less credit, a piece entitled "Forty to Twenty." The chief feature of the evening was the play "My Aunt's Heiress," of a domestic character, and well suited to the occasion. Miss Georgie Nichols took the part of Mrs. John Smith, the mistress of the household, and managed it well; Miss Carrie Yingling, in the character of Miss Alexandria Smith, won many praises; Miss Lizzie Swarbrick performed the character of "Miss Betsy Brown" in a very creditable manner, and Miss Sadie Kneller as "Sippets," the servant girl, received general applause. Misses Eudie Richardson, Ada Smith, Minnie Jones, India Cochel, Sallie Wilmer, Ada Trumbo and Florence Hering, as Mrs. Smith's daughters, were the life of the play, Miss Hering proving the heroine of the play by being made the heiress of Miss Betsy Brown. The programme was interspersed throughout with music by the ladies of the Society, and closed with a chorus entitled "The Parting Song." The entertainment well sustained the reputation which the Brownings had gained in the way of entertainments, and was a source of enjoyment to all who attended. After the crowd had dispersed the ladies and gentlemen seated themselves in the Chapel and had a social chat until ten o'clock, during which time the ladies received many warm congratulations. With the closing of this entertainment the students generally take it upon themselves to close College exercises until after Christmas holidays. Many of the students left the next morning for their homes.

The Rev. Dr. Hicks, who was spiritual adviser to Guiteau, announces that the assassin is not in hell, because there is no such place.

From Harper's Easy Chair for December.

Washington Irving's Centenary.

Washington Irving's centenary will occur on the 3d of April, 1883. It is late for a fresh compliment to be paid to his sweet and gentle genius, but the *London Spectator* pays it by saying: "Since the time of Pope more than one hundred essayists have attempted to excel or to equal the *Tattler* and *Spectator*. One alone in a few of his best efforts may be said to have rivalled them, and he is Washington Irving." The *Spectator* adds that one only has surpassed them, "the incomparable Elia." Irving's temperament, however, was much more congenial with that of the early essayists than Charles Lamb's, and his pictures of English country life in *Bracebridge Hall* have just the delicate imaginative touch of the sketches of Sir Roger de Coverley. But in treating distinctively English topics, however airy and vivid his touch may be, Irving is manifestly enthralled by his admiration for the literary masters of the Anne time, and by the spirit of their writing. It is in the Knickerbocker world that he is characteristically at home. Indeed, it is his humorous and graphic fancy more than the sober veracity of history which has given popular and perpetual form to the early life of New York, and it is Irving who has enriched it with romantic tradition such as suffuses the story of no other State.

The bay, the river, the city, the Catskill Mountains, as Choate said of Faneuil Hall and Webster, breathe and burn of him. He has charmed the Hudson with a peculiar spell. The quaint life of its old Dutch villages, the droll legend of Sleepy Hollow, the pathetic fate of Rip Van Winkle, the drowsy wisdom of Cumminipaw, the marvellous municipality of New Amsterdam, and the nose of Anthony guarding the Highlands, with the myriad sly and graphic allusions and descriptions strewn all through his books, have made the river Irving's river, and the State Irving's State, and the city Irving's city, so that the first instinctive question of every lover of Irving from beyond the State, as he enters the Central Park and beholds its memorial statues is, "Where is the statue of Washington Irving?"

Unhappily, Echo and not the Park guide-book answers. Of course, in a general sense, "Si monumentum" may serve for a reply. From that point of view, indeed, Westminster Abbey, as the monument of English heroes in letters and arms, in the Church and the State, would be superfluous. But the Abbey is a shrine of pilgrimage because of the very fact that it is the burial-place of famous Englishmen. The Central Park in New York is already a Walhalla of famous men, and the statue that would first suggest itself as peculiarly fitting for the Park is that of the New-Yorker who first made New York distinctively famous in literature—the New-Yorker whose kindly genius first made American literature respected by the world.

There are, indeed, two New-Yorkers, two sons of the city of New York, who especially deserve commemoration in a great metropolitan pleasure-ground in which statues of famous men are erected. By a gift of private munificence Webster is there, and no one can demur. But John Jay is still wanting. By similar generosity, Halleck is admitted, and stands as the representative of American literature in the society of poets of other lands: Shakespeare and Burns and Goethe and Schiller. But Irving is not there. Reversing the question of Elia's story, "Where be the bad people buried?" the wondering pilgrim asks, Where be Irving and Bryant and Cooper? They were not Americans only, but by birth or choice New-Yorkers, and the

three distinctive figures of our early literature. It was very touching to see the venerable Bryant, in the soft May sunshine five years ago, standing with bare head and speaking of his old friend and comrade Halleck. But who that listened did not see through tender mists of years the grave and the reverend form of the speaker himself transformed to marble or to bronze, sitting serene forever beneath the shadowing trees, side by side with the poet of the "Faust" and the worshipper of Highland Mary? But Bryant would have been first to name Washington Irving as the earliest and most renowned distinctively American man of letters whose figure, reproduced characteristically and with simple quaintness, should decorate the Park.

It is the Dean of Westminster; we believe, who decides without appeal what memorials shall be admitted to the Abbey, and there was great alarm three or four years ago last Dean Stanley should admit a monument of the young son of Louis Napoleon. In the management of the Central Park it is probably the Commissioners who exercise the authority of admitting and excluding statues of distinguished persons. They ought certainly to insist vigorously upon the rule, "No rubbish shot here." They ought not to admit everything, merely because somebody will pay for it. A high standard of artistic merit, indeed, is hardly to be expected from a Board of Commissioners, nor is it essential. The veto should be laid not so much upon the work as upon the subject of it. But to a statue of Washington Irving all the gates should open, as every heart would open, in welcome. That half-humorous turn of the head and almost the twinkling eye, that brisk and jaunty air, that springing step, that modest and gentle and benign presence—all these could be suggested by the artist, and in their happy combination the pleased loiterer would perceive old Diedrick Knickerbocker, and the summer dreamer of the Hudson legends, the charming biographer of Columbus and of Goldsmith, the cheerful gossip of Wolfert's Roost, and the mellow and courteous Geoffrey Crayon, who first taught incredulous Europe that beyond the sea there were men also, and that at last all the world must read an American book.

Personals.

J. R. Hunt, Freshman Class, while at his home in Prince George's county, spending the Thanksgiving holiday, had a severe surgical operation performed, which resulted in the removal of a tumor from his forehead.

Rev. John M. Gill, who has been at his home in Virginia for some time for the improvement of his health, has determined to return to his appointment in Baltimore county.

Prof. Edwin M. Wilmer, formerly of the faculty of Western Maryland College, is to be married to Miss Blanche Placide, of Baltimore, on the 26th of this month.

Thomas J. Ewell, formerly a student of Western Maryland College, is married and stopping with his bride at the Maltby House, Baltimore.

The overseers of Harvard College have voted to revoke the degree of any graduate who participates in any dissolute behavior in commencement week. Their right to do so is questioned, the decisions in somewhat similar cases indicating that when degrees have been once conferred the diploma can not be withheld. Lawyers say that the courts would compel the college to desist, if applied to on a writ of *quo warranto* by a graduate who had been punished in this manner.

College News.

The students all took a peep at Venus on the 6th.

You can still hear a few notes from the College orchestra.

Prof. Reese missed several days at College last week on account of ill health.

Westminster is putting on her holiday appearance, and the College students their disappearance.

Col. Henry Page, of Somerset county, has been invited to deliver the oration before the Societies next Commencement.

Ward Hall is fast approaching its completion. The building is expected to be ready for occupancy by the first of February.

Skating is the most popular sport at College now, and nearly the whole school were on the ice last Saturday, ladies excepted.

The Sophomore Class have made several attempts to elect their class officers, but owing to a division in their ranks, have never succeeded.

The intermediate examination at the Theological Seminary will commence on Monday next, the 18th instant, and continue for five days.

A pertinent young Senior to Professor—Everything to-morrow will be closed on account of the Seniors' Quarterlies. Professor—Everything except the Seniors' mouths.

Besides the special course of lectures that are soon to be instituted in the College laboratory, arrangements are also being made to give the students practical instructions in the art of photography.

The officers of the Browning Society are: Miss Nannie S. James, President; Miss Carrie Yingling, Vice-President; Miss Lizzie Swarbrick, Rec. Secretary, and Miss Edie Richardson, Cor. Secretary.

Notwithstanding our College has no exercise in boating, it is said that a certain member of the Senior Class recently sat up all night that he might take a short "Rowe" to the depot early next morning.

College exercises, according to former custom, were suspended entirely on Thanksgiving Day. Union services were held in the Lutheran Church. Rev. T. H. Lewis, Principal of the School of Theology, preached the sermon. Ministers of the various denominations were present, and participated on the occasion.

Many of the students are looking forward with great pleasure to the next session of the Maryland Annual Conference, to be held in Westminster in March next. Many of the young ministers now enrolled in that Conference were formerly students here. Their stay with us during Conference week will undoubtedly be of a very pleasant character.

A short time previous to Thanksgiving Day a large number of the students received boxes through the express from their homes filled with the luxuries of life. It was not an uncommon occurrence for a week or more to find members of the various classes assembled around a full spread table in another student's room, and sharing liberally of his hospitality. College meals for a while were almost dispensed with.

"Present evidence," says Prof. Owen, in *Longman's Magazine*, "concur in concluding that the modes of life and grades of thought of the men who have left evidences of their existence at the earliest periods, hitherto discovered and determined, were such as are now observable in 'savages,' or the human races which are commonly so called."

Trouble at Adelbert College.

For some two weeks a struggle has been going on between the students of the new Adelbert College and the faculty with reference to a time-honored college entertainment called "the tempus," of a ribald nature, held annually on Thanksgiving evening. Two weeks ago the faculty informed the students that it must stop. The junior class went secretly to work preparing for the tempus and gave it in modified form on the usual evening. Silence from both sides has been the feature until to-day, when the junior class was informed by President Carroll Cutler that the entire class of twenty-one less three were no longer members of the college. The entire college met this afternoon and passed a series of resolutions for the consideration of the faculty, setting forth "that while the junior class had alone engineered the tempus, their work had been approved by the entire body of students; that the faculty had no right to prohibit the entertainment, and that unless the faculty restored the juniors to their college rights none of the other students would attend any classes in the future. A committee of six waited on President Cutler with these resolutions, and were tersely told that the faculty had defined their position, from which they would not recede one jot if all the students left the college.

The affair is the sensation of the town. The college has been lately founded and incorporated with the Western Reserve College of Hudson, Ohio, which was removed to this city. The Board of Trustees back the faculty, and unless the students, to the number of eighty-five, give in, they will have to go.—*N. Y. Tribune*.

The Masher.

Published by request, and dedicated to the "gang" of "mashers" who sit on steps along Main street, on Sundays and watch us girls going to and from Sunday school and church.

"What is that, mother?"

"A masher, dear; You may always find it standing here, Poised on the corner of the street, Proudly displaying its tiny feet; Twirling its little ten cent cane; And stupefying its tiny brain With the smoke of a paper cigarette— Don't touch it, dear, it was raised a pet."

"Will it bite, mother?"

"Well, I should shout; It will bite free lunch for all that's out." "Well, why doesn't Barnum buy the thing And tie it up with a piece of string? No other monkey in all his show Would prove such a drawing card, I know, But for me, I'd chew gum all my life Rather than be a masher's wife."

At the recent meeting of the Maine Pedagogical Society the sentiment of the members seemed to be opposed to the marking system in schools. Principal Rounds, of Farmington, declared that much of the marking is sheer nonsense, besides being a great burden to good teachers. He added that he had given up trying to find out a pupil's knowledge by searching examinations. He held brief examinations at unexpected times. Recitations, he added, cannot be judged so minutely as by tenths without interfering with the instruction. He thought that conduct should be taken into account in marking, because teachers undertake to do something more in teaching than merely to make scholars—they strive to mould character. W. J. Gorthello, of Gorham Normal School, would, he said, give more for the judgement of the teacher at the close of the term than for any system of marking; would promote scholars upon the individual opinion of their teachers that they were able to do the work of the higher grade. Marking he thought an unhealthy stimulant.

Cheap Opinions.

There is probably nothing that so obstinately stands in the way of all sorts of progress as pride of opinion, while there is nothing so foolish and so baseless as that same pride. If men will look up the history of their opinions, learn where they came from, why they were adopted, and why they are maintained and defended, they will find, nine times in ten, that their opinions are not theirs at all,—that they have no property in them, save as gifts of parents, education, and circumstances. In short, they will learn that they did not form their own opinions,—that they were formed for them, and in them, by a series of influences, unmodified by their own reason and knowledge. A young man grows up to adult age in a Republican or Democratic family, and he becomes Republican or Democrat in accordance with the ruling influence of the household. Ninety-nine times in a hundred the rule holds good. Like father, like son. Children are reared in the Catholic Church, in the Episcopal, Unitarian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist Church, and they stand by the Church in whose faith and forms they were bred. They become partisans, wranglers, defenders on behalf of opinions, every one of which they adopted without reason or choice. Touch them at any point, and they bristle with resistance, often with offense; yet they borrowed every opinion they hold! If they had all been changed about in their cradles, we should have the same number of partisans, only our present Republican would be a Democrat, our Roman Catholic would be our Methodist, and so on through all the possibilities of transformation.

Opinions acquired in the usual way are nothing but intellectual clothes left over by expiring families. Some of them are very old-fashioned and look queerly to the modern tailor; but they have the recommendation of being only clothes. They do not touch the springs of life, like food or cordial. Certainly they are nothing to be proud of, and they are not often anything to be ashamed of. Multitudes would not be presentable without them, as they have no faculty for making clothes for themselves. The point we make is, that opinions acquired in this way have very little to do with character. The simple fact that we find God-fearing, God-loving, good, charitable, conscientious, Christian men and women living under all forms of Christian opinion and church organization, shows how little opinion has to do with the heart, the affections and the life. Yet all our strifes and all our partisanships relate to opinions which we never made, which we have uniformly borrowed, and which all Christian history has demonstrated to be of entirely subordinate import—opinions often which those who originally framed them had no reason to be proud of, because they had no vital significance.

When we find, coming squarely down upon the facts, what cheap stuff both our orthodoxy and our heterodoxy are made of; when we see how little they are the proper objects of personal and sectarian pride; when we apprehend how little they have to do with character, and how much they have to do with dissension and all uncharitableness; how childish they make us, how sensitive to fault-finding and criticism; how they narrow and dwarf us, how they pervert us from the grander and more vital issues, we may well be ashamed of ourselves, and trample our pride of opinion in the dust. We shall find, too, in this abandonment of our pride, a basis of universal charity,—cheap, and not the best, but broad enough for pinched feet and thin bodies to stand upon. If we inherit our opinions from parents and guardians and circum-

stances, and recognize the fact that the great world around us get their opinions in the same way, we shall naturally be more able to see the life that underlies opinion everywhere, and to find ourselves in sympathy with it. We heard from the pulpit recently the statement that when the various branches of the Christian Church shall become more careful to note the points of difference, the cause of Christian unity will be incalculably advanced; and that statement was the inspiring word of which the present article was born.

We can never become careless, or comparatively careless, of our points of difference, until we learn what wretched stuff they are made of; that these points of difference reside in opinions acquired at no cost at all, and that they often rise no higher in the scale of value than borrowed prejudices. So long as "orthodoxy" of opinion is more elaborately insisted on in the pulpit than love and purity; so long as dogmatic theology has the lead of life; so long as Christianity is made so much a thing of the intellect and so subordinately a thing of the affections, the points of difference between the churches will be made of more importance than the points of sympathy. Pride of opinion must go out before sympathy and charity can come in. So long as brains occupy the field, the heart cannot find standing room. When our creeds get to be longer than the moral law; when Christian men and women are taken into, or shut out of, churches on account of their opinions upon dogmas that do not touch the vitalities of Christian life and character; when men of brains are driven out of churches or shut away from them, because they cannot have liberty of opinion, and will not take a batch of opinions at second-hand, our pride of opinion becomes not only ridiculous, but criminal, and the consummation of Christian unity is put far off into the better future.

With the dropping of our pride of opinion—which never had a respectable basis to stand upon—our respect for those who are honestly trying to form an opinion for themselves should be greatly increased. There are men who are honestly trying to form an opinion of their own. They are engaged in a grand work. There are but few of us who are able to cut loose from our belongings. Alas! there are but few of us who are large enough to apprehend the fact that the opinions of these men are only worthy of respect, as opinions. We can look back and respect the opinions of our fathers and grandfathers, formed under the light and among the circumstances of their time, but the authors of the coming opinions we regard with distrust and a degree of uncharitableness most heartily to be deplored. We are pretty small men and women anyway.

Honors to Longfellow's Memory.

Lord Granville Nov. 29, in introducing the Dean of Westminster to a deputation from the Longfellow Memorial Committee, said they asked the Dean's consent to allow a bust of Longfellow to be placed in Westminster Abbey as a testimonial to the graceful and tender poet. He pointed to the number and numbering nearly 500, as scarcely paralleled, they being distinguished in all the departments of intellectual activity. Lord Granville asked the Dean to accede to the request, and thus bind more closely in friendly common feelings ourselves and the citizens of the United States. The Dean, replying, unhesitatingly consented, and after paying a graceful tribute to Longfellow, referred touchingly to Washington Irving, and to the relations between the two countries, whose ties were strong as links of iron.

Education for Civil Engineers.

If a census could be taken of all the young men of the age of thirty who are in charge of parties on railroad location or construction, it would be found that those who graduated from technical schools were receiving the highest salaries and had the best prospects for promotion, and further, we feel confident that in number they would far outrank the others. This cannot be said of men of fifty, for thirty years ago, when they were young, technical schools were scarcely known. To argue that, because these older engineers have attained reputation and success without the advantage of scientific education, the young men of to-day can do so likewise is certainly fallacious, for the conditions in the two cases are far different.

An inspection of the lists of graduates given in some of the catalogues of technical institutes shows that young men who have been six years out of the school, in general, hold responsible and lucrative positions. On graduating, they began at the bottom of the ladder with low pay, but they have rapidly mounted the steps, passing and often leaving far behind those who began the ascent when five years younger. In fact, we know of no profession where the graduate advances so rapidly as in civil engineering. A young doctor finds it hard to obtain patients, even when he furnishes both services and medicine gratis. A young lawyer is glad to take cases where he receives nothing if he loses, and almost nothing if he wins. But the young civil engineer earns at once as rodman or draughtsman fifty dollars a month, and usually double or triple that amount after a very few years of practice.

The indications are, that technical education, as a qualification for technical pursuits, will grow every year more and more important, until finally it will become, as it is now in Germany, indispensable. Already some railroads hire for their field parties and draughting offices almost no other than technical graduates. They do this because they find it pays. A young man who is trained how to think is of more value to them at higher wages than one who does his work by rule of thumb at lower wages. He does more work in a day and does it better.

And when we look at the question from other points of view than the financial, everybody will agree that the young man of education has the advantage. The locating engineer, for example, does his work with cheerful mind, if he knows something about the rocks of the country through which he travels. He has an interest in the progress of science in general, as well as in that of his own specialty. When the panic comes that stops his work and his pay, he is not so bound to his trade that he cannot try his hand at something else. In such such times, too, he feels at liberty to ask the alumni of his institution to assist in securing him employment. This may, perhaps, seem a trivial matter, but as a rule men's lives are largely controlled by circumstances, while those who are able to control circumstances are few; and many a college man will testify to encouragement received from his brother alumni in times of commercial depression, encouragement without which his life might have been very different.

There is one other point suggested by the remarks made, two weeks ago, by Herbert Spencer, concerning overwork and gray hairs, that should receive the careful attention of parents who are puzzled to know whether to give their boys a technical education or put them at once into practical work. Much of course depends on the boys, but if they have any liking for study, we say by all means let them con-

tinue at it. In these days of hurrying business rush and overwork, let us keep the young men out of the world as long as possible. Let the days of their youth be spent in academic halls, where the worry of business is unknown. Let the selection of their special branches of engineering labor be deferred until they are qualified by age and experience to select. Overwork and gray hairs come soon enough to men, even when life is begun at twenty-two, and by commencing younger nothing whatever seems to be gained, but rather much seems to be lost.

To conclude: A young man who wishes to attain success and happiness in the occupation of a civil engineer ought to begin by obtaining a sound technical education. —*Engineering News.*

Mistakes In Colleges.

The Rev. Dr. Crosby, in speaking last week before the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni in this city, on "The Errors of Our Collegiate Institutions" said that he did not believe in sacrificing any branch of a practical English education to attempts to teach the classics or ornamental branches. He also objected to the custom in America colleges of permitting the students to select their own studies. A young American boy of eighteen does not know enough to select the studies that will best fit him for the real contests in life. He says further:

"Another mistake common to our colleges is the fostering of boat-clubs and ball-clubs. That young men should, in time of relaxation, go out on the green and have a good game of ball, or should go down to the river and have a row, is most natural and commendable; but that they should form clubs for training, and spend months in the process, and have grand public contests before thousands all over the country, and attract the professional roughs, with their betting and drinking, to the show, in all of which study is neglected, and must be neglected, is an abomination of the first order. It is a shame that college presidents are actually promoting this demoralizing system. It would seem as if these worthies thoughts that colleges were instituted to collect a crowd of young bloods together that they might have "a high time." No wonder that so many young men cannot go to college, because all this high living is so costly. If they refuse to pay the class taxes for all sorts of fooling, they are shoved aside as mean fellows, and this ostracism very few can bear. It costs a student at Yale or Harvard from \$1,200 to \$2,000 a year, if he is going to be in full rapport with his class. It becomes college trustees to see that the expensive habit, so inimical to all true study, is prohibited, and that professors and students give heed to the important work for which the college was created."

The scientific expedition which left Princeton, June 26, secured twenty-two hundred pounds of valuable fossils, which have been classified and added to the college museum. The collections were made in Wyoming, Nebraska, and Dakota.

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A Southern Christmas Eve.

'Twas Christmas Eve in a Southern town,
The air was soft and sweet,
And the sinking sun looked lightly down
On the gay and crowded street,
While roses and violets blooming near,
Made my little girl say,
"Is it Christmas here?"

"At home the snow is on the ground,
The air is cold and clear,
And greens and holly are hung around
To keep the Christmas cheer,
How can St. Nicholas come in his sleigh,
If all the snow is melted away?"

"What will he do with his big fur coat,
The icicles on his hair?
The tinkling bells won't sound a note
With no Jack Frost in the air.
'Twould be just folly, O, mother dear,
To hang up my stocking—no Christmas here."

"But," I said, "I see the Christmas star
High in these Southern skies,
And the Christmas light is streaming far
And shines in the people's eyes,
I'm sure St. Nick will find the way
Without Jack Frost and the reindeer sleigh."

Early my little girl went to bed,
That the night might shorter seem;
And scarce had she pillowed her curly head,
Than she dreamed a beautiful dream;
And wondrous music seemed to bear
A message of joy on the balmy air.

Nearer and nearer it seemed to come,
Sweeter and sweeter it grew,
Till the Christmas light was in the room
And the Christmas glory, too;
While the angels' song rang from the sky,
"All glory be to God on high!"

"All glory be to God on high,
And peace, good-will on earth!"
Thus joyous rose the angels' cry
To hail our Saviour's birth;
And e'er the radiance passed away,
The light had dawned on Christmas day.

Students in Grease.

Although the episode herein referred to did not occur at Yale, we earnestly recommend the following editorial (from the *N. Y. Observer*) to the thoughtful perusal of the members of '85 and '86; simply adding that before these classes lies the golden opportunity to distinguish themselves by abolishing forever from Yale what many justly call a "relic of barbarism."

"It is stated in the public prints that in a cane-rush last week at one of the first-class New England colleges, between the sophomores and freshmen, the sophomores were stripped to the waist and thoroughly greased. This grease gave them a decided advantage over their less unctuous antagonists; and, after three-quarters of an hour of hard fighting, they carried off the cane in triumph.

The very æsthetical taste of these young gentlemen must commend them to the admiration of the refined! And what progress they must make in the grand purposes of a college education, when they rush into an arena half naked and well greased! There are ways and means by which the aspirant for distinction in athletic sports may secure the applause of his friends; but we have not heard of the practice in modern civilization, of college young men covering themselves with grease that they may the more readily slip out of the grip of their antagonists. *And is it not high time that these silly contests in college were suffered become things of the past? In them there is nothing manly, much less is there anything scholarly.* They belong to the lower orders of animal life, where brute force is the standard of merit. But when men pretend that knowledge is power, they ought to wear clothes in public and never appear naked and greased."—*Yale News.*

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