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Monthly Musings

"MAIDEN MEDITATIONS, FANCY FREE."—Shakespeare.

Richmond College.

VOL. III.
NO. 6.

RICHMOND, VA., MARCH, 1878.

TERMS. { ONE YEAR.....60 cents.
SINGLE COPY.....10 cents.

The Muse.

We have received from the gifted authoress in the North the following original contribution. We are grateful for this, and shall be delighted to receive other contributions, prose or poetry, from the same facile pen.—EDS.

TO A POET.

BY IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM.

Shall I essay the critic's art?

The child upon his mother's knee
Feels but the beating of her heart,
Her warm and ready sympathy;
And be her dear eyes bright or dim,
They are as heaven's lamps to him.

Her voice is music in his ear;

No wood bird's note, no zephyr's sigh,
No wild brook bubbling soft and clear,
Is sweeter than her lullaby,
Which mingles with his dreams at even,
And seems an echo borne from heaven.

I was a child when first thy spell

Fell with soft touch on heart and brain;
And I have grown to love thee well
While wandering in thy charm'd domain;
And feel my soul drawn near to thee
By fragrant links of poesy.

While critics talk of that and this,
Of here a flaw and there a lack,—
A note their captious clamors miss,—

Love still shall turn thy pages back,
And climb the flowery heights once more,
And sing the songs it read before.

"A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT."

A NEW VERSION BY CHARLES MACKAY.

A man's a man, says Robert Burns,
For a' that, and a' that,
But though the song be clear and strong,
It lacks a note for a' that;
The lout who'd shirk the daily work,
Yet claim his wage and a' that,
Or beg, when he might earn his bread,
Is not a man for a' that.

If all who dine on hamely fare,
Were true and brave, and a' that,
And none whose garb is hoddin grey,
Was fool and knave and a' that,
The vice and crime that shame our time,
Would fade and fail and a' that,
And ploughmen be as good as Kings,
And churls as earls for a' that.

You see yon brawny blustering sot,
Who swaggers, swears, and a' that,
And thinks, because his strong right arm,
Might fell an ox and a' that,
That he's as noble, man for man,
As Duke or Lord, and a' that,
He's but a brute, beyond dispute,
And not a man for a' that.

A man may own a large estate—
Have palace, park, and a' that,
And not for birth, but honest worth,
Be thrice a man for a' that;
And Donald, herding on the muir,
Who beats his wife, and a' that,
Be nothing but a rascal boor,
Nor half a man for a' that.

It comes to this dear Robert Burns,
The truth is old and a' that,
"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,"
"The man's the gold for a' that;"
And though you'd put the minted mark,
On copper, brass, and a' that,
The lie is gross—the cheat is plain—
And will not pass for a' that.

For a' that and a' that,
'Tis soul and heart and a' that,
That makes the king a gentleman,
And not his crown and a' that;
And man with man, tho' rich or poor.
The best is he for a' that,
Who stands erect in self-respect,
And acts the man for a' that.

Literary.

IDEALS.

How pleasant it is to build castles in the air. Everyone has enjoyed the luxury of erecting fairy palaces out of intangible bricks and impalpable mortar, and of peopling them with maidens rarer and more radiant than she "whom the angels name Lenore," and there is no one, however modest and diffident, who has not fancied himself the fortunate possessor of the aforesaid castles and of at least one of the charming damsels.

After laborious and long continued mental exertion, the mind loves to wander in the fields of Phantasy and to seek there rest and relief from its severe labors. The tired student finds refuge from the care and care of his daily duties in a world of his own, where the skies are brighter and the fields are fairer than any ever seen by mortal vision. In this world which his fancy has created, all his aspirations are satisfied, all his plans succeed, and in imagination he returns home laden with honors to gladden the hearts of his parents and receive the applause of his friends. During an afternoon walk, when the sight of the green fields has recalled the memory of his own country home, and the grateful breeze has blown away from his mind the dust and cobwebs gathered while poring over dull text books or listening to abstruse lectures, his fancy wanders forth, overleaping all the bounds of probability, and annihilating all circumstances of time and space, and rears palaces more enchanting than those of Aladdin, with a swift-

ness far surpassing that of the genius of the lamp. What matters it to him then, if in his studies he has met with insurmountable obstacles or has suffered the defeat of his dearest hopes? He soothes his wounded pride with visions of what he will one day become, and bestows upon himself the honors which have been withheld by an inappreciative world. So long as the Phantasy is exercised judiciously and in proper limits, it affords pleasure as innocent as it is absorbing, but there is constant danger that it will encroach upon time which should be devoted to the performance of the duties of life. The day dreamer at first devotes only his leisure moments to the airy creations of his fancy, and returns from them with his mind refreshed and invigorated; but gradually he devotes more and more time to them until a spell is woven around him, which he cannot shake off. His duties are neglected, and, as a consequence, his failures become more frequent. He seeks respite from his feelings of mortification and chagrin in a world where he has no crosses, and thus the indulgence of his fancy becomes at once the source and the alleviation of his troubles. He himself becomes an idle dreamer. He forms plans which are never executed, and makes resolves which are either incapable of fulfilment or too visionary for any practical purpose. His life is spent in devising and planning; but the results of his plans never appear, and he will pass away from earth and leave nothing behind him to show to the world that he has lived. The Phantasy, however, may be made subservient to the highest ends of our being. If it is employed in forming pure and lofty ideals to which we constantly endeavor to conform our lives, then its use will be as beneficial as its abuse is pernicious.

Every young man ought to have always before him an ideal to which he should strive to attain. If his mind is constantly fixed upon it, his character will be conformed to it; for one cannot dwell upon noble and beautiful ideas without partaking in some measure of their nature. The ideal should be formed with great care, and pursued with unremitting diligence. The deepest and truest feelings of the heart as well as the loftiest aspirations of the soul should be embodied in it. If the ideal is worthy of the name, it will never be attained, but will elude all pursuit, rising ever higher as the mind becomes refined by its influence. The ideal of our youth will not be the ideal of our maturer years. The ideas which filled our souls in the morning of life, and the hopes and aspirations which thrilled us by their grandeur and beauty when first we conceived them, will give place to others, nobler and

worthier of pursuit. As the soul becomes refined and purified it is capable of deeper feelings and of higher aspirations than those which filled it when the ideal was first formed. If the ideal did not rise, there would be no growth for the soul. One must raise the other.

The sculptor forms in his mind an ideal vague and fleeting at first, but growing more clearly refined as he dwells upon it. He gives it expression in clay and works it over again and again until he has a clear conception of its general outlines. As the model approaches perfection, his ideal stands forth in bolder relief, until he is able to chisel its likeness into marble. The ideal which the completed statue represents is not the ideal which first entered the mind of the artist. Every successive model wrought changes in it, and every step towards perfection in the statue rendered it purer and more beautiful.

Thus it is with our youthful ideals. The beautiful dreams of youth are the loftiest creations of which the mind is then capable, but are far below the aims of the true and earnest man.

In Bulwer's novel, "What will He do with it?" Guy Darrell began life with the determination to win back the estates of his ancestors, and to re-establish the dignity of the old name. For the penniless barrister it was a noble aim. He made it his ideal, and devoted to it all the faculties of his powerful mind. As the years rolled by, success rewarded his labors; but his ideal remained the same. He did not suffer it to rise, and, at last, instead of elevating him, it held his spirit chained to earth, and the fruition of his hopes served only to render him a disappointed and miserable man. So will it ever be with those who place their ideals too low.

He who has reached his ideal is of all men the most to be pitied. For him there is no future. Thenceforth he must drag out an aimless existence, with no joy for the day, no hope for the morrow. His life work is ended, and he has nothing more to live for. The young man who enters life without a settled aim, is no less to be pitied than he who has reached his goal. His life is filled with grand possibilities and golden opportunities. The road to honor and fame lies open before him. If with fixed purpose and lofty aim he pursues it, his efforts will be rewarded with abundant success. But if he yields himself to the guidance of impulses and inclinations, his life will be spent in vain roving hither and thither, without plan and without result. His course is like that of a ship laden with rich merchandise sailing over the ocean with neither compass nor chart, and with no definite port in view. She may reach a harbor in safety, but it is almost certain that she will be dashed to pieces upon some rock-bound coast, a dismantled and abandoned wreck.

Ideals are commonly considered to be the peculiar property of poets and artists, and the ideal world is supposed to be inaccessible to men of common mould, but there is no one so humble that he cannot form an ideal, and there is no one so lowly that he cannot make his life nobler and purer. The true poet is he whose life is a poem, and the most skilful artist is he who chisels his character into conformity with a beautiful and exalted model.

BOURDON.

READING AS AN AMUSEMENT.

Oh, how many happy hours did I spend, when a boy, poring over the pages of story-books, whose romantic and wonderful descriptions were as real to my fancy as was any actual experience of life to my senses!

I went over and over all the novel-reading ground on which it was considered safe by judiciously indulgent parents to permit so frisky and nervously organized a subject as myself to range. I sailed over the main with Captain Marryat, enjoying hugely the voyages, the society of Jack, and the wonders of foreign ports. I roamed the forests and the prairies with Cooper, following with breathless intensity the trails, and avoiding the ambushes, of the sly and murderous red man. I had delightful shipwrecks with Captain Mayne Reid on paradisiacal islands, where life with the goats, and monkeys, and parrots, was unspeakable bliss. I shared the adventures of poor cracked Don Quixotte and his good-natured, chattering Sancho Panza, understanding little or nothing of their ludicrousness, but enjoying the strolling life and constantly-changing fortunes of the pair. I was David Copperfield, happily domesticated in honest Pegotty's "old boat," or sharing the hospitalities of the Micawber family, which last-mentioned people I love to this day. I was Jack Sheppard, and that was the best of all, for—O, naughty human nature—it was a *stolen* pleasure.

There was another clandestine affair of this kind. One Sunday afternoon, I recollect, my mother detected me reading by myself in the back parlor (where I had secreted myself, believing the place secure from parental visitation), a very sanguinary and improper novel, entitled "Tom, Dick, and Harry," which I was fraudulently holding before my face *inside* the open pages of that excellent work, "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain." After I was not favored with many private opportunities for indulging my taste for literature.

All this was more years ago than I care to recall, but reading has the same intense, all-absorbing interest for me now as it had then—the same power of driving from mind every thought of weariness or vexation, and transporting me to the land of fancy and imagination. A book is a cheering and sympathetic friend, always at hand. Are you in a merry mood? then follow blundering, but amiable, old Pickwick and his ridiculous fellow-excursionists in their adventurous course; or read about that delightful, gin-drinking old humbug, Sairy Gamp; or Dick Swiveller and the marchioness; or most any of those laughable creations of Dickens' genius; or, for a very funny hour, take the extravagancies of Mark Twain.

Apropos to humorists, it seems to me that Charler Dudley Warner is the most graceful and refined of all our American writers in that line. His "Baddeck" and "My Summer in a Garden" are elegant trifles.

Should you, from disgust with the hypocrisy and trickery of the world, find yourself a little cynical and misanthropic, and desire to read an author in sympathy with such a humor, take Thackeray. But do not read him much; for his all-embracing and scathing strictures on the weakness, and selfishness, and meanness of human nature, tend rather to pain than to amuse one, and it is of reading simply as an

amusement we are dealing now. *En passant*, what an admirable diction Thackeray has, so clear, and simple, and strong, and direct!

Do you fancy romance and excitement in your reading, and, like the gushing Mrs. Skewton, "dote on the darling *bygone* times," then read the fascinating mediæval stories of Sir Walter Scott, "Ivanhoe," "The Betrothed," "The Talisman," those brilliant kaleidoscopes of castles, and knight-errant, and monasteries, and monks, and tournaments, and all the brave and picturesque belongings of those times. How many have these fine stories delighted, and how many will they continue to delight, so long as our language shall last?

Should your taste require something quiet and less pretentious than any of the preceding, try Mitchell in his graceful and polished "Dream Life," or "Reveries of a Bachelor," or Miss Mitford's "Our Village"; which latter is, to my mind, a most dainty book. Miss Mitford is comparatively little read by us, and I doubt if there is at present any American edition of her entire works, though the Harpers publish her "Recollections of a Literary Life"; but to such of my readers as like quiet sketches of country life, an easy, natural style of writing, and bright, poetical pictures of woods, and glens, and pastures, and fleecy flocks, and leafy lanes, and thatch-roofed cottages, and honest rustics, and all that—to such let me recommend Miss Mitford's "Our Village."

Then, if you like love stories—but hold!—I forget for the moment whom I was addressing, and how exceedingly improper it would be for me to broach a subject of so inflammatory a nature to so inflammatory a class as college boys. Young gentlemen, you had better resume your studies, if you please. O.

BULWER'S NOVELS.

While Lord Lytton was endeavoring to establish his claim as a novelist Dickens and Thackeray were just then in the zenith of their popularity and fame.

Dickens, by his "Pickwick Papers," and "The Old Curiosity Shop," had made the heart of all Britain throb in unison with his, and Thackeray in his "Variety Fair" and "The Newcomes," had shown such keen humor and bitter sarcasm, that he was universally acknowledged as the master of irony. And so Bulwer selected another style of novel writing, different from either Dickens' or Thackeray's.

In his novels we see nothing which characterizes English life and manners. It is true, that he wrote "My Novel," "Varieties in English Life," but still the work might have appeared as a translation from some foreign language, and have lost little of its interest.

Bulwer's style is sparkling and vivacious. He often says sharp things, and gets off good points. His novels seem to bristle with vivid, shining thoughts; and though they sometimes dazzle us at first, on further examination we generally see their fallacy. In "Pelham," more than any other of his novels, does Bulwer show this power. Indeed, at one period in the book we find so many instances of his hard, metallic humor and wit, that they grow almost tiresome, and we long for some real narrative incident.

Bulwer's greatest merit lies in his power of

describing scenes and delineating characters. He delights to inject the fairest flowers of his rhetoric and the daintiest fruits of his fancy into his scenes. He possesses in a wonderful degree the power of describing, so that we can picture the scene to the eye. Very much of some of his novels is the most poetical prose in our literature.

Bulwer shows much ability in depicting the phases of love. He seems to take especial pleasure in telling of the thrill, the misery, and the rapture of *first love*. Bulwer has been pre-eminently successful in his portraiture of women. He has given to us an almost Shakespearian gallery of female portraits. Where can we find more beautiful female characters than the confiding Madeline, or the loving Ione, or the queenly Nina?

In his historical novels Bulwer has ably reproduced the last days of Pompeii, the life of Rienzi, and other historic romances—all teeming with his vast learning and research, and brilliant with his powerful imagination and tender fancy.

Bulwer's most celebrated novels are "The Caxtons," "My Novel," and "Zanoni." Of these we think "My Novel" the best. This is Bulwer's longest novel, and, in many respects, the most complicated, and yet not a link in the chain of incidents is missing. The greatest character in this novel is Burley—gay, generous, large-hearted, rollicking John Burley. He enjoyed life while he possessed it, and his motto was, "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

In the lines of Byron did his feelings and sentiments in regard to life find expression:

"The best of life is but intoxication:
Glory, the grape, love, gold, in these are sunk
The hopes of all men and of every nation."

In his portraiture of Burley, Bulwer has given us a faithful representation of many of the greatest souls of the present day. We often see men noble in every word and action, free with all they have, generous to a fault, and yet they die in poverty and neglect. Upon his death bed, looking back over his wasted life and squandered powers, and just then gaining a dim conception of his latent capabilities and of what he might have made himself, Burley said: "I once beheld a ship in a storm. It was a cloudy, fitful day, and I could see the ship, with all its masts, fighting hard for life and death. Then came night, dark as pitch, and I could only guess that the ship fought on. Towards dawn the stars grew visible and once more I saw the ship—it was a wreck—it went out just as the stars shone out."

DELTA.

WHY SMITH?

Can you tell, reader, whence they are and why so many? We will give a few of the legends and allow you to draw your own conclusions.

It is thought that in the beginning all were named Smith,—e. g. Abram Smith, Noah Smith, Isaac Smith, &c., but after awhile some of them began to break the laws, and they were forthwith excommunicated and made to change their names; and hence we have Shepard, the man who kept (after stealing) the sheep; Robertson, the son of Robert, which is another expression for robber; Har-

rison, the son of "old Harry"; Hix or Hicks, the son of the man who was always going hic! hic! (the toper); Winfrey, (Wine-fray), the one who was always in drunken-broils; Bagby, (Bagb-o-y), the boy who ran away with the bag; Decker, the card-player; and Loving, the man who practices what his *forced* name implies to the detriment of himself and State. We could give examples, *ad infinitum*, but think the above will suffice.

Others contend that this name is derived from Apollo, whose surname was *Smintheus*. By cutting off *eus*, the sign of agency, and dropping the weak *n* before *th*, we get the well-known form *Smith*, the name of the priests and ministers who conducted the services in the temple dedicated to Apollo Smintheus. We find that these priests were the most refined and intelligent of the land; they were prophets, and their very name was an emblem of the prophetic power of the god which read the events of the future, notwithstanding the darkness that then surrounded them; they were ministers of the god who moved at the head of the nine Muses, the divinities who each presided over one of the liberal arts; and shall not their descendants honor their name?

Recent research has shown that Smith is connected with one of the early forms of human faith—the worship of "Sun-myth," which is simply the letter *s* for sun with *myth* added.

Possibly the most plausible derivation is that it is from Shem, the eldest son of Noah, from whom the Shemitic nations have sprung. The change is very simple and satisfactory; *Shem*, *Shemitt*, *Shmitt*, *Smith*. We thus see that it is an old family, and those of the present generation should be proud of their ancestry. Its long lineage will account for the great number that bears that name; and it is a profitable, needful class—the most useful things are always given us in abundance, e. g. air, water, light.

Yes, it is a large and very popular family, and, in conclusion, we would add, let young speakers—and old ones too—beware how they carelessly and indiscreetly allude to them, as they are certain to be found in every intelligent and appreciative audience.

ERNST.

A colored individual fishing, had the luck to catch a huge catfish. After a while, concluding that it was the stock of that portion of the waters, he tied it to a stake and struck higher up stream. Presently two fellows came along, whose fortune was limited to one sun-perch and noticed the stake and movement of the waters; hauled up the big catfish, they decided to make an exchange and did so. Not long after the old darkey came back for his game, drawing up the line with great care, all at once his eyes floating about like two sun-flowers in a fluctuating breeze, thus he addressed his sole diminutive piscatory audience: "Hi! how am dis now; dis here am my stick, and dis am my line sure; golly, and dese am dis niggers tracks, but fore de Lord how dis here catfish is dun swunk, 'tis 'sprising."

There is a fish which is used as a candle and is caught on the coast of Alaska. It is about eight inches long, almost transparent, and very fat, which fat is pure, white, and very sweet. The Indians dry this fish, then light it at the tail, and it burns with a clear, sparkling flame which the wind will not extinguish.

Forsaken children resemble forsaken plants; the thistles that grow around them sap the roots of the plant and it loses its beauty and fades away.

ANTI-DYSPEPTIC DROPS.

What's the difference between mice and girls? Why, one charms the he's, the other harms the cheese.

The difference between a boy and a barn is, the shingles are applied to the roof of the barn.

A gentleman said, when a pretty girl trod on his toes, that he had received the stamp of beauty.

"When tempted to anger, 'breathe a prayer.' Jes' so, when you stub your toe, just murmur, 'now I lame me.'"

It is probably some satisfaction to a mule to know that while he cannot soar as high as the lark, he can sing just as loud, and kick very much sorer.

"Aint it wicked to rob dis here hen roos, Jim?" "Dat's a great moral question which I aint time fur to consider now. Hand down another pullet."

A "Soph" being asked the origin of the word restaurant, replied, "It comes from res-a-thing, and taurus—a bull. A bully thing."

"Little boy, can I go through this gate to the river?"

"Yes, go on, the load of hay went ahead some time ago."

"Courtship is the skirmish before the regular battle begins."

Yes, and marriage is the charge before the retreat. Next.

A truthful engineer says that a young man, with his head out of the car window, went to kiss his grandmother good bye, and the train pulled out so fast that he kissed an old negro woman at the next station.

An Irishman, with a heavy bundle on his shoulder, riding on the front of a horse car, was asked why he didn't set the bundle down on the platform, replied, "In-dade, the horses have enough to drag, I'll carry the bundle."

Oh! yes, we have hearts full of charity, but when a miserable tramp whines out that he is a poor widow and the mother of five children on his father's side,—we cave in.

A good little boy, who was kicked by a mule, did not say naughty words nor go home crying to his mother. He just tied the mule within five feet of a bee-hive, backed him round to it, and let him kick.

Some men can never take a joke. There was an old doctor who, when asked "what is good for mosquitoes?" wrote back: "How do you suppose I can tell unless I know what ails the mosquito?"

A gentleman, coming into the room of the late Dr. Barton, told him that Mr. Vowel was dead. "What!" said he, "Vowel dead? Let us be thankful that it was neither U or I."

"Oh, my friends," exclaimed an orator, "that I had a window in my heart, that you might look in and see the truth of what I tell you." "Wouldn't a pain in your stomach do just as well?" asked a small boy.

A Chinaman, engaged as a servant in a restaurant, was prevailed upon to eat some ice-cream. When he got up from the floor, he sadly remarked: "Melican man makee cold vittles too dam hot. Cookee John's mouth allee skin off, allee same likee off clackel. John practice on hot flat iron, maybe eat some day ice-cream."

FAMILIAR SAYINGS.—I'd ish a streed dot ish pooty long ven he don'd vill hav by sometimes dose gorners grooked mit himself.

Dis ish a sick vind ov id don'd by some oder vellers dings blows pooty good.

Ov a feller ish got a bird mit his handt already, he don'd vos schmarat ov he let em got away mit der same price os two ov dem birds by a grape-vine-dree. Yah.

A strong-minded woman married a man not noted for activity of body or energy of character, and before the honeymoon was over, upon waking one morning, he found his spouse in tears. "My love," said he, "what is the matter?" "Oh, I had such a frightful dream." "Why, what was it?" "I thought I was going up Fourth avenue shopping, when I saw a sign, 'Husbands for sale.' So many women were rushing in that I followed, and just then they sold a splendid specimen for \$1,500." "But did they all bring as much as that?" "Oh, no! they went at \$1,000, \$500, and so on down." "Well, did you see any that looked like me?" "Yes, indeed. But they were tied up in bundles, like asparagus, and sold for ten cents bunch." Tableau!—Inter-Ocean.

MONTHLY MUSINGS.

RICHMOND COLLEGE, RICHMOND, VA.

EDITORS:

MU SIGMA RHO SOCIETY.....R. H. PITT.

PHILOLOGIAN SOCIETY.....ASHTON STARKE

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

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WHAT AND HOW TO READ.

The incalculable value of books as a means of culture admits of no questioning. Books are the teacher's instructors, and a well selected library is indeed a well of thought, from which we may draw to the satisfying of every mental requirement: "Whatever is lofty, profound or acute in speculation, delicate or refined in feeling, witty or quaint in suggestion, is accessible to the lover of books." A man may accumulate wealth and have his riches, but if the mind is not stored with useful knowledge, he fails to wield power with men of letters.

Books are the little railway cars that transport us from Continent to Continent, over land and sea, up into the high heavens and down into the mighty deep—yea, into the bowels of the earth. No tribe or clime is too distant, no age too remote; even in the fields of the dim future are already dotted the way stations of the little travellers. But one can hardly hope or wish to travel over the entire routes of these little carriers, so we desire to suggest a single thought to those who propose becoming passengers, in mapping out the shortest and best route for the journey.

Reading, says BACON, "makes a full man;" "and so does eating, but fullness without digestion is dyspepsia, and induces sleepiness and flabbiness, both fatal to activity.

Some one has written that there should be a Professor of Reading in every College, and this is in one light certainly true, for one could hardly visit the rooms of our students and note the *outside* of volumes found there without being convinced that few, if any, are capable of selecting those books which contribute the greatest knowledge and pleasure with the smallest expenditure of time and labor. A Freshman or Sophomore craves to say, boastingly, to the world, I have waded through HUME, GIBBON, ROLLIN, and such, ignorant of the fact that modern works are better suited to their wants, and contain the very food that will invigorate and stimulate them to grapple with such old literary giants.

Be sure that you read, and careful what you read! You would not climb up and over a rugged mountain, when through a skilfully masonried tunnel, the beauty of whose workmanship and symmetry of proportions would please you every step of the way, you could reach the other side; neither waste precious moments in plodding over page after page to gather a few facts, when from the labor and experience of others they can be pointed to you on a single leaf. Consult older readers, profit by their advice, and save time and labor.

Now a word as how to read. Unless reading makes an impression on the memory, the eye has only drifted over the pages and the mind has not sunk a single shaft to find what they contain; no more intelligent nourishment is taken than when an illiterate negro philosophically scans the contents of a newspaper upside down. Prof. BUTLER, of Wisconsin University, in a recent lecture before the Detroit Scientific Association, uttered the following suggestions, which every student should read: "A habit of writing in connection with reading and study is useful to every scholar, therefore keep a blank book by you. Write ideas epigrammatically—like a honey bee—short, sweet, and with a sting at the end. Cork up the quintessence of thought, which, at your bidding, will expand almost of itself into an hour's lecture. Notable precedents we find in the habits of EURIPIDES, DANTE, BEN JONSON, MILTON, HOBBS, BENTLY, LOCK, SWIFT, WILBERFORCE, RICHTER, FLAXMANN, and others. The poorest pencil is better than the best memory; why practice book-keeping for lucre and keep no account of the greater riches of the mind. A well kept note book assists memory. Reading, selecting, arranging and writing an idea, fixes a fact much better than reading alone. The unwritten is your shadow in the glass, the written your photograph; the more you mark down the more you will remark."

If human memory had its apartments in which treasures could be stored systematically, so that they would be accessible at a moment's notice, well enough, but we, who are called upon to write on varied subjects, know how memory will close its doors upon us just at the moment of our perplexity, and how valuable is the little store room by our side, whose shelves are loaded with tiny *bon mots* and delicacies ready for our taking.

The quantity of reading is vastly less important than the quality. I have seen a tree so laden with luscious fruit as to tear its limbs down into the very trunk and forever destroy its productive value, and so may we overstock the mind. Select your reading, read carefully, record what you read, and your time is invested at the best paying interest.

ARE THE TIMES OUT OF JOINT?

"Whither are we drifting?" is often asked with a vague sense of impending danger and indefinable terror. Conflicting theories of science and religion, threatening social and political revolutions, combine to produce this fear.

Error, hydra-headed and venomous, lurks in unsuspected corners, assumes unwonted shapes, and starts unbidden from its hiding place to attack vehemently and oppose stoutly the progress of truth. The alarmist cries lustily and continuously, "Confusion! all is lost!" Sensationalism gloats over the general dismay and feeds the fevered fancy with pictures of new dangers to be encountered—revelling with fiendish glee amid horrors conjured up from a frightful future.

We cannot, however, see ground for so much alarm. The conflict between Truth and Error began in Eden, and has ever since been relentlessly waged; and neither truce nor armistice will be declared till Error is finally overthrown. It must be admitted that Truth has at times suffered apparent defeat; but that this defeat was only apparent, is evident from the fact that at no time during the conflict have her adherents been more numerous than now, or readier to do battle for the immutable principles which have withstood the shock of ages.

Frequently the temporary discomfiture of the defenders of the Truth has been due to rashness and indiscretion.

When a new theory, scientific or religious, is promulgated, they are apt to attack it without investigation. As sentinels along the line they should at least demand the countersign, and ascertain whether the advancing troops are friends or foes before giving the signal of alarm. For example, it is silly to denounce DARWIN without reading "The Origin of Species," Quixotic to attack HUXLEY and SPENCER until it is known under what standard they are enlisted, and until the fortifications in which they are entrenched have been carefully examined and weak points duly noted.

In all theories there is a mixture of truth and error. In investigating them let us remember that there cannot be two contrariant truths. If what we now hold as truth, be such, it cannot suffer displacement, but must rather be sustained by the discovery of any other truth; if error, we ought to be delighted at its overthrow.

We believe in the unity of truth, and in its final triumph. The blind old poet, in a splendid simile, likens it to a figure whose disjointed fragments are scattered throughout the earth, and it should be our life-work to gather these fragments, so that, in the fullness of

time, the Master-hand, with the plastic touch of Omnipotence, may arrange and adjust them in a form whose symmetry shall be faultless, and the harmony of whose proportions perfect and complete.

To change the figure, all are helping to rear a temple of magnificent proportions, with God as the Architect, and in the pure Empyrean of Eternity, His own hand will give the finishing touch.

We repeat, Truth is the same, whether recorded in the rocks or written in Revelation.

"Every scientific experiment, rightly conceived, is an act of reverent worship," says a distinguished philosopher, and however modern savants may ignore the existence of a Creator, the pioneers of Physical science, and those whose labors have been most lasting, have recognized it.

KEPLER grandly said, "Oh, God! I think thy thoughts after thee!" AGASSIZ caught and repeated the same sentiment, when he affirmed that "all thorough classification is but an interpretation of the thoughts of the Creator," and his silent prayer on the shore of Penikese Island, while the murmuring waves, that laved the beach, sang the "bass in Nature's anthem," has a touching eloquence, and speaks in language far more convincing than the specious sophistries of those, who, recognizing Design, deny the existence of a Designer.

We are young in years, tyros in experience, but till something better is shown, we cling in supreme confidence to the old fashioned doctrine that God rules, and try to realize the grand idea that "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are unseen are eternal"

AN EDITORIAL in a former issue of this paper, entitled "Old Sores Healed," has excited much comment, and placed the Literary Societies in rather a false position. There has been no bitterness between the two Societies for the past six years. With singularly rare exceptions, they have not only been free from partisan bitterness, but have entertained the most amicable relations to each other. The Reading Room was a necessity, but the necessity did not grow out of Society feeling. We hope those of our exchanges which have noticed the article will also notice this disclaimer.

To be constantly despondent is undermining the throne of reason, and with reason dethroned a man's usefulness is gone.

To be hale and hearty one must have a well-balanced mind, plenty of exercise, good food and good company

Some men hate each other without cause, while others love each other for the same reason.

A happy disposition is of greater value to man's happiness than the possession of great wealth and a sour, fault-finding temper.

To prolong life make your troubles as small as possible and carry them lightly.

PERSONALS.

Solomon Cutchins is practicing law. His office is No. 17 Shafer's Building. Bring suits for two—Sol.

A. J. Chewing, '71-72, was married on 30th January, to Miss Kate G. Carpenter, of Louisa. Alpheus has a host of friends here who wish him and his bride long, happy and useful lives.

Wm. Ellyson, A. M., '75-76, is succeeding admirably in his chosen profession. Recently he had a case before the Supreme Court and won it.

W. M. Turpin has gone to Europe with Professor Harris.

Richard Hardaway was in town a few days ago.

Eaton Nance has left for Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

W. R. Savage is with Bodeker & Bros., wholesale Drug-gists.

John S. Warren has left College to the regret of his numerous friends.

OUR EXCHANGES.

Here is a new and welcome face—The "Euzelian Album," published at Hollins Institute, Va. It makes its first bow to the public with the air of a modest maiden, and we like it all the better for that. It proposes to sketch "the incidents of every-day life at Hollins." We hope the record will be a faithful one, as we have long desired to know how girls do manage when there are so many together. We read the article on "Christmas week at Hollins" far enough to find out that the girls were on a "Calathump" Christmas morning at 3½ o'clock. We have not yet sufficiently recovered from the shock to read the remainder. Success to "the Album."

The January number of the Jewell is full of readable articles.

Judging from several articles in "the Lafayette College Journal" we fear there is some bad blood between Northern Colleges, growing out of the Intercollegiate contest. They failed here, and seem likely to do so there. Why not adopt the Herald's suggestion and have the Oratorical displays strictly private? That might help the matter.

Another acquaintance made, "The Pennsylvania College Monthly," of Gettysburg. They gave Lee a warm welcome somewhere in that region, we believe, during "the late unpleasantness," and now in turn we welcome the Monthly warmly. Read with some interest the new translation of "Dies Irae."

The Student's Journal has a sprightly article on Individuality, and a thoughtful one on Responsibilities of the American Citizen.

The January number of the Gray Jacket, through many trials and tribulations, as it seems, has once more put in an appearance. They have rather original ideas of humor, but if the supply of italics should give out, the humorist of the Gray Jacket would be forlorn. The editors have resolved the principles of punctuation and made the important discovery that a liberal use of italics will answer all purposes. What does the exchange editor mean by "a female paper"? Why did he not indicate that "Leaves of Gold" was selected? Why, O! why, does the aforesaid editor make a Quixotic jackass of himself? Answer in our next.

The Dickinsonian, Lima Express, Hagerstown Monthly, The Ariel, College Index, Acta Columbiana, Vidette, and Reveille, (New Haven), are among the NEW exchanges, and we regret that they came too late to be noticed at length.

The usual number of exchanges received, but the lack of space prevents further notice.

FEMALE SOCIETY.—You know my opinion of female society. Without it we would degenerate into brutes. This observation applies with tenfold force to young men, and those who are in the prime of manhood. For, after a certain time of life, the literary man makes a shift (a poor one, I grant), to do without the society of ladies. To a young man, nothing is so important as a spirit of devotion, next to the Creator, to some amiable woman, whose image may occupy his heart and guard it from pollution, which besets it on all sides. A man ought to choose his wife, as Mrs. Primrose did her wedding gown, for qualities that "wear well." One thing, at least, is true, that if matrimony has its cares, celibacy has no pleasure. A Newton, or a mere scholar may find employment in study, a man of literary taste can receive in books a powerful auxiliary; but a man must have a bosom friend and children around him to cherish and support the dreariness of old age.—JOHN RANDOLPH.

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MU SIGMA RHO SOCIETY.

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"MONTHLY MUSINGS,"

Richmond College, Richmond, Va.

SOCIETY NOTES.

MU SIGMA RHO HALL, }
February 1, 1878. }

The Society was called to order by the President.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

Roll called. Minutes read and approved.

Chairman of the Executive Committee proposed the name of Mr. S. A. Fishburn, of Texas, who was elected an active member of the Society, and duly installed.

The Chaplain and Corresponding Secretary for the ensuing term were installed.

Reading by Mr. Geo. B. Taylor, Jr.

Reading of the Mu Sigma Rho Star by Mr. T. W. Haynes, Jr.

Declamation by Mr. J. A. Brown.

The question for debate, "Resolved, That the construction of a railroad down the Valley of the James River would be beneficial to Virginia," was discussed.

Affirmatively, by Messrs. J. J. Taylor, Hardaway, McCarthy, Haynes, Abbott, Steel and Tupper.

Negatively, by Messrs. Warren, W. T. Cheney, Coleman, Curry, Fleet, and Jenkins.

Question decided in favor of the negative.

Critic's Report.

Hon. S. S. Cox was elected an honorary member of the Society.

Reports of Censor and Sergeant-at-Arms.

Business transactions.

Adjournment.

PAUL Y. TUPPER, Critic.

MU SIGMA RHO HALL, }
February 8, 1878. }

The Society was called to order by the President, Mr. A. R. Long.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

Roll called.

Minutes read and approved.

Reading by Mr. C. L. Steele.

Declamation by Mr. J. W. Boyd.

The question, "Resolved, That the sexes should be co-educated," was then debated.

Affirmatively, by Messrs. Davis, Abbott, Taylor, Warren, Bagby, Cheney, and Martin.

Negatively, by Messrs. Haynes, Hubbard, Steele, Johnston, Boyd, and Riggan.

Question decided in favor of the negative.

Mr. W. G. Hix was elected a member of the Society.

After the usual routine business, the Society adjourned.
J. W. BOYD, Critic pro tem.

MU SIGMA RHO HALL, }
February 15th, 1878. }

The Society was called to order by the President.

Prayer by Mr. Martin.

Reading of Minutes by Recording Secretary.

Reading of Star by Mr. Haynes.

Reader Mr. Stanard.

Disclaimer Mr. Dickinson.

In addition to the four medals already offered by the Society for excellence in different departments, a Disclaimer's Medal was offered by Messrs. Bouldin, Pitt, Hubbard, Davis, Dickinson, Haynes, Fleet, Martin, May, Geo. B. Taylor, Jr., and accepted by the Society.

Debate on question: "Resolved, That extension of territory would be disadvantageous to the United States."

Debated, affirmatively, by Messrs. Pitt, Johnson, Martin, Bagby, Benton, Boyd, and W. T. Cheney.

Negatively, by Messrs. Davis, C. H. Jones, Hardaway, Loving, Fleet, and Fishburn.

Question decided in favor of affirmative.

Reports of Critic, Censor and Sergeant-at-Arms.

After transaction of private business, the Society adjourned.
TOM HAYNES, Critic pro tem.

MU SIGMA RHO HALL, }
February 22, 1878. }

The Society called to order by Vice-President Brown.
After the usual opening exercises, Reading by Mr. Geo. S. Snead.

Declaration by F. W. Cheney.

On motion, the time of Monthly Orator, W. O. Hardaway, was extended one week.

The Society adjourned to Philologian Hall to hear Report of Committee regarding College Reading Room. Report adopted.

Re-assembled in Mu Sigma Rho Hall. Vice-President Brown in the chair.

Business of joint session ratified.

Question for debate, "Resolved, That the 'Mu Sigma Rho Star' should be abolished and a medal given by the two Societies for the best article in the 'Monthly Musings' ", was discussed.

Affirmatively, Messrs. May, McCarthy, Riggan, Hubbard, Bouldin, Boyd, Hix, and Tupper.

Negatively, by Messrs. Mercer, Shott, Martin, Fleet, Hardaway, J. J. Taylor, and Fishburn.

Question decided in favor of negative.

J. B. Jenkins was elected to deliver the next Monthly Oration.

George Watson was elected Scribe, and J. W. Fleet Reader of the "Star".

Reports of various committees and officers.

Adjournment.

PAUL Y. TUPPER, Critic.

PHILOLOGIAN HALL, }
February 15th, 1878. }

The Society met at the usual hour, with President Catlett in the chair.

Usual preliminary exercises.

First Declaimer—V. r. Noland.

First Reader—Mr. T. J. Lawrence.

Classic Gem was read by Mr. Fleming, the Scribe.

Second Reader—Mr. Drewry.

Second Declaimer—Mr. Herndon.

DEBATE.—The question: "Resolved, 'Is Happiness a creature of the Imagination or a Reality,'" was discussed regularly on the affirmative by Messrs. Fleming, J. M. Garnett and Simms, and negatively by Messrs. Drewry, Fizer and Huff.

After regular debaters had finished, the discussion was continued by Messrs. Smith and Cutchins on the affirmative, and Messrs. Nance, Tucker, Davis, Holland, Oppenheimer, Brooks and Nettles on negative.

Question decided in favor of the negative.

Critic's Report.

Minutes read and approved.

After the regular business, the Society adjourned.

SOL. CUTCCHINS, Critic pro tem.

PHILOLOGIAN HALL, }
February 1st, 1878. }

The Philologian Society convened at the regular time. President Catlett in the chair.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

First Declaration by Mr. Fleming.

First Reader, Mr. Nettles.

Classic Gem read by Scribe.

Second Reader—Mr. McManaway.

The question: "Resolved, That there should be a qualification suffrage," was discussed by Messrs. Catlett, Brooks, Bidgood, Boldridge, Starke, Winfrey, Oppenheimer, Morris, Wright, Reamey, Tucker, and Cutchins.

W. T. DERIEUX, Critic.

PHILOLOGIAN HALL, }
February 8th, 1878. }

The Society was called to order by the President.

First Declaimer—Mr. Fizer.

First Reader—Mr. Morris.

Reading "Classic Gem."

Second Reader—Mr. McManaway.

Second Declaimer—Mr. J. M. Garnett.

The question: "Resolved, That Virginia do repudiate its debt," was discussed by Messrs. Cutchins, Decker, Davis, Derieux, Christian, Cone, Powers, Nance and Bayne.

W. T. DERIEUX, Critic.

PHILOLOGIAN HALL, }
February 22, 1878. }

At the regular hour the Society was called to order by the President.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

First Declaration by Mr. Smith.

First Reader—Mr. Jameson.

Classic Gem read by Scribe.

Second Reading by Mr. Fleming.

Second Declaration by Mr. Herndon.

The question: "Resolved, That Theatres are more beneficial than injurious," was discussed.

Affirmatively, by Messrs. Herndon, Holland, Jameson, Fleming, Cutchins, Sands, Morris, and Davis.

Negatively, by Messrs. Lawrence, Derieux, Winfree, Boldridge, Cone, Fizer, and Reamy.

Decided in favor of negative by a vote of 17 to 3.

After regular business the Society adjourned.

W. T. DERIEUX, Critic.

OUR FERRET.

Now students all, I'll try to tell

A story short and true,

'Tis of a "Ministerial"

Who'd put a brother through;

This brother he one day must take

A lassie blithe, but shy,

And ask'd his friend, for friendship's sake,

To make the solemn tie.

At last the bell sent forth its peal

While slowly closed the day.

As this poor "Ministerial"

Made ready for the fray,

He black'd one boot and then he thought,

"Now how shall I appear,

A new cravat 'tis true I bought,

But something else I'll wear."

He pac'd the floor, the bell struck five,

And now all in a flit,

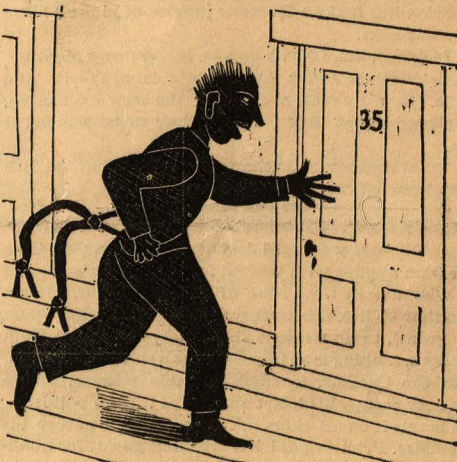
Threw ope his trunk, "If I'm alive!

I have not got a shirt;"



Then up he sprang and out he ran,

"Lend me a shirt!" he cried,



"A collar too!" yelled out R—,

"I must not keep the bride."

He got them both and back he flew,

Imagine his surprise,

When half way on he quickly knew

They were just half his size,

Now off they came, on went the old,
And down the street he flew,



To be pursued for goods he stole

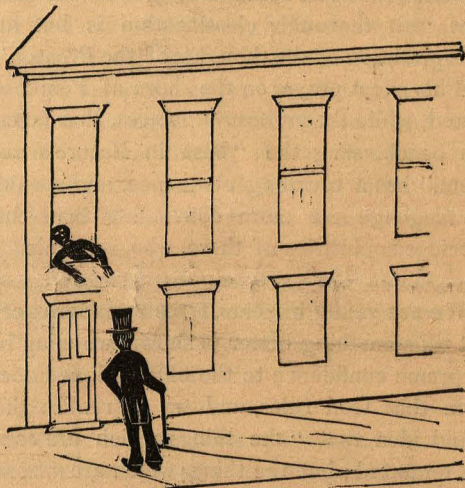
By one of Poe's brave crew.

The church is reach'd and there's the bride,

No preacher yet arrives,

When, lo! our friend is heard outside,

And, "Let me in!" he cries.



Now in he stalks, the house is pack'd,

The folks begin to jeer,

To see a man with one boot black'd,

And collar set so queer.

They held their sides and laughed outright,

As children oft at school,

But there he stood in such a plight

As born the scene to rule;

And now he says, "I will be shot

If folks aint too ill bred,

To sit and grin, and such as that,

At people when they're wed."

There is scarcely an evening now but what our Tower and Museum is visited by little squads of the fairer sex from the city. We are always delighted to see them, and Mr. L. C. Catlett, the accommodating, courteous and polite student, who has these in charge, never tires in acting the escort. We overheard a Miss say, "Oh! aint he nice." So say we. Welcome young ladies at any time. We hope the day is not far distant when a more suitable and accessible place will be set apart for the Museum. In fact, we can't understand why the house recently purchased, with an outlay of say \$300 or \$400, could not easily be made an excellent place. Throw all the lower floor into one room, remodel the outside, place an observatory on top, lay out an approach, and you can make it fireproof if desired. Oh, pshaw! wake up, Trustees, or delegate us at once.

"One of our pr ch rs was seen making his exit out of the back door of a Lager Beer Saloon and wiping his mouth on his handkerchief."—Ex. You didn't suppose he would use his beaver or coat tail, did you? That would have been the PARSON-ification of folly.

Not often have the editors of this paper been called upon to chronicle the marriage of a student of Richmond College. Now and then some (former student) alumnus, having won his way in the world, finds "it is not good for man to be alone," and ceases to be lonely, but rarely is it, that a student is found brave enough to embark upon the sea of matrimony in the very midst of the session, with examinations and recitations looming up before him like grim and frightful rocks. Such a one has at length been found, however, and Mr. CHARLES E. BARGLEBAUGH, of Rockingham county, Va., is the man. On the evening of February 12th, at 6:15 o'clock, he lead to the altar one of Richmond's fair daughters, Miss EMMA G. TYREE. The marriage ceremony was performed at Grace street Baptist church, by Rev. Dr. W. E. Hatcher, assisted by Rev. Dr. E. W. Warren, and Rev. G. W. Riggan. (See page 6th.)

The following gentlemen acted as ushers—M. B. Curry, P. Y. Tupper, R. H. Pitt, J. M. Simms, W. T. Derieux, R. L. Woodward. After the ceremony the happy pair took the train for Washington, to visit relatives of the groom. Long and useful lives to them both!

Scribner's Monthly for March is an exceedingly interesting number. Virginians particularly will appreciate the article entitled "Last Days of Edgar A. Poe," Virginia's poet, whose productions have excited the admiration of the literary world. "A trip to Central America," "An Earthquake Experience," and "Dresden China" are among the contributions. Scribner's is a magazine every lover of pleasant reading should subscribe for.

St. Nicholas for March is in its usual glowing colors. We sometimes just wish we owned a little one or two to have the pleasure of reading it to them, and see them enjoy the rich illustrations. Subscription price only \$3 per year. If you would please the young take it.

SCENE—SOUTHERN CAMPUS—TIME 10 P. M.

B—comes dashing across the green and meets John W—, of Albemarle.

JOHN—Hallo! what's up?

B—Run for your life man! And John's coat tail immediately set sail, and he skeedaddled.

When B— could pick himself up, he and the fellows went to look for John, but the "rat" went into a hole not yet discovered, and the surveyors estimated his strides next morning as super-human, and yet he thinks it strange the boys call him—Toodles!

Nothing can be more touching than each evening to see Civis, imagining himself Daniel Webster, following in the furrow of his plow, watching the squirming angle worm as he is disturbed, RE-ADJUST himself. FURROWS we know then is the time when he is making his per-year re-trench-ments.

A mass meeting was held to make arrangements for the "Jollification." Mr. Ashton Starke was elected President, the regular committees appointed, and from little scraps gathered, we are to have the biggest time imaginable.

"Conny" Sands' girl has kicked him, and "Conny" says when he left he don't understand why in the mischief she commenced singing

"And in parting leave behind us
Footprints in the Sands of time."

We give it up, "Con—"

Frank R— has a bad case. The other night he was heard to break upon the solemn midnight hour, exclaiming, "Deary, oh!"—and now he thinks he can crawlfish by asserting he was only calling his absent room-mate, Derieux. Frank, we know how it is.

Look sharp, Bro. Hatcher, the session ends in June, and you haven't many more evenings to strike dramatic attitudes with an uplifted croquet mallet, and exclaim, "Stand back there!" Alas, what is dissipation? Mind you, we don't object, but then you know—

Oh, indeed, 'tis sad to know
That Parson W., of Borneo,
Has gone and quite these scenes of teaching,
As we suppose to do his preaching?

T—, of —, was called upon to offer prayer, a few days since, and we may know what aided him when he said, "Oh, Lord! let us pass to logarithms." Examination day, too.

Our thanks are due Mr. E. D. Hotchkiss, C. and O. R. R. office, for sundry contributions of papers. Why don't you come out and see us? And also to Mr. Frank Osgood for an article. Send us another, old friend.

In the row over the way among the negroes, some nights nights since, one fellow was knocked down with an axe, and he proved that it was an axe'dent. Who says it was not?

"Oh, for a thousand tongues," chanted Prof. P.'s cow as she came across an empty barrel, in which had been packed SALT HERRINGS, just behind the Mess Hall.

"Is there a hell?" is taking the rounds of the Press. A great hall-ahbuloo about nothing. Where do you suppose all the editors finally emigrate to?

"The last number of the MUSINGS is the best ever printed."—Letter from Hugh C. Smith, its founder. Thank you, old boy.

Messrs. Cutchins, Garnett, Hardaway and Hooper, of the Law Class, have been licensed to practice. Oh, Law-dy!

What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world and invest it in Virginia State bonds, Bro. Massie?

"The Vassar girls object to continuing the present fashions, because they interfere with sliding down the banisters." Not room enough for Vassar-lating, we suppose.

The upper cottage has been Payne-fully Decker-ated. The Law Class has lost a jewel—its Garnett has gone.

PASS IT ALONG.

Harness-makers can collar most anything.—Detroit Free Press.

Yes, and can trace most anything.—Albany Argus.

Now, who will saddle this paragraph with another pun.—Hudson Republican.

They are very essential to the bridal engagement.—New York Graphic.

Now, halter-gather, let's tighten these reins.—Yonkers Gazette.

We are strapped, and can't buckle into this. We'll stirrup some one else, though, if possible.—Fulton Times.

Not a bit of it.—Camden Post.

Oh, check up on this.—Petulama Argus.

You'd cinche it.—San Rafael Herald.

Blanket it and let's recuperate.—San Jose Pioneer.

That's a hard tug. Give us another line.—San Jose Mercury.

We will hold back this time.—Napa Register.

We're treed! Snap your lines and let 'em run.—Red Bluff (Cal.) People's Cause.

Sureling-r as it may seem we are not whip-ped yet and don't hame to be. The subject is not exhausted by any manes. If you will only hitch in and be in-harnessed you can make some more puns.—Liberty (Mo.) Jewell.

We'll see that blind; that's no head-stall, our shafts serve a breeching to such slow coaches. Who's hors du combat now?

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D. KRUG.

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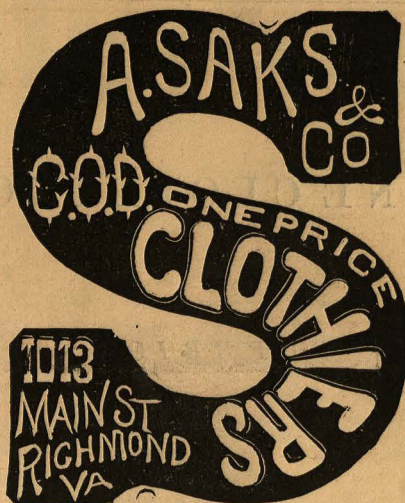
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