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Monthly Musings

"MAIDEN MEDITATIONS, FANCY FREE."—Shakespeare.

Richmond College.

VOL. II. }
NO. 6. }

RICHMOND, VA., MARCH, 1877.

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The Muse.

WEST POINT.

'Twas Commencement eve, and the ball-room belle
In her dazzling beauty was mine that night,
As the music dreamily rose and fell,
And the waltzers whirled in a blaze of light.
I can see them now in the moonbeam's glance,
Across the street on a billowy floor,
That rises and falls with the merry dance,
To a music that floats in my heart once more.

A long half hour in the twilight leaves
Of the shrubbery—she, with coquettish face,
And dainty arms in their flowing sleeves,
A dream of satins and love and lace,
In the splendor there of her queenly smile,
Through her two bright eyes I could see the glow
Of cathedral windows, as up the aisle
We marched to a music's ebb and flow.

All in a dream of Commencement eve!
I remember I awkwardly buttoned a glove
On the dainty arm in its flowing sleeve,
With a broken sentence of hope and love,
But the diamonds that flashed in her wavy hair,
And the beauty that shone in her faultless face,
Are all I recall as I struggled there,
A poor brown fly in a web of lace.

Yet a laughing, coquettish face I see,
As the moonlight falls on the pavement gray,
I can hear her laugh in the melody
Of the waltz's music across the way.
And I kept the glove so daintily and small,
That I stole as she sipped her lemonade,
Till I packed it away, I think, with all
Of those traps I lost in our northern raid.

But I never can list to that waltz divine
With its golden measure of joy and pain,
But it brings like the flavor of some old wine
To my heart the warmth of the past again.
A short flirtation—that's all, you know,
Some faded flowers, a silken tress,
The letters I burned up years ago,
When I heard from her last in the Wilderness.

I suppose, could she see I am maimed and old,
She would soften the scorn that was changed to hate,
When I chose the bars of the gray and gold,
And followed the South to its bitter fate.
But here's to the lads of the Northern blue,
And here's to the boys of the Southern gray,
And I would that the Northern star but knew
How the Southern cross is borne to-day.

L. C. STRONG.

Literary.

CHRISTMAS WANDERINGS.

What a time of rejoicing is Christmas!
And what better place to observe its effects
than on the deck of one of our river steamers!
Such an opportunity I had recently
while on a visit home. Standing on the forward
part of the vessel is a member of the
Legislature going home to spend his Christmas.
He is talking about politics now, but
you can see from his glances at the distended
pockets of his overcoat that he is more concerned
just now about those little toys than he
is about the next Presidential election. He
is going home to see his wife and his little
ones, and may his heart grow tenderer as he

takes the children on his knee and shows them
the contents of those big pockets.

What a noisy group of fellows are those
standing near! They are students set free
from college regulations once more, and determined
to make the most of their liberty. Every now
and then one of them gets off, and the others
shout to him as long as he is in hearing, and
then turn away with a smiling yet eager face
to wait their turn. God bless the boys! There
is hope for them as long as they love to go
home, and they will be strengthened and stimulated
by its sweet influences during their short sojourn.

At one wharf a little fellow came on board
that took my attention. There was nothing remarkable
about him to cause me to notice him, except
that he seemed to be all alone in the gay crowd
that thronged the deck of the steamer. I soon
entered into conversation with him, and found
that he was the only son of a widowed mother,
and that he was living with a farmer and was
going home to spend his Christmas. He spoke
of his mother in such an affectionate way that
I was very much pleased with him. I soon found
out that he was trying to support his mother
with his earnings, and he spoke so hopefully
of the future that he made me feel ashamed of
my own repinings. How glad he was to go home!
He said that there would be no one to meet
him, and that he would have to walk several
miles before he reached his mother's dwelling,
but he didn't mind that, for his mother would
be awaiting him. Presently the boat stopped,
and the little fellow, taking up his bundle,
bade me good-bye and stepped on the wharf.
My heart followed the little fellow in his lonely
walk, and I tried to picture the joy of that
mother as she clasped in her arms her noble
little son. "In a short time," I thought,
"these passengers will have carried joy into
their respective homes, but there will be homes
where the absent ones will not return, and
where the cheerful surroundings of Christmas
will only give a deeper tinge to the sadness
that reigns supreme." What varied scenes
meet the eye of San Claus as he goes on his
journeyings?" And I imagined myself accompanying
him, and I will tell you what I saw.

Away we go through the frosty air, in the
bright moonlight. We stop at a little dingy
hovel in the suburbs of a large city. We enter,
and the inside corresponds but too well with
the dismal exterior. A few chairs, the remnant
of faded affluence, and a bed, made up the
furniture of the room. A small fire is in the
fireplace, and its flickering light reflects the
desolateness of the room upon the face of

a woman sitting close up to the feeble flame.
Cold, bitter cold, is the night, and the whistling
wind blows through the cracks into the room
and seems to chill the very heart of the lone
woman. She thinks of the vows made by one
but a few years before when her heart was
buoyant and her cheeks glowing with the
ruddy tide of life.

She looks at the fire, and feels that her
hopes have been turned into ashes as the coals
before her eyes. Her husband, who promised
to be faithful and loving till death, is a drunkard.
She watches anxiously for his return, not
that she may be happy, but that there may be
variety even in her trouble. The sound brings
to her mind the memory of bygone days. It
brings not with it the hope of happy days to
come. It tells not of a happy Christmas, but
its solemn tones threaten greater sorrows for
the future. Santa Claus, though loaded with
gifts, leaves none at this dwelling, and nothing
but the cold, desolate room will meet the eyes
of her children on Christmas morning.

Another aerial journey, and we stop at a
palatial mansion on — street. Surely they
must expect a happy Christmas here. Invisible,
we enter the room. All that wealth can furnish
or art produce is here to please the eye and
tickle the fancy. At his desk sits a man busily
engaged in looking over accounts. His wife, a
lady of beautiful but careworn countenance,
stands near by. She at length ventures to lay
her hand on her husband's arm. "James," she
says, and her voice is low and tremulous, "will
you not assist me in dressing the Christmas tree
for the children?" "No, dear," he replies, in a
peevish voice, "I haven't the time. I think it is
enough for me to manage my business without
bothering with your household affairs." "But,
James, when you used to have to work all day
long, you took pride in amusing the children, but
now they hardly know what a father's love is.
I fear that now we have grown rich you do not
enjoy yourself as you once did." He turns
away with almost an angry look upon his face;
she goes to the work of dressing the tree. Pretty
soon a boy of fifteen enters the room—a boy in
years and size, but a man in ways. He throws
himself into a chair, whistling a popular tune.
It needs but one glance of the mother to discover
that her boy has been drinking. She has seen
him in the same condition before, and his appearance
now adds another line of care to that once smooth
brow and deepens the intensity of that anxious
look. It is a long time before sleep comes to
her weary eyelids, and when it does, it is to
bring in dreams the image of a drunken son,

and a husband's life wasted in making money. And the husband? Is not his sleep filled with dreams of consols, railroad stocks and mercantile ventures, and does he not wish in his better moments that he had not known this craving for wealth which now possesses him, but had remained a conscientious, contented man? Santa Claus leaves large and costly presents here, but they do not bring happiness. The rays of the sun on Christmas morning do not bring light into two hearts of that family, but reveals in one the tender solicitude of a wife and mother, and in the other the grasping, covetous spirit of a man of the world—a spirit that, like the deadly Upas tree, blights everything within its reach.

One more visit and we are done. Into a dilapidated little building, on a dreary looking street, we will enter. The interior of the room is even more desolate than that of the drunkards. The fire has gone entirely out and only the moonbeams, shining through the window, light up the room. A widow and one child are its only occupants. The widow draws the child closer to her bosom, as if to shield it from harm, but in reality to impart the warmth of her body to it. Cold as the wind is, poor as the house is, she thinks of Him who had not where to lay His head, and she is thankful. She thinks of the goodness and the promises of God, and through her benumbed lips rises the low melody of a hymn. The words are

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,"

and as the words seem to burst forth from her heart rather than from her lips, it does not require much effort to imagine that angels are waiting to carry to the Father the prayer of thanksgiving that the poor widow utters. She hears the bells strike also, and their glad notes tell not only of the passing time, but of an eternity of happiness beyond the grave.

* * * * *

The song has died away, the room has grown colder. She finds that the child is getting chilled. Her own limbs are so benumbed that it is with difficulty she rises and places the child on the bed, carefully tucking the scanty bed clothing about it. She goes to the door. What must she do? She has burnt everything she could find on the premises, and now she and her child will freeze unless she can start a fire. She tries to recall those promises, and she looks upward to God as if to fully realize them. But only the cold glittering stars are there to mock her misery. Suddenly a new idea presents itself. There is a woodyard near by, and she noticed this very evening that a few of the palings were broken off so she could get some wood. Why should she stay there to freeze when the means of comfort lay so near her? And then it was not for herself alone, but for her child. She gathers a shawl about her and walks hurriedly down the street. Everybody is asleep, there is no fear of detection. This is no time to be dallying with conscience, and she walks quickly to the pile of wood. She fills her arms and starts away, when suddenly she stops, trembling in every limb. Shall she disobey the very Being that promised to preserve her? And yet the wind blows so coldly and heedlessly through her thin garments. "Thou shalt not steal" is sounding in her ears, not in clarion tones, but

in gentle, loving accents. Oh, God! will not her heart break with the contending emotions? She takes the wood back and hurried away to her home. The room is as cold as ever, but down by the side of her sleeping child she kneels and prays for strength and resignation. As she prays, the frozen fountain of her tears are melted by the sweet influence of the Comforter, and she weeps. A lumbering sound is heard at the door. She opens it quickly and finds that Santa Claus has left a load of wood there for her. We will not intrude upon the happy scene that ensues. But we learn this lesson, that happiness depends not on outward circumstances, and that the promises of God can afford comfort in the most trying circumstances of life.—*Christian Sun.*

THE SEASONS.

Had we the tender and pathetic expression of Bryant to clothe our musings, we would dwell long and thrillingly upon the lessons taught so forcibly in the advent of Autumn.

Coldly, indeed, must he look upon nature and her changes, who does not find a luxury of sentiment in the contemplation of all her seasons.

All are but chords to that instrument which yields its tone to every breath of man, and vibrates to every feeling of his breast. In the Spring the fairy melody is made up of the unmingled warblings of rapture, the involuntary thrills of untaught fingers, the overflowing of that spring of gladness which gave mythology her fabled fountains, and from which issues all that claims the name of music, short of the voiceless harmony of heaven. In Summer it is mellowed into the harmony of hope.

The voice which never mourned is heard in lofty diapasons; its glowing progressions are tempered to the calmness of matured desire; echoes are unbroken by the irregular responses of untutored passion, and its deep and ever-varying consonances, chime, swell and estuate, in infinite gradations. Beautifully, though sadly, the reverse of these is the style of Autumn's "unwritten music." The hope of the glad Spring, and the devotion of the ardent Summer have been damped, but not to deaden a single tone.

The chords on which once played the breath of the affections, are strained, but not to break.

The mind is no longer a mighty organ, yielding its sounds to the hand of man: but it becomes a gentle Æolian harp, catching its magic from every breath of the autumnal breeze.

Plaintive and sweet, as though sound itself had caught a charm from the beautiful hues of decay, they come to the ear, bending into harmony such strains as no art can imitate, no science arrange, no skill record.

Such is the music of Autumn upon that deep-toned, glorious instrument—the heart. As hoary Winter followed in the suite of Autumn, so the grave comes gloomily upon the thoughts of youth.

They have not yet buried there the better part of their hearts. To the pilgrim who has farther advanced on the highway of human disappointments, the last home of man is a welcome theme.

Lovely to him, not only that it already

holds the best hopes, and only charms that made the world fair amid all its desolation, the grave—the cold and dreary grave—sends up a sweet and holy call to his weary and broken spirit. All that speaks of decay has a chance for him.

No wonder, then, that he woes the melancholy influence of Autumn, and breathes with untold delight her sighing breezes, and settles an unwearied gaze upon her red and yellow forests.

No marvel, likewise, that he remembers with apprehension and dread that Winter will soon herald its approach with blinding snow and howling winds.

Childhood may hang with enraptured fondness over the brightest beauty of Spring's first flowers, but its idols will wither.

Let matured youth yield its full devotions to the fruitful and fervent hopes of Summer, yet they, too, shall pass away. But who that has ever relished the calm yet passionate love of fading beauty, which steals unsubdued, through the softened spirit of one whose hopes have been like the Summer clouds, will cling to such fleeting hues again! There is no Autumn to the soul, where all these images are deep and indelible.

Even the Winter of age, though it withers the outer form, can never supplant the lingering hues of Autumn in the soul.

Memory goes back like a weeping mourner, and brings up from the unreturning tomb the precious forms that have long rested in its dark shadows.

Sweetly the dead obey our commands, and come up at our bidding, and we see them beautiful, as they once were, or pale and lifeless as we saw their cold remains.

So these lingering hues of Autumn in the soul cling to memory longer than hope—and the memory itself is life. "DELTA."

USING BIG WORDS.—Our best writers use most simple and direct language, and choose Teutonic rather than of Romanic origin. Mr. Marsh examined 30 of our most characteristic writers on this point, and found that Bryant has in his writings from 84 to 92 per cent. of Teutonic words; Browning, 84 per cent.; Tennyson, 87 to 89 per cent.; Longfellow, 87 per cent.; and even Ruskin, although a critical writer on art, 73 to 84 per cent. Of early writers, Chaucer used from 88 to 93 per cent. of home-born words; Shakespeare, 88 to 91 per cent.; Milton, 80 to 90 per cent. Our young "aspirant" will find his style, both in conversation and writing, improved in vigor and effectiveness by substituting short Saxon words, wherever he can do so, for long words of Latin derivation. Richard Grant White says: "If all foreign elements were taken away from the English tongue, its life and vigor would be unimpaired. We could live and love and hate and work and play and worship, and express all our wants and our feelings, tell tales and sing songs."—*New England Journal of Education.*

A Detroit restaurant keeper hangs out a sign of "free chops," and when the old loafers come around he shows them an ax and a wood-pile.

Ode to a washerwoman—\$1.50.

A REMINISCENCE OF COLLEGE LIFE.

It was a lovely night in June:
The stars shone brightly; and the moon
In all her majesty arrayed—
Hung as a lantern overhead;
While torches of devices strange
In an illuming range
Hung from the row of trees which bounds
Old Randolph Macon's campus-grounds:
And from each tree within her lawn
A gay, fantastic lantern shone.
Indeed, our lovely campus-green
Presented an enchanting scene.

This was Commencement's closing night,
And college glee was as its height:
Hence, these provisions kind were made
That loving pairs might promenade.

There were three speakers:—each address
Was kindly called "a great success;"
And next in order after these,
The noble army of trustees
Responded to the call of COURAGE,
Each holding forth till he was hoarse.
(It sometimes will the patience tax,
To hear these walking Almanacs;
And, often, ere they deign to close—
The house is in a solemn dorze.)

When each of these amusing (?) gents
Had told his Almanac's contents,
The President, with grace arose,
Declared the meeting at a close;
And, then, the most amusing joke
Was when the sleepers awoke.
Oh, then, the band began to play!
The old folks kindly went away,
And left the young ones in their glee,
To stroll uninterrupted, free
Along the green, romantic grove,
To breathe their sighs and vows of love.

We wisely used the season short
For making love enchanting sport;
For every student did his best
To have the ladies all addressed:—
And as the time to leave drew nigh,
Fell many a tear from many an eye.

Between the hours of two and three,
A college friend came up to me,
Tapped me upon the arm, and said:
"I'll introduce you to a maid
Of winning charm, attainments rare,
Who sits before you over there,
Whose grace and excellence supreme
You cannot but admire, esteem."

As thus he spoke, I stole a chance
To cast a sly and hasty glance
Towards the captivating maid,
Whose virtues he had thus portrayed.
Attracted in a great degree
By her becoming dignity,
And by the modesty unfeigned
Which o'er her every movement reigned,
And carrying out the proudest plan
To make a friend wherein you can,
I thanked with a grateful smile,
And walked with him across the aisle,
(The conversation given above
Was in the church, not in the grove.)
Unto the spot where sat the maid
In all her loveliness arrayed.
We quickly hurried through the form
Of introduction; and my arm
I offered to the blushing maid,
Soliciting a "PROMONADE."
In token of assent she bowed,
And, turning sweetly to the crowd
Of students, who around her sat,
Delighting in her wholesome chat,
Begged pardon gracefully, and stole
Away with me to take a stroll.

Oh, never, I affirm, until
This heart of mine lies cold and still;
Oh, never, while within my brain
The powers of memory remain,
Shall I forget the wondrous spell
Which on my raptured spirit fell,
As I with wistful glances eyed
The modest maiden at my side,
While so agreeably entertained
By her whose purity unstained,
And whose SINCERENESS true and real,
Form my conception, my ideal,
Of those bright attributes which should
Bespeak a noble womanhood.

But cruel, unpropitious Fate
Had willed we should separate.
We tried to keep her, but in vain;
Next morning's very earliest train,
Unmindful of the hearts that prayed
That his approach might be delayed,
Came in on time, and tarried not
For tearful eye or bleeding heart.
So, 'mid heart-rending groans and sighs,
And grief which we could not disguise,
The lovely girl away was borne,
And we were left behind to mourn.
Oh, never was there seen or met
A more forlorn, dejected set
Than we whom she behind her left—
Of all our happiness bereft.

E'en Nature seemed to sympathize,
For tree with tree communed in sighs
And every tiny bough and leaf
Trembled beneath its load of grief;
While Nature's songsters drooped the wing,
And, lost in grief, forgot to sing.
But Nature's agony acute,
And grief so great (and yet so mute),
Could not in least degree compare
With the intenseness of despair
Which sat upon the countenance wan
Of Nature's noblest creature—man!

When to the student it was known
That the bewitching bird had flown—
This gem of gems, this maid of maids—
They left these sweet and classic shades,
Hoping that home's familiar scenes,
And sweet delights might offer means
Whereby to soothe and palliate
Their grief and disappointment great

The greatest sufferer beneath the blow
Was he who tells the tale of woe.
In vain did he attempt to find
Amusements to divert his mind:
The cup of pleasure, which for him
Had lately sparkled to the brim,
He lifted to his lips again;
But, ah! the sweets he used to drain
Were gone, for grief had killed them all;
And in their place he drank the gall.

* * * * *

After a year of change had flown,
I with the charming girl was thrown,
And in her did not fail to find
A woman of the noblest kind,
Of that demeanor which reflects
Honor and credit on the sex.
Th' infatuation so profound
By which my senses first were bound,
Had passed away; and, in its stead,
The noble light her presence shed,
Shining into my heart revealed
A little spark which lay concealed,
Ready to burst into a blaze
At the first dawning of those rays.
That spark soon proved to be a gem
Of sacred friendship, true and firm,
Of that ennobling, lofty cast
Which must and shall forever last.

* * * * *

As from the walks of business-life,
With all its care and duties rife,
I look with memory's dotting gaze
Upon those vanished college days,
This happy right I contemplate
With joy immeasurably great;
And shall ever take delight
In dwelling on that summer night,
Amid whose sweets that rustic belle
Around me threw her mystic spell.

Richmond, May, 12th, 1879.

J. L. H.

A coroner's jury, in the case of a man who
was killed by a falling icicle, rendered a ver-
dict that he "died of hard drink."

A lawyer was noticed at a recent concert
enthusiastically applauding one of the singers.
"Fond of music, isn't he?" said one acquaint-
ance to another. "No," was the reply, "it's
mere professional instinct. He is moving for
a new trial."

The proprietor of a young ladies' academy
has utterly ruined his business by causing to
be inserting in a large number of newspapers
a picture of the building, with two girls stand-
ing on the balcony with last year's hats on
their heads.

A lady, whose cook went to a wake, was
given notice by her a fortnight afterward that
she was going to be married. "Who to?"
asked the mistress. "Plase, mam, to the hus-
band of the corpse" "Why, does he love
you?" was the next question. "Oh, yes, mam:
he said I was the light of the funeral."

Said a fond mother at the table of a fash-
ionable Chicago hotel the other day:

"Do you know, my little son, that the word
'menu' is French for bill of fare?"

"Oh, yes, mamma," was the assuring reply,
"menu it!"

The mother fainted right there. She was
afraid her boy would grow up to be a paragraph
editor.

Locals.

THE two Societies met in joint session in
the hall of the Philogs. The committee to
draft a plan for the management of the
MONTHLY MUSINGS made their report, which
was rejected, and a motion, transferring the
management of the paper to a Board of Man-
agers, composed of six, with power to nomi-
nate Editors, was passed. There was a spirited
discussion, which only served to ventilate the
subject before the motion prevailed. The M.
S. R. Society adjourned to their Hall and rat-
ified the action of joint meeting. Messrs. G.
W. Riggan, R. H. Pitt and A. G. McManaway
were elected members of the Board of Mana-
gers. These gentlemen nominated Mr. M. A.
Turner, of Richmond, as Editor from the M. S.
R. Society. The gentleman was elected.

The Philologian Society also ratified the ac-
tion of the joint meeting, and Messrs. B. T.
Davies, F. P. Robertson and W. T. Derieux
were elected members of the Board of Mana-
gers. Mr. J. W. Synder was elected Editor.
The action of the Societies provides that Edi-
tors shall be elected at the regular elections
of officers, which takes place every three
months.

WE are pleased to find the *Monthly*, pub-
lished by the Executive Committee of the
Southern Historical Society, so ably conduct-
ed. It is under the immediate charge of our
College's friend, J. William Jones. The pub-
lication is well performing its work of present-
ing to the public the most important of knowl-
edge relating to the late war. The work de-
serves encouragement, and we are pleased to
know it is meeting this. Its publishers speak
of the "marked favor" which the *Monthly*
has received during the first year of its exist-
ence, May this ever be its fortune.

It is surprising how strong a hold the word
"bull-doze" has taken in our language. We
recently heard a prominent speaker use the
word in a dignified oration. The word is
quite expressive, and, as sometimes happens,
although born from the political strife of to-
day, it may take its place in our tongue. It
is interesting to speculate what linguists in the
year 2480 will say about its origin and deriva-
tion.

THE Mu Sigma Rho Society met on Friday night,
March 9th. The question, "Resolved, that the Electoral
Bill was constitutional and expedient." It was debated
affirmatively by Messrs. Curry, Woodward, Haynes, El-
lyson and Pitt. Negatively, by Messrs. Gore, Fleet, Da-
vis, McManaway, Price, Peel and Taylor. The debate
was quite a spirited one, and the negative side think that
Congress had had the advantage of their speeches that
Mr. Hayes would not be President. What a pity! The
golden opportunity is gone. The past is in the eternal
past. But the future is before them, with all its possibi-
lities, and go in and win. The question was decided in the
affirmative. Declaration by Mr. W. G. Hix.

After several little business matters were disposed of,
the Society adjourned.

MONTHLY MUSINGS.

RICHMOND COLLEGE, RICHMOND, VA.

EDITORS:

JOHN W. SNYDER, Richmond, Va., }
G. W. RIGGAN, Isle of Wight Co., Va., } Editors.

Communications solicited from the students and friends of the College. No anonymous articles will be inserted.

For Subscription and Advertising Rates, see eighth page.

Vol. II. MARCH, 1877. No. 5.

TESTING NEW DOCTRINES.

We live in an age of revolution and progress. Old beliefs are being supplanted by new, and heresies, once popular, but dead now, are quietly laid away in their little graves. It would be rash to aver that all this change is for the best. We fear some of it is for the worst. To illustrate; the Louisiana Returning Board stands a monument of a "change," but we would be slow to declare that it presents an entirely satisfactory exhibit of real advancement in higher Civilization and Christianity.

But we are too young to be a foggy. We believe, with Galileo, that the world moves. He might answer, that "It moves in a circle." But we should consider this merely one of Galileo's jokes, and be content to reply, "Galileo, Providence never intended you should be a joke. Listen to Providence."

But it seems clear to us that the world is really advancing, however slow and however interrupted its progress be, since, (1) God evidently designed it should, (2) Enlightenment is daily spreading, and (3) The experience of past ages, carefully treasured by the historian's hand, is given the men of succeeding generations for their study, and *must* teach them wisdom.

So we learn that these "changes" in our manners, beliefs and institutions are not necessarily all good or all bad, although in a majority of cases we may trust it is for the best. But this is learning little definitely. To accept *all* newly established doctrines, because the majority of them are wise, would be to reason upon decidedly too general principles and would be to blindly follow a faith.

But even were we content to accept all established doctrines, the grave question arises in what light shall we regard the new issues daily presented us, not the established but the *proposed* doctrines. Shall we accept or reject? Guilty or not guilty?

If it were true, as probably it is, that nineteen-twentieths of the new isms which their originators attempt to foist upon the world are the progeny of humbuggery, would it be wise to reject with a sweeping hand *every* new idea brought before us? No.

Or shall we blindly follow the world, permit

it first to pass judgment, and then accept what it accepts, and reject what it rejects? This, indeed, would prove an easy solution to the problem, and, moreover, would keep us generally in the right path, since the world, wise in its way, is apt to detect fraud and refuses to play victim. But are we content to follow the world? Are we not ambitious to be numbered among the world's leaders? If so, and if it be that we hope to mould the minds and beliefs of our fellows, we must take heed to so train ourselves, that we may examine in an independent, fair and philosophic spirit the problems each day submitted the world.

To be more specific; shall we believe in spiritualism, or mesmerism, or phrenology, or mind-reading? Shall we look to the world for our answer? Let us not forget that if we lay any claim to culture, the world looks to us for an answer.

No, we must face the music, and grapple the problems. What Bacon has said of reading, gives us light as to how we shall investigate new doctrines. "Read not to contradict and confute, nor to take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider." And we should examine the "ism," not in order to argue for it, or against it, but to know if it be true. Let us not start back affrighted by its novelty, or rush forward to embrace it simply because we are commanded to "entertain strangers." We must judge it upon its merits, and neither *trust* it is "all right," or *trust* it is "all wrong."—Trusting is dangerous business. Not alone leading to financial bankruptcy, but often to *mental bankruptcy*, if one cultures his mind to trust and not to think.

No class of thinkers ever boasted more hard common-sense than the famed school of Scotch Philosophers. And in that school no member excelled in intellectual powers Sir William Hamilton. What was his method of investigating new doctrines? We find an answer in this quotation: "He knew that investigation into opinions and beliefs that seemed to the ordinary wise man too preposterous to receive a thought, may nevertheless repay the investigator. He counted it very unsafe to treat any opinion, especially any one professing to contain a truth within it, as naught, unless it be first weighed in the balance and found wanting. When the result is reached, and it is found that the whole is a fallacy, there is yet gained for the service of psychological science the special exposure of this fallacy, heresy, superstition, or whatever else it might be called."

And so it would seem that when a new ism presented itself to Hamilton's mind, he neither received it, nor rejected it, but considered it. Though men of *ordinary* wisdom passed it by

with ridicule, this man of *extraordinary* wisdom did not. Especially if it claimed to contain a deep truth, he investigated it. If but once in twenty times he found new doctrines worthy of consideration, he felt repaid for all his labor. But if, having torn a "doctrine" to pieces, he found falsity and not truth there, he still believed he had achieved a signal victory, and had benefited the world no less perhaps in exposing a heresy than by proving a truth.

Now, we submit, that no true philosopher could prove a more valuable philanthropist to the world than in this field. He stands as a watchman of Zion upon the bulwarks, to warn his fellows to reject the false and to welcome the true. And because we believed this a sphere where the man of culture might do knightly service in the cause of right and advancement, we have presumed to call the attention of students to the topic; and this more particularly since we have never seen the theme specially considered. We know our treatment of the topic must appear crude and unsatisfactory, it seems so to us, but we can only plead that we were denied the time for properly considering it.

EDUCATION.

When one is discussing a topic, it is of some importance for him to know what he is talking about. Oftentimes men talk long and tolerably well without definitely knowing this; but the policy is somewhat unwise and dangerous. We have heard a learned and honored Professor of Mathematics declare that in examining some thirty works upon Algebra he had found scarce a half-dozen wherein "Algebra" was correctly defined. Probably these thirty works were wise in their way, and boasted good points, and gave the "Hindoo Formula for Solving Quadratics," but it seems sad to reflect that the authors of the majority of these works did not know what they were talking about, did *not*, in short, know what "Algebra" was.

Now we have many works written in a controversial spirit upon Education. Certain "schemes" and "courses" of Education are suggested and savagely advocated. What leads to this wide difference of opinion among our worthy Educators is perhaps partly explained by the fact that many of them do not know what they are talking about, do not know what "Education" signifies. There can be no solution of a problem until the force of each symbol and sign is appreciated, and neither can we determine the best way to "educate," until we determine what "Education" is.

To illustrate; if we should begin with the supposition that the best informed man is the

best educated man, we could not conscientiously advocate the same *methods* of Education as those held by one who believed that Education meant the development and training of one's mental powers. We would be compelled, if we stood by our definition, to advise a student to read much, to cram much, to exercise his memory to the utmost, and in short, to *inform* himself, whilst he might give comparative little attention to his reasoning faculties, and to the subject of mind-concentration. Upon the other hand, the advocate of the "other definition" would advise a method entirely different.

Then we must know what Education means. We take it for granted that the old heresy, that to educate one is to fill him up with a great heap of miscellaneous and undigested and undigestible knowledge, is dead, cold and buried. Webster formulates quite correctly that "Education" implies not so much the communication of knowledge as the discipline of the intellect, the establishment of the principles, and the regulation of the heart." He notes that "Education is properly to draw forth." Of course it is, if we shall merely regard the origin of the word, from "*e*" and "*ducere*," but we place little trust in this manner of arriving at a word's signification. It tells us rather what a word ought to mean than what it does mean. Words like persons are not always just what they should be. Still to "draw forth" or to "lead out," may be, with a little explanatory clause inserted, made to square with our ideas of "Education."

In the first place, we consider that true Education implies self-knowledge. "Know thyself," declared Socrates, and it was the wisest declaration ever uttered by uninspired lips. Knowing our natural abilities, our powers and our weaknesses, we should aim to strengthen, to nourish our *mental virtues*, whilst we should utterly annihilate our *mental vices*. If we accomplish this, and of course "this" implies the development of all our mental powers to their fullest limits, and the complete subjugation of them to our control, we should consider our "education" completed, even if we might be just ready to begin the acquisition of knowledge.

This relates, of course, alone to mental discipline. Webster correctly includes in the course of Education "the establishment of the principles, and the regulation of the heart." One of depraved morals and corrupt heart can no more be considered a truly educated man, than the idiot of diseased mind, or the savage with undeveloped intellect. Education means *completeness*. It has been well said, that to be educated is to have the physical powers fully developed, fully trained, and fully subjected to the mind; the mind developed

and subjected to the soul; the soul purified and strong, and subjected to God.

The question arises, "Can any man become so educated, can he hope with reason to attain this perfection?" We dismiss the subject as a trivial one. It is enough to know what is the right course, it is enough to see the model we should seek to liken ourselves to; every step in the right direction is so much gain, and whether we finally reach the goal is a matter of second consideration. To be *very* near perfection, is *very* near as good as to be perfect. If we cannot be fully educated, let us make certain to be as fully as we can.

President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins University, in describing his ideal college the other day, said that "three by-laws should be passed—that no waste of time should be allowed within its walls, that there should be no disparagement of any branch of learning, and that character is before knowledge. Not what one knows, but what he is, should be the criterion. The first requisite of such a university is brains—a large number of learned teachers, who must also be ready to teach and skilled in teaching. The day is passed when the same teacher can teach everything. Other requisites are choice collections of books, apparatus, etc., good plans, method and harmony, good working places, as laboratories, etc., and last, a good body of enthusiastic students. Whether the guardians of the Johns Hopkins University are aiming at this, remains to be seen. Strangers are invited to come among us, and by their counsel and help, and by their presence aid us in reaching out to the education of the intelligent classes of the community. The four year system has been entirely given up, and is falling into disuse in many institutions in the country. The matriculation requisites are as high as in the best institutions of the land, and the student has now the choice of at least seven combinations of studies. For the degree of Bachelor of Arts a knowledge of Latin and Greek is required, and to students of science are given opportunities for the study of literature and the languages, and opportunities to the classical and literary student for the study of science. Sharp lines are not drawn between the faculty and students, but professors, associates, fellows and students are regarded as fellow-workers."

—Tribune.

One of our college exchanges tell us that the Seniors have revived the custom of wearing the cap and gown. This custom is a time honored one in truth, receiving little honor from any other source. For a few reasons we like it, for more we do not. Situated as our college is, in a large town, the wearing of any such article of clothing by the students would attract extraordinary attention, and in all probability, in a short time we too would be notorious for our conflicts between "town and gown." We don't want anything of this kind. The kindly feeling of the people of Easton for our students must be maintained. We desire to have no dealings with the "great unwashed" who would compose the town faction. Then, too, it is contrary to our spirit of true progression to turn to old usages, or wear cast off garments. We have no time either to go backward, we have too much earnest work ahead to be done. Probably it might tickle the vanity of some of our Seniors, and add an appearance of dignity to don the cap and gown on stated occasions. Yet we believe after they leave college they will not grieve much because Lafayette does not practice nor exchange useless customs.—LAFAYETTE COLLEGE JOURNAL.

Subscription to the MONTHLY MUSINGS \$1 per year, invariably in advance.

THESE words from ISAAC BARROW merit thought:

"Even beings void of reason, of sense, of life itself, do suggest unto us remembrances of industry; they being set in continual action, toward the effecting seasonable purposes, conducting to the preservation of their own beings, or to the furtherance of common good."

"The heavens do roll about with incessant motion; the sun and stars do perpetually dart their influences; the earth is ever laboring in the birth and nourishment of plants; the plants are drawing sap, and sprouting out fruits and seeds, to feed us, and propagate themselves; the rivers are running, the seas are tossing, the winds are blustering, to keep the elements sweet in which we live."

* * * * *

"If we soar yet further in our meditation to the superior regions, we shall there find the blessed inhabitants of heaven, the couriers and ministers of God, very busy and active; they do vigilantly wait on God's throne in readiness to receive and to despatch his commands; they are ever on the wing, and fly about like lightning, to do his pleasure. They are attentive to our needs, and ever ready to protect, to assist, to relieve us! Especially they are diligent guardians and succorers of good men; officious ministers sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation: so even the seat of perfect rest is no place of idleness."

"Yes, God himself, although immovably and infinitely happy, is yet immensely careful, and everlasting busy; he rested once from that great work of creation; but yet 'My Father,' saith our Lord, 'worketh still,' and He never will rest from his works of providence and grace. His eyes continue watchful over the world, and His hands stretched out in upholding it. He hath a singular regard to every creature, supplying the needs of each, and satisfying the desires of all."

WIT AND HUMOR.

Why is a man who marries an heiress a lover of music? Because he marries for-tune.

Punch, in his dictionary, gives the definition of the word "conscience"—"My rule for another man's conduct."

A hotel is advertised as "kept by the widow of Mr Brown, who died last summer on a new and improved plan."

A learned Junior, who had spent his days in the city, while speaking on modern improvements, said, "It is not many years since farmers went forth and cut their harvests with a flail."

Prof. in Political Economy: "Now let us take distilled liquor." Then every man murmured mournfully: "No, thank you—member of the Nassau Temperance Society."

An Iowa paper tells how a man, at a match, spelled the first word, "fraud," all right, and yet went down. In pronouncing it he looked hard at his mother-in-law, and she sat near the dictionary.

"What are you fencing in that lot for, Pat? A herd of cattle would starve to death on that land." "And sure, your honor, wasn't I fencin' it in to kape the poor bastes out av it?"

A teacher, wishing to explain to a little girl the manner in which a lobster casts its shell when it has outgrown it, said, "What do you do when you have outgrown your clothes? You throw them aside, don't you?" "Oh, no!" replied the little one; "we let out the tucks."

"Do you reside in this city?" asked a masked man of a masked lady at a masquerade party the other evening. He felt sick when she said to him, in a low voice: "Don't be a fool, John, I know you by the wart on your thumb." It was his wife.

A boarder, the other day, after vainly endeavoring to masticate a piece of fowl, laid down his knife and fork, saying: "All the training, traditions, and teaching of my youth, my sense of propriety, and the commands of Holy Writ, compel me to respect old age; but I'll be blown if I can bring myself to stomach it roasted or boiled."

"Yes," he said, dreamingly, "we are always striving for a subjective goal. Unconsciously, it may be, but still we strive. We lean over the verge of the infinite, longing to grasp its mysteries, and are lost in the profundity of its immensity." "Yes," she replied, thoughtfully; "but, John, would you mind my putting a brown patch on those old duck pants of yours?"

A New York bar-keeper advertised for an assistant, and had two thousand applicants. This seems to conform the report that there are a great many Yale graduates out of employment.—*Ex.*

MED. CLASS—Prof: "Which is the longest gland?"

Student (after a moment of profound thought)—"England, sir."

They had an interview after the class, and Prof. advised him to quit the medicine and join the minstrels, or run for Mayor.

THE CANAL CAPTAIN.

BY WINSLOW.

[Originally contributed by the editor of the MONTHLY MUSINGS to the EMPIRE HERALD, of Randolph, N. Y.]

The captain of our packet was a hero. He was the model officer and gentleman; his bearings indicated that. At the time he was bearing due East. As he stood in the stern with the helm in his hand, the lustre of his red shirt undimmed by vest or coat, his black moustache flying in the zephyrs, and swore he would see us through by daylight or perish in the attempt, he awoke the admiration of all parties, especially the fair sex. He kept his word. It was true we were behind time in starting, but as he knowingly observed, "it was not the first time horse-flesh had to stand the consequence, and would not be the last as long as the company bought horses at a thousand dollars the hundred."

We had not been long under way when a strong wind arose. It blew great guns from the Northeast, and also the smell of musty cheese and bologna sausage from the vicinity of the cook's quarters in the bow. The usual placid waters of the canal were lashed into a wild fury, but our little craft struggled nobly on its way. Some of the timid passengers beseeched the captain to heave to, cast anchor, and try to find bottom, but as long as the horses had bottom the thought was not to be entertained.

But our captain was as prudent as he was brave. He would not stop the packet, but he determined to prepare for shipwreck. The cabin-boy was promoted to the rank of gunner, and for signals of distress there were placed in his charge an old horse-pistol, two fire-crackers and a three-ball Roman candle, the last to be used only in a case of the greatest emergency.

As it was becoming dusky the necessity of placing a light in the bow was appreciated. Search was made for a lantern, but none was found, so the red-headed cook was substituted in its place. This was at the suggestion of the captain, who thus showed himself original in ideas. Preparations were nearly completed, but one thing remained to be done. At the request of the captain, one of the passengers wrote the following note, placed it in an empty beer bottle and consigned it to the waters:

"Strong wind blowing from Northeast directly against us. All will be safe unless wind so retards us that will not reach Hagerstown 'till whisky is used up and men compelled to drink water. In which case serious consequences may follow. Written aboard the canal-packet, SALLY LUKINS, July 20th, 1873."

The storm now increased in violence. The wind and waves caused the noble bark to career from side to side, whilst the sway of the red head of the cook looked like the fiery career of a pin-wheel in its circular motions to and fro. Vivid flashes of lightning, succeeded by sharp peals of thunder, increased the terror of the scene, and also the speed of the horses, which broke from their usual walk into an unusual trot, and continued in this state of recklessness some twenty seconds. This greatly amazed all hands, for in the experience of the oldest canalers the thing had never been done. It especially befogged the mind of the captain, causing him to lose his "reckonings," and with a remark about taking

observations he darted down below. A suspicious noise which followed seemed to indicate the collision of tumbler and bottle, but probably it was the rattling of "nautical instruments." The "vigor" of his breath, as well as the order to "take in a reef of the rudder and throw the main-deck overboard," seemed to confirm the first surmise, but circumstantial evidence is untrustworthy, and besides mental excitement often follows intricate mathematical calculations. Canal captains should guard against this.

But an incident, which shortly followed, showed how soon his intellect had become evenly poised. The motion of the boat made it exceedingly difficult to walk across the deck, and the "first mate," unfortunately going too near the edge, was sent by a sudden lurch into the canal. It would have sounded more romantic to have said he fell in the "briny-deep," but it was bad enough as it was. With remarkable presence of mind the captain seized his long horn and blew a blast for the driver to hold up his horses. The command was instantly obeyed, and the "fiery steeds" stopped one-millionth of a second after the driver ejaculated "whoa." The captain now ordered the boatswain to summon "all hands aft," and in a moment the two deck hands, negro cabin-boy and the red-headed cook stood in line before him. With his accustomed self-possession the captain addressed them somewhat after this manner: "Boys, Tom Shanks, second officer aboard the *Sally Lukins*, has fallen overboard. As you all know, Tom was never much a friend to water—preferring something stronger—and I fear so sudden an introduction to such a large quantity may prove unbeneficial. To be short, Tom can't swim, and the first man that pulls him to the surface gets an extra glass of grog."

The sad fate of Shanks had apparently excited very little sympathy, but no sooner was the reward mentioned then a rush was made for the boat's edge, which nearly precipitated the captain in the water. Simultaneously four splashes were heard, and the red head of the cook, assisted by a flash of lightning, enabled us to discern four struggling forms. But the lightning collapsed, the red head dove, and darkness reigned. For a moment nothing was heard except the dashing of the water against the boat, then followed angry cries of "Let go! I got him first." The red head of the cook once more appeared to light up the scene and we beheld four men, each grasping a limb of the unfortunate mate. Seemingly they had all discovered him about the same time, and judging from the fact that the sound of contention reached us before a view of the contestants, they must have begun quarrelling about the grog some six feet underwater.

Slowly they dragged their burden to the boat's edge, when to the infinite astonishment of us all the captain seized a hand-spike, and flourishing it above his head, ordered the men at the peril of their lives to stand off and keep their distance. "Stay where you are 'till you have settled your dispute. Only one glass of grog was offered in reward, and if I should deal out four the commissary department would be inevitably ruined. The water will keep your heads cool and enable you to argue the question more logically. Decide who is the

lucky man and then come aboard." Even under these thrilling circumstances we could not but admire the remarkable presence of mind displayed by the captain. Once on deck the men would either have quarrelled everlastingly or all demanded the reward. An interesting dialogue now followed. Each one most positively and emphatically affirmed that he had discovered Shanks at least one half hour before the other three arrived, but neither resigned his claim or relinquished his grasp on Tom.

Ten minutes elapsed, bringing no change. I can't say how the matter would have ended unless Shanks had recovered his faculties and with a sudden lurch sent himself on deck and his rescuers under water. As he went up, they went down. But shortly they again appeared and slowly crawled aboard. The horses were again started, and as we descended to our "couches and dreams," we heard the captain sagely remark: "You see, boys, what you got by quarrelling."

PERSONALS.

We called at the office of our old friend and former College mate, A. J. Chewing, a few days ago, and found him succeeding admirably in the Real Estate business. The students who were at College with him in 1870 will remember Mr. C. as an earnest, thorough student, and they will, no doubt, be glad to hear of his prosperity. For several years after leaving us he was the business manager of the *Religious Herald*, of this city, but for the last few months he has been conducting a Real Estate agency in partnership with Dr. A. R. Dickinson, the editor of the *Southern Planter*. The firm have unusual facilities for conducting their business, and we predict for them an abundant measure of success.

We were pleased to see James W. Tucker, late of Baltimore Dental College, as he stopped by on his way home. Jimmie is looking as fresh and rosy as if he had been rustivating instead of learning how to draw the "troublesome member" successfully. He has determined to enter the ministry, and announces his intention of returning to Richmond College next session.

Rev. J. E. L. Holmes, the popular pastor of the Baptist church at Danville, paid us a visit last week. He was too much engrossed, however, with the fair sex, during his stay in the city, to let us see much of him.

Professor Harris' health has been fully restored and he has taken his classes again.

The city papers announce Dr. Curry's going to Washington to present his compliments to President Hayes, his room-mate at College.

Mrs. Partington says that Ike has bought a horse so spirituous that he always goes off in a decanter.

Locals.

THE arrangements for the Final Celebration of the Social Club are progressing finely. Various committees have been appointed, and the work has been well apportioned. Mr. R. H. Pitt has been elected President; Mr. L. F. Whittle, Declaimer; Messrs. W. W. Cosby, — Peel, J. M. McMannaway, P. Y. Tupper, Debaters.

We congratulate the students on their selections, and predict that, with painstaking efforts on the part of committees and speakers, we will have the most successful celebrations we have ever had.

THE funeral services of the Gymnasium will take place on the 1st of April, immediately after dinner. Deceased had been afflicted for some time with *achrematia*. It is gone. The political depression was too much for its weak constitution. Its career was short but brilliant, and it is pleasant to think that "being dead it yet hath its influence." Several students have been taught in a convincing way of the universality of the law of gravitation and the utter instability of hempen material. It lived before its time. In these days its value is not generally acknowledged. There have been some fanatics who have openly asserted that physical and mental development are intimately connected, but a body of staid, conservative men, like the Board of Trustees of this College, can endorse no such new-fangled notions. Perhaps, as this is an age of innovation, the day will come when these and similar ideas will have more credence, and our Gymnasium will have had its influence in the change. But we were not ready for the revolution and the deceased, like many other prominent individuals, came to grief from being born too soon.

Its career is finished, and we will assemble on the above mentioned day to pay the last tribute of respect to its memory. The occasion promises to be a sadly interesting one. The students are respectfully invited to attend without further notice. The Committee on Gymnasium will act as chief mourners. The Trustees will attend in a body. Addresses expected from members of the Faculty and other distinguished officials.

A YOUNG FRIEND of ours, who very rarely attends the morning worship, was so much overcome by the beauty of the badge which Messrs. John H. Tyler & Co. made for him, that he made a special effort to attend one morning in order to display to the astonished crowd the beauty of his pin. See how closely the BEAUTIFUL and the GOOD are allied!

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"Why is the shape of a egg like a kiss?" Because it is elliptical, (lip-tickle)."

The above is from a students who failed on his Int. Math. Examination. He says he knows more about the kiss than he does about the ellipse. We hope he does.

WE, or rather the Museum, were honored, a few days ago, with a visit by the young ladies of the High School. They were accompanied by Mr. J. H. Peay, Superintendent of Public Schools of Richmond, and Dr. W. H. Taylor. The boys have been crazy ever since, and now several of them are meditating applying for admission to the High School. If we had not resolved to eschew "*calico*" until our mind ceased to be disturbed with thoughts of functions and differentials, we should have had to yield, but we are better now.

Exchanges.

THE usual number of exchanges for this month is on our table. Among them we note the *College Journal*, *The Campus*, *The College Journal*, (notice that one is *College College Journal* and the other *The College Journal*), *The Home Journal*, and *College Record*. All of them are ably edited. The article "Emancipation of Mind in the Sixteenth Century," in the *College Record*, bears evidence of mature thought.

The *Home Journal* is always gladly received. It is a journal of long standing, and keeps fully abreast with the times without conforming to their imperious dictates.

Who is the wit of *The College Journal*? Give us his name, and don't let him hide his light under a bushel.

The Campus tells us of a lecture delivered under the auspices of the Senior class of Alleghany county, Pa., by Hon. Fred. Douglass, and says that the attendance was very small. Wonder what was the reason the "distinguished gentleman" didn't have a larger crowd.

Another one of our old comrades has been called away. RALPH DICKINSON, of Louisa county, died on the 8th of March, 1877. He was a student of session '73-4. We had not the privilege of an intimate acquaintance with him, but he was considered, by those who knew him best, a refined gentleman and Christian. He had been teaching school at his home in Louisa county. We extend to the relatives and friends our heartfelt sympathy.

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B. PURYEAR, A. M., Professor of Chemistry.

Expenses per session of nine months, embracing matriculation and tuition fees, fuel, lights and washing, \$118. Good board in messing clubs costs \$10 per month; at the College boarding houses, \$13. About \$90 will be needed on matriculation; \$35 the 1st February, and the remainder at intervals through the session.

The expenses of a day student per session are \$87.50. Students can enter advantageously 1st January, or at the beginning of the second half of the current session, 6th February. Suitable reduction in charges are made. The College Buildings, situated in the most beautiful and healthful portion of the city, just within the corporate limits, with thirteen acres of land attached, are ample for the accommodation of at least two hundred and fifty students.

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