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NO. 9.

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Swearing.

The day had dawned both bright and fair,
But 'twas so warm it made men swear.
Men swear sometimes, I know not why,
Nor to explain it will I try.
But 'twill suffice just to declare,
The aforesaid men began to swear ;
And wish for storms to sway the trees,
And bring to all a cooling breeze.
They fanned themselves, their faces mopped,
They fanned again, and swore and stopped.
A storm-cloud came across the sky,
To kiss the earth so parched and dry ;
The lightning flashed, the thunder roared,
The clouds grew black, it rained, then poured.
The air grew cool, joy was complete ;
Men found relief from burning heat.
The clouds passed by, the sun grew warm,
Soon all forgot the thunder storm.
The day again grew bright and fair,
And men again began to swear.
And so it is in summer time,
Just as I've written in this rhyme ;
And then when winter's chilling breeze,
The hands and feet begin to freeze,
Men wish for summer's warmth of air,
And at the cold begin to swear.
They swear at heat, they swear at cold,
They swear when young, they swear when old ;
They swear when sick, they swear when well,
They swear at more than tongue can tell.
Some men swear with their latest breath,
And only cease to swear in death.
A useless habit 'tis to swear,
Young men, ere 'tis too late, beware.

Was Edgar Allan Poe a Madman?

(The following oration was delivered at the joint final celebration of the two literary societies by Mr. Curtis L. Laws, of Loudoun county, the final orator of the Philologian Society.)

Strange and contradictory must have been the character of a man who combined the gentleness, chastity, and sensitiveness of womanhood, the deep culture and intellectual grasp of the noblest manhood, and the chained spirit of a maddening, blaspheming passion, which possessed his soul and manifested itself in the lightning flashes of his eye, the muttered curses of his lips, and the weird, impassioned productions of his pen.

In earliest life the child of misfortune, in boyhood the subject of a haughty pride and shrinking sensitiveness, in manhood the being in whom dwelt the two antagonistic spirits, the angel of light and the demon of darkness, each striving for complete mastery, in death the subject of deep, almost impenetrable mystery, the veil of calumny has heavily and darkly clouded the memory of that magnificent genius who alone among American poets is counted worthy to be ranked in that "illustrious procession of bards from Chaucer to Tennyson," which are the world's admiration and wonder.

The offspring of a romantic marriage, contracted between a law student of good family but dissolute character, and an English stage actress, would naturally have been blessed with no rich heritage.

When Edgar was only two years of age his mother died, while filling an engagement at the Richmond theatre, and three weeks later his father was a victim of the fire which consumed the same theatre, thus leaving the lad to the tender mercies of the world.

Adopted by a gentleman of wealth and culture, he was reared in refine-

ment and luxury. In earliest life he evidenced those traits which afterwards became his strongest characteristics—haughty pride, painful sensitiveness, deep introspection, and mournful melancholy.

After a brief, but *eventful* and *honorable* course at the University of Virginia, he returned to Richmond, and to his surprise found that his heavy gambling debts had greatly displeased his foster father, Mr. Allan. The haughty spirit of the young poet rebelled when he was chided for his course. Thus began the difficulties between them which led finally to an estrangement which was consummated when an heir was born to Mr. Allan, which disinherited the young poet, who had been reared as heir-prospective to the vast estate.

Peculiarly incapacitated to battle for a livelihood, and thus doomed to a life of poverty, which with him was synonymous with a life of disgrace, we find him in his young manhood beginning that unequal conflict with the powers of darkness, which seem to have been incorporated in his very being—the tenderness and gentleness of his nature giving place more and more frequently to that maddening, agonizing passion which in after years so lashed him into fury as to give occasion for the inquiry we are pursuing, and which so bound him with iron bands as to have rendered him that stately raven's

"Unhappy master whom unmerciful disaster
Followed fast and followed faster, 'till his
songs one burden bore,
'Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy
burden bore
Of never—never more."

Was Edgar Allan Poe a madman?

It seems to me that the contradictory phases of his life and character can be explained upon no other hypothesis. Again, there can be no possible doubt

that all great literary men have left in their productions deep and lasting traces of their personal character and idiosyncrasies.

In prose or poetry, strange, weird, impassioned or highly imaginative, not imitative in its character or the result of historical research, but issuing from one's inmost soul, no man can go beyond or outpass the limits of his subjective experience. What in dreams, deep reverery, or hallucination his soul has experienced as a living, vital experience, that becomes, when embodied in appropriate words, the poetry or prose which thrills the world with admiration. What a man does not experience that he cannot relate; what he relates in a manner which will thrill others, that he must have experienced.

The most trustworthy account of the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of a man's mental and moral predisposition can be traced slowly but surely by a careful analytical study of the literary works which proceed from his pen during periods of his literary career. We need not the biographer to tell us of the mocking, dissolute devil which reigned supreme in the misanthropic Byron; we have his autobiography delicately enshrined in the products of his masterly pen. We need not the combined testimony of biographers and historians and the combined criticisms of sages and philosophers reverberating "down the corridors of time" to convince us of the gentleness, purity, and holiness of that Man who spake as man never spake before. We read his life in the words he spoke.

After so long a diversion let us apply the principles we have established in the inquiry we are pursuing. I suppose all are more or less acquainted with the prose and poetic works of Edgar Allan Poe. His life and writings stand before the world, not only intimately connected, each suggesting the other, but inseparable in the minds of those who have studied them together.

His poetry, the outgrowth of his deep and agonizing introspection, the index of the disquietude of his soul, is thrilling yet sad and mournful in its melancholy as its sweet, alliterative strains fall upon our ear. "His rhythm is exquisite; his phraseology is in the highest degree musical," but his thought is always sad and sombre.

He was a master in prose composition. These stories are characterized not alone by deep melancholy, but by weird, ghostly, frightful conceptions, traced in the most fantastic character. However much one may strive against it, his weird prose creations will inevitably lead us "through perplexing mazes of the impossibly beautiful to perplexing conclusions of the impossible," and though at first you realize that the realm you are about to visit lies in the dim and distant inconceivable and impossible, yet by his subtle, rapid and logical progression you are intoxicated like the opium-eater, transferred to the regions of the Haunted Palace, where you see like

"The travelers now within that valley,
Through the red-curtain windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While like a ghostly vapid, rapid river
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more."

Transferred even against your will into the presence of the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady "Madaline of the House of Usher," you stand in agonizing fear gazing upon her blood-stained robes, her emaciated frame, her blazing eyes, listening to her low, moaning cry of anguish; you can conceive how her brother became the victim of his terror, and was borne into the realms of the eternal as the disentombed clung to him in her violent death agonies, and like the dreamer you would flee from that mansion aghast, and would rejoice when, with the long, tumultuous shouting, like the voice of a thousand waters,

the deep and dank tarn at your feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "House of Usher."

A close study of the life and works of Edgar Allan Poe in the light of literary criticism upon the rationale of poetic and prose composition, has convinced me that this mysterious man, in composing his beautiful, weird poems and his mysterious, ghostly stories, did but incorporate in writing, not the results of his poetic fancy, which increased with his literary culture, but the images, visions, and phantasms which appeared to him as living realities, and which clung to him with such pertinacity as to render his solitude a hell, and which at the same time increased his antipathy to the social world.

This, my friends, I believe to be the most reasonable explanation of the conceptions which resulted in such stories as "The Black Cat," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Imp of the Perverse," and such poems as "The Raven," and "The Haunted Palace."

To this hypothesis the following objection may be urged: It is by no means necessary for a man to be mad to paint the ravings of a madman, nor is it necessary for a man to be mad to record the feelings of a madman. Shakespeare and Nathaniel Hawthorne are said to have been men who could "grasp the two hemispheres of the human mind, the sane and the insane, and hold them perfectly reconciled in their gentle yet inspiring and almost divine insight." Shakespeare and Hawthorne had that genius which some one has described as being accompanied by "a tremulous, constantly readjusted and infinitely delicate sensitiveness which is simply the perfect period of health;" whereas the genius of Poe was accompanied by a sensitiveness which was so morbid in its character, and so destructive in its consequences, that every acute observer could see that it was certainly the index, and probably was the cause, of some brain disorder.

Shakespeare and Hawthorne, though both of them felt deeply, undoubtedly studied madness with a view of painting it, and painted it because it was necessary for completing their plot, or for the development of their themes; and each of them acquired greater strength and grasp of mind by reason of these mental efforts.

There exists no credible evidence that Poe ever made madness a study, save by deep introspection. He wrote not poetry and prose with an occasional allusion to the maniac, but underlying his beautiful figures and his exquisite rhythm we find, with a few notable exceptions, always and every where throughout his fictitious works, the dreams, visions, phantasms, and experiences of the maniac; and, unlike Shakespeare and Hawthorne, the more he thus bent his efforts the weaker grew his intellectual grasp and physical health, for his genius, in manifesting itself, was like a destructive fire, and for several years prior to his death he very clearly evidenced growing mental decrepitude.

Some have written from the experience of others, but he breathes out the tumult of his own soul. He has ever been regarded as a poet of magnificent genius, "a passionate worshipper of the ideally beautiful," and led by this raving passion he loves to adventure into what in one of his poems he calls

"A wild, weird clime,
Out of space, out of time,"

and then he experienced the convulsions of his soul.

He wrote of these realms and these scenes because he continually dwelt in them, and in the moments when his mind was clear and lucid, and there was no longer for him a "demon in the sky," he could graphically paint the hideousness and horror of the dark valleys through which he had traveled and the terrors which had come to his soul as he wrestled with the powers of dark-

ness, and then he could lay aside his pen, and with clear consciousness of his mental state, could say, as once he said, "My very soul has become a ruin;" and then, as he would begin to look with deep sadness and melancholy at his lost and undone condition, as deeper and deeper would become introspection—darker and darker would his mind become—'till the demon in him conquered, and then, with flashing eyes and the most appalling blasphemy, he would battle with the curse 'till his physical strength was gone, and then in a trance would he again renew the experience, which later we received; made less hideous by their gorgeous drapery.

Such, to my mind, is the most reasonable explanation of the much-debated question as to Edgar Allan Poe's inspiration; and, my friends, this is thoroughly in keeping with scientific explanations as to the character of madness, both as to its origin and progress, and is the ground-work upon which the most astute literary criticism establishes its fundamental canon—that in grand poetic conceptions the human mind is in an abnormal state, brought hither either by psychological or physiological causes.

I have endeavored to show that the most plausible way for accounting for the conceptions that resulted in his finished literary productions is, to accept the very reasonable hypothesis that they were but revelations of his subjective experience. If we accept such as the explanation, our inquiry has not been in vain, for this will enable us to reverse the order of inquiry by hypothesizing his *madness* as an explanation for the contradictory phases of his life and character. Grant his mental disorder—that his mind was delicately poised; that it took but an idea and a moment to disturb its equilibrium—now sufficiently strong to grapple successfully with the abstruse philosophy of life, now the prey of distorted fancy, and now the victim of Satan and satanic influences, and you have taken a long stride

towards establishing a true philosophy of his character, and of reconciling the testimony of his various biographers, some of whom have made him little less than a saint, and others who have left his name to posterity as synonymous with all that is wicked and diabolical.

Grant that his mind was a complexity, its various elements not always under the control of his will because of his peculiar construction, but that in his nature gentleness, tenderness, sensitiveness, pride, haughtiness, ambition, vanity, passion, and Satan, each, or various combinations of these in their order, reigned supreme, and in this interesting fact we have the explanation of how various people regarded him with various opinions; of how one dear, good old woman would call him her "darling Eddie;" of how her cheeks would flush and her bosom swell with indignation when one dared to criticise his life or character; another woman who loved him with all the passion of her life, and yet who feared him and dreaded to be in his presence; and yet another who loved him with all the tenderness of her nature, and who clung to him in sickness, in poverty, in drunkenness, and even sometimes in unkindness, and yet she never saw in him a fault, for some how she knew the space she filled in his wretched heart, and she knew that when she was gone to dwell in fairer worlds on high, that out of his broken heart would come the sweetly solemn refrain:

"A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee,
So that her high-born kinsmen came,
And bore her away from me."

How another, an intellectual giant, could consider his mind the keenest and clearest for literary criticism that America has produced; and how another claimed that there was no original power in him, but that he was a bold plagiarist; and finally, how a vast throng should consider him a devil incarnate, and a happy riddance to the world when he was gone.

My friends, all of these criticisms, however antagonistic they may be, have truth, and much truth, in them. They show different sides of the man—different phases of his character. I would not for a moment claim that Mr. Poe should be classed with the raving maniac of our mad-houses; yet, nevertheless, I believe that his literary works and his personal conduct clearly and conclusively prove mental disorder. In his brain was a “rift of ruin” at its very start. His mental and moral proclivities, his uncontrolled passions, and the brain disorders which resulted from inebriation, together led him to the very line which divides the sane from the insane; and who could doubt that he had passed over the line, when upon various occasions, as Dr. Griswold has told us, “he would walk the streets in madness and melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayer for the happiness of those he loved; sometimes with glances introverted to a heart knawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, he would brave the wildest storms” during all the night.

We claim that he was mad, because the very essence of madness lay in losing control of ourselves. When the intelligence which God gave man to guide him no longer exercises its function, but is subordinated in directing power to dreams, phantasms, and hallu-

cinations, which occur in conscious, semi-conscious, or unconscious states then the mind is in an abnormal state, and to brand the man as a madman is no injustice to him, but will cover a multitude of sins.

Edgar Allan Poe's last poem is an epitome of the history of his woe and sorrow. In sorrow and in sadness he visits for the last time the tomb of his loved and lost. He stopped at the door of the tomb and asked, “what is written, sweet sister, on the door of this legendary tomb”? His soul answers, “Ulalume, Ulalume! 'tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume.” This was the last visit of his tortured soul to the tomb of his *lost Lenore*—his beautiful Annabel Lee and his dear departed Ulalume.

In memory of Edgar Allan Poe let no harsh words be breathed. Honor his memory for his magnificent genius; pity his sad, sad condition, and *listen, a warning*—take heed.

Magnificent genius, but a life wasted—a soul in the hands of an angry God.

And now let us say with the poet Stoddard:

“He might have soared in the morning light,
But he built his nest with the birds of night;
But he lies in dust, and the stone is rolled
Over his sepulchre dim and cold
He has cancelled all he has done or said,
And gone to the dear and holy dead;
Let us forget the path he trod,
And leave him now with his Maker, God.”

C. L. LAWS.

Dignity of Labor.

[Oration delivered by R. LYLE MOTLEY, of Mu Sigma Rho Society, at joint celebration of the Literary Societies, June 7th, 1889.]

Mr. President,—Labor is the great law of God's universe, and ever since man first transgressed the Divine law, the decree has gone forth, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou earn bread till thou return unto the ground.” This

is the lesson that our fathers learned, and the one that we must learn, and by which our lives must be governed if we are to be useful and true to our trust, for

“God hath set
Labor and rest as day and night to men,
Successive.”

So, as night follows day, rest follows

labor; and as night is calm and restful after the day has passed with all its duties and responsibilities, so rest is sweet at the close of duty well performed. For to those who labor there is rest, but to those who labor not even the hours of rest are a burden. And no man of character can be content to spend his days in idleness, for idle hands seek mischief, and an idle mind leads to weakness and vice.

By labor we do not mean physical labor merely, but mental labor as well. Yet, there is an accepted meaning of the word labor, by which many are misled and made to regard labor as confined strictly to the rougher and more menial services; and thus we find people the world over who shrink from any work that will soil their hands or stain garments, lest they be classed as laborers, forgetting that he is a harder laborer and a greater slave who is confined to his counting-room, or who pores over Latin lexicons, or wanders through the realms of infinitesimal calculus from early morning till the midnight hour.

It is wonderful, yet true, that a great majority of the laboring world are dissatisfied with their positions in life, and are continually wasting opportunities for much usefulness while seeking positions of ease, seemingly ignorant of the fact that no position can secure peace to a discontented mind; for luxury and abundance, in themselves, do not bring health and happiness. Therefore, every one should find that position for which he is best adapted, and that work which he can perform with most credit to himself, and which will result in the greatest good to others, and therewith be content.

A legitimate business is honorable, whether it requires us to toil at the plow or indite the mandates of a king. But, alas! ambition too often asserts itself, and reigns with such unbounded sway in the heart of man that he longs

to leave the so-called lowly walks of life and soars aloft to gilded pinnacles of fame, and, alas! too often, by this indomitable greed for worldly honors, many a promising youth has fallen never to rise again.

Ah! could we learn that sweet, ennobling lesson that contentment with honest effort, be the result ever so small, is the ideal of perfect success in life, we would succeed often where we now fail. Who should labor? Only those who are compelled to toil day by day to keep the wolf from the door? Nay, but every one should feel it his privilege, if not his duty, to do something for the improvement of self and the advancement of mankind at large. But many lose sight of the claims that the world has upon them, and take as their motto *dum vivimus, vivamus*, which means that it is their aim to seize everything that falls in their way, and make it subservient to their purposes in life, even at the expense of the failures and sorrows of others.

They that labor honestly according to their opportunities lack no real comforts of life, nor those means that will enable them to aid the furtherance of many a worthy cause. Therefore, we should consider that there is something for us to do—something that we can do, and something that we ought to do—and not be ashamed to let the world know that we are willing to do honest work for which our talents fit us, and to which we are directed by the hand of Providence. But, alas! some are not willing to labor when they have every means for doing so successfully, and even many of those who are willing to labor at all would fall into positions of ease that will get for them a name among men.

Labor is honorable, and has for its end that which is greatly to be admired and sought after by all regardless of the circumstances with which they may be surrounded. For could the omnipotent Creator have conceived such wonderful

means for usefulness as those with which he has surrounded us, had he not designed that we find that place in which we can make ourselves most useful, and there do with our might what our hands may find to do, whether it be our choice or not?

Still, many would leave the plain and simple walks of life and soar aloft to fancied heights of fame, and wave the sceptre of authority over the whole universe, when they are not fully capable of governing themselves.

Such men need to crush out that indomitable ambition, and fold their penguin-like wings, and walk the humble way of those who consider the highest walks of life to be those that are fraught with fewest temptations and less of vice, and who consider it a privilege to do honest work for their Master and their fellow-man.

We read the law of labor in the physical world. The great central body round which the planets revolve, by which they are held in their orbits, and from which they all receive light and heat, does not hang in idleness a wonder to the universe, but seemingly feels it no condescension to perform its daily labor *pari passu* with the other bodies of far less dignity and prominence.

The earth is ever making her revolutions upon her burning axis, and, going on and on in her course, brings day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest.

Geological formations are going on continually in the earth, rendering it habitable and suited to the needs of every creature of creation. Ocean and continent ever changing places; hill becoming valley and valley hill; floods wearing away the rock, and in their general sweep brings from mountain and hillside rich supplies of vegetable and mineral matter, to be deposited in the plains below. The countless streams are ever and anon gently flowing to the great sea; ocean and river are ever in motion in their ebb and flow; and the

stars, their silent vigil keeping, give us light from their far-off mystic home.

The tide of the lonely ocean unceasingly ebbs and flows, flows and ebbs, and we are filled with wonder and admiration as we behold wave after wave drift upon the shore, and break into white spray at our feet. We wonder that those dimpled waves are content with chasing one another over the briny deep, and playing with the pearly sands along the shore. Yet day by day they toil on in the faithful performance of the duty assigned them, and thus call upon us to consider whether we should shrink from duty, be it ever so humble or tedious a work.

The leaf, never idle, drinks in the poisonous gas of the atmosphere, and gives off the life-supporting element to every living being; and each tiny blade of grass seems clamorous for its share of work and usefulness in its humble sphere.

The small, unsightly polyp, deep down among the pebbled sands of old ocean, lays firm the foundation of the matchless coral reef upon which navies are stranded and mighty nations spring up. It is not an exalted labor, but a work of necessity, and a work of honor.

Creation is continually going on around us, and we may say with Bryant:

"My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle which still goes on
In silence round me—the perpetual work
Of Thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever."

These physiological truths, taken with the Divine law, all teach us that we should work—that we should "learn to labor and to wait" the good results that follow. Honest labor has its rich reward; for as no father commands his child to labor without a promise of success, neither does the Divine Creator require us to toil without an assurance of reward. But, after all, it is not so much the labor that we dread, but the

department in which we have to labor. The young man starting out in life, as he stands at the threshold of his career, asks himself, "In what department shall I labor? I am ambitious, and I want a wreath of worldly glory entwined around my brow." One says, "I do not want to till the soil. My greatest ambition is to get behind the counter of some city store, and then I shall realize all my cherished hopes." Another says, "I do not like to labor at the anvil or the lathe, but my greatest desire is to wonder through the realms of metaphysics and philosophy, and fill positions of distinction that will excite the praise and admiration of the world, and then I will have realized the full purpose for which I was created." Alas! alas! the many failures attendant upon these glorious expectations.

But we would not discourage one from the so-called higher walks of life, for we recognize that the fearless, patriotic statesman even must stand at the helm of the old ship of state, and yet there is other work to be done; the sails to be unfurled, and the anchors dropped at the proper time.

Among young men especially, there seems to be a shrinking from the culti-

vation of the soil, and also from the mechanical pursuits, engendered by the false idea that there is something humiliating in such labor. This is all wrong, in principle and in fact.

And now, my friends, and especially my fellow-students, let me beg that you pause and consider the honor and dignity of labor.

Who have been the greatest men of all ages? They are those who won their laurels and honors by hard and persistent toil. Some were farmers, some mechanics. Prominent among that splendid galaxy of names appear those of Fulton, Franklin, Newton, and others, who will live forever upon the pages of history. In the language of another: "Sons of the South, awake! throw away false pride. Walk through the fields already smiling to greet your coming. Drive your teams afield; sing merrily along; the furrows; turn up the stubborn glebe, and generous harvest will crown your store with plenty." For—

"On active worth the laurel war bestows;
Peace rears her olive for industrious brows;
Nor earth uncultured, yields its kind supplies;
Nor heaven its showers without a sacrifice."

In a Buggy.

"Schwisst Gelangue!" These euphonious words, selected from the horse dialect, were spoken one June morning not many moons ago to a lithesome sorrel in a top buggy; and when they penetrated her cranium, she, taking in their full meaning, moved off, and as she did so, so started the journey I'm about to narrate; but as we move off let me take this occasion to make an inventory of what that buggy contained: First, there were two young men, my brother and I, frantically waving our handkerchiefs, which wafted back sad farewells

to the girls we left behind us; then, underneath the seat there was a satchel containing articles necessary to adornment and cleanliness; then a camera, a tripod, a plentiful supply of sensitive plates, and a ruby lantern, with which appurtenances we hoped to take impressions of those scenes that in anyway might lend a charm to our journey, and call back in after years, more vividly than fickle memory, those places in which we had roamed; and lastly, a rifle. This instrument, however, very peacefully reposed almost during the en-

tire trip, for we had no occasion to keep robbers or tramps at bay, and game was exceedingly scarce along our route. This completed our traps, and now, our last farewell having been borne back o'er the breezes, our handkerchiefs being quietly pocketed, we, the horse, buggy, camera, and all, meditatively jogged down the long pike road.

One hundred and twenty miles of our present road lay through that prettiest of all valleys, the famous Valley of Virginia. All the way through this garden spot of the Old Dominion we feasted our eyes on luxuriant foliage, beautiful silvery streams, and well-kept farms, and then, as it were, to clothe all these in dearer charms, nearly every knoll and nearly every house had enwreathed about it saddest recollections of the civil war. Here had our noble Lee marched back and forth to victory and defeat. Here had Sheridan ridden with his devastating forces, burning fences and barns, and leaving behind him and on all sides the horrid traces of war! But now how different it all looked as we rode on!

Not pursuing or pursued, not with the slow tread of infantry or the rush of cavalry, but quietly trotting along in our easy buggy, and eagerly drinking in the beautiful landscapes that nestled beside the winding Shenandoah, the very river smiling at the thought of having its bed in such a valley, and even the cattle, sleek and fat, roaming about in the rich pastures, seemed to ruminate with pride upon the reflection that this was their home! What a calm and peaceful picture do we look upon here in contrast to the terrors and ragings of grim-visaged war! Fine old homesteads stand guard over the long lines of well-kept fences, and instead of armies standing out yonder in those fields, there stands luxuriantly the golden grain inviting the harvester to come and slay him; but I shall not attempt a description of this Valley, for verily, I believe, no less than an Irving's pen

could do justice to it. Where is that man to be found who does not think that the flowers are more beautiful, the foliage more brilliant, and the rivers more sparkling in his native land than in all else besides? I know him not, and I am no exception.

On or about the third day, at noon, we halted in the historic village of New Market for our usual rest and meal. Outside the dining-hall some little boys were beating a tattoo on the porch, and we being then surrounded by reminders of the late unpleasantness, were just in a mood for summoning up our imagination; this, we fancied, is the call to arms, and down the streets come the armed Confederates; here they go by, shouting and waving their ensigns, ecstatic over victory; the Yankees are fleeing down the pike road; b-oo-m is heard from our brave men's cannon as they are leveled at the fleeing forces (this boom was caused by the little boy falling off the steps outside), and now for awhile all is silent, save the weeping of distressed mothers over their lost braves, exulting tears of victory mingled with sadness, and the sobs growing more and more distinct as the soldiers return from their pursuit; the door is burst open, and in rushes the little fellow (who fell off the steps) into his mother's arms, and our illusions were dispelled, and quietly we finished our meal. We went out in the afternoon to stroll over the battle-field; we were pointed out the positions of the opposing forces, but especially did we linger on that spot where stood our heroic cadets of the V. M. I. during this encounter, and on account of whom that old saying, "we have robbed the cradle for our men," so aptly suggests itself when we reflect upon the extreme youth of some of these young fellows, who risked their lives for their country right here upon these fields. Stopping solemnly, and adjusting our camera for the first time since we left home, we caught a view of this famous field, and then

slowly repacking we struck tent, and reluctantly withdrawing from the grounds, moved on to Winchester.

We spent a very pleasant time in this old town, but as my space will not permit me to describe it, we will drive on, and so upon a certain Wednesday afternoon we might have been seen moving along the road between Winchester and Martinsburg, and the sun fast declining behind the rugged Alleghanies, we were forcibly struck by the following sign, not so much with the script as the meaning it conveyed to us—ENTeRtanEmiNt hEre—and pulling up under this board, we, with the landlord's assistance, unharnessed and unpacked. When we came to the case that contained our camera, great curiosity was manifested by the villagers, who had collected around, as to what the box contained. When it had been taken into the house and we had all finished our supper, many young fellows picked it up, felt it, tapped it, and turned it over and over, when my brother asked me in an audible undertone if I thought there was any danger of the dynamite going off in the box. I expressed some uneasiness. The whole crowd immediately dispersed in a rather reckless manner out of the door, and left us with a smile creeping over our faces as we crept into bed. We were well repaid, however, next morning for our little joke on the previous evening, for no one was willing to help us get ready to start, and so, my brother, very gently depositing the strange box under the seat, we drove on, a mystery to the inhabitants of Bunker Hill, who stood eyeing us out of sight.

We were now pressing under foot the soil of West Virginia, and having left some miles back the rather rolling land of the Valley, our progress was a little checked as we tugged up and down these hills; nevertheless, our steed, made of true metal, and like that noblest of all beasts, trotted on without a murmur. Soon we caught a glimpse of Martinsburg, and a more beautiful

view of the town cannot be obtained than that which one gets as he comes up the Winchester pike. This view may grow dimmer in memory, but the retaining power of our sensitive plate still presents it to my eyes without a blur. A fine subject for any artist's pen does it make, with its neat yards scattered throughout the town, and the thick foliage of the trees sprinkled profusely about, whilst here and there some church spire shooting towards the skies, stands solemnly like some grim sentinel watching over all beneath. Our stay here was just long enough to pen upon the back of a postal, directed home, the graphic symbols O. K., which letters we hoped sufficiently anæsthetic in character to quiet all uneasiness, if there was any concerning us, and let the family know that we were still living and still moving. (However, a postal from home a few days later forcibly convinced me that there is very little satisfaction to be gotten from those two letters, and so I have henceforth discarded them from my mind.)

Still moving, did I say? Yes, we were certainly moving on; for now a beautiful field and now a forest passes by, and now a picturesque old mill, taking advantage of these gurgling mountain streams, appears in sight, and then, plunging into another woods, behold! we have come upon the banks of a mighty stream. The Potomac is about a quarter of a mile wide here. On the opposite bluffs is the little town of Williamsport, Md., sleeping in the shade of its leafy bowers, and the ferryman, for whom we were waiting, with his two daughters and his dog upon his raft, had just reached the centre of the river, when we pulled the cap off of the camera and caught the entire picture. Little did these people know that they were in the range of our lens, and so it was that we caught them, not laboring under the consciousness of "sitting for a picture," but in those more graceful attitudes in which nature was wont to

place them, thereby lending to the scene greater charms than any artist could devise. When the ferryman arrived we had much difficulty in making our horse understand that a ferry boat was a harmless piece of machinery, for she had been brought up in the mountains, and was not accustomed to such contraptions. We begged and entreated her; we offered her all kinds of inducements, for it now began to appear that our trip was very unexpectedly brought to a sudden termination, when finally she consented to go aboard, and we dined that day in the State of Maryland.

Yes; we have come through the Valley and a corner of West Virginia, and are now peeping into Maryland, and although we feel rather far from home, yet we are not far, for a few hours' ride behind the iron horse would land us right where we started from four or five days ago. Still, the impression is so strong upon us that we look about us with curiosity at the people, expecting to find something different in men, manners, or customs, but we see no change. People here do just like they do almost everywhere in our country. We are not out of the Confederacy yet, even with all our traveling, and we feel a conjoining of fellowship with our friends and allies. As we passed by a group of men on our way out of town, in a mirthful conversation, I heard one of them say something about "that time we laid around Richmond in '63," and we felt at home immediately, for those times between '61 and '65 are sometimes discussed in Virginia.

Quietly driving along a few miles out of Williamsport, our attention was for an instant drawn to a house a short distance ahead. There was nothing peculiar about the house, except that it set very close to the road, and our former experiences made us instinctively feel for our pocket-books; our horse pricked up her ears also, as she recognized a

long pole dangling in mid-air over the pole opposite the house. It needed no one to tell us that we would soon be stopped, and our pocket-books made to show themselves; and whilst we sat reflecting upon these gloomy thoughts, before we were aware our horse suddenly halted, a man stepped up to the side of the buggy, out flew our pocket-books, and we—paid the toll-fee. Are toll-gates a benefit to the morals of the traveling public? Are they not a promoter of wrath? Assuredly we have been sorely vexed every five miles since we started by these lovely edifices. Sometimes, perhaps, we would be expatiating upon a beautiful landscape or a fine field of grain; another time, perhaps, we would be just in the middle of some exquisite stanza, brought on by the scenery around us, when, lo! upon turning a bend in the road a damper would be thrown upon our ejaculations; we would grow melancholy and subdued; and what would cause all this? Nothing more or less than a toll-gate. It wouldn't be so bad if it didn't seem that they were always mending the roads and never getting them done; and such, I believe, so far as my experience goes, is the case. Well, having paid our respects to the above-mentioned officer and inquired of the same the way and distance to Hagerstown, for we were loth to linger here, we moved on in that direction.

We did not intend to stop here, but after arriving in the city some procession in honor of somebody or something was parading up the street, and we, like patriots, joined in. We learned from some of the worthy citizens that Hagerstown was *the* town in the State; shat here they had the best brass band in the State (this was shouted to me above the turmoil of about a dozen bellying brass horns); here they made the best fertilizers (I judged so from the smell); here they turned out the finest almanacs. Everybody was overflowing with patriotism. "Letch all

hands (hic) open keg nails," shouted one boozy parader. We politely declined, and the day fast closing, hurried on to rest our weary bones for a day or two

before proceeding further, under the hospitable roof of an old school-friend's in Leitersburg.

Valedictory.

[Delivered by JOSEPH WHITEHEAD, 1888-9.]

Ladies and Gentlemen,—It hasn't fallen my lot to-night to give you any demonstrations of the instruction of the muses. Neither does it come under my province to roam the heavens nor to wander through the fields of romance. There is no time here for such travels as these. The orators for this occasion must have taken trips to the country for the purpose of preparing their orations; for when yonder bell tolls there is no time for flights of imagination, nor for the cultivation of the æsthetic. It means plain facts, except in one class, particularly, we have a few jokes, and in another a good many tricks. But while we have no time at early morn to commune with the muses or the fairies, still at dewy eve some of us seek the inspiration of our "fairy fays." But day after day many of us tug over such things as Bain's theory of conscience, or try to understand how the asymptotes of an hyperbola meet at infinity, with only the very occasional disturbance of an invitation for a "set up" at "The Madam's." Invitations of this kind, though, are not frequent enough to fatigue us in complying with them, nor are they of such a character as to require a very long suspension of our routine work; for a lemonade is all we get. So you can see how the expectation of living here, and living as we do, always would, indeed, be a prospect of overwhelming despair; yet, on the other hand, the realization of the fact that we must leave, some of us, perhaps, forever, is almost as insupportable. To hunt

for Greek and Latin roots is a very uninviting pleasure. And it's a very bad thing to lose your degree by failing on a single class. It's a sad thing to continually *harass* the chairman of the Faculty by playing on the campus during class-hours. Sad, sad indeed, to see a fellow-student ruin his health and break down his constitution by a year's reckless dissipation, and leave college, it may be with his degree, a complete wreck. But sad, sadder still, is it to be sensible to that thrill of melancholy bursting through the unbroken barriers of the soul, which he alone can experience whose lot it is to bid farewell to this galaxy of grace and beauty, and to all those who have endeared themselves to us. No more shall many of us hear those instructive and eloquent discourses upon the cultivated Greek. No more shall we listen to those profound lectures on Metaphysics, nor see the sun, moon, and stars glittering on this rostrum from their canvass-heavens. No more shall we sit entranced in the Greek and Latin lecture-rooms listening to the sound of the pony's hoof growing fainter and fainter as he speeds over the retreating ground. No more shall we hear those familiar sounds "*Vous monsieur*," "*Das ist alles*;" nor that familiar old hexameter, "*naturam si furca ex pellas, tamen usque recurret*." For, alas! the college days of many of us have come to a close, and young manhood finds us to-night "standing with reluctant feet" where the theoretical and the practical life meet. We

our world is not finished
we have heard - The Richmond
which is come to be held -

have wandered through the theoretical with many a care, but never a pain; living a dreamy but not much of a holiday existence. But all the while this theoretical life has been widening and deepening, until now we are standing just where it merges into the deep and busily-flowing river of real, practical life. And as we gaze out to-night upon its surface, placid as it may seem, little do we dream of the unpropitious winds which it may be our lot to encounter, or of the angry storms against whose billows our little barks may be dashed. Still we ought to be proud that our careers shall have their commencement in an age so pregnant with future possibilities, where there is so much for which to live, to labor, and to wait. We ought to rejoice that our infant eyes first saw light just when our whole country was in mourning for her noble dead, and was in her lowest stage of poverty on account of her shattered fortunes; for now it is allowed each one of us to be numbered among the thousands of young men to heal that still open wound and to raise our Union to the highest position on earth. This is our glorious privilege and our sacred duty. America is but another name for opportunity.

Never in all the annals of history has there been an era in which more stimulating influences were urged forward, or richer rewards awaited the faithful toiler. And while all of us will undoubtedly enlist under the great American standard, still we have the privilege of choosing where we shall cast our lots. Some of us may decide with the Northerner, some may settle on the snow-capped mountains of California, some on the wild prairies of the West, but, as for me, give me the old, "Sunny South." It is true that she may never be as rich or as prosperous as the North or West, still I cannot help but predict that her skies will ever be the brightest and her daughters the loveliest. Now, my fellow-students, many of us are standing on the very threshold of a new

life, looking out into the world's arena filled with contestants. Some of us anxious, still undecided as to what stand we shall take or what course we shall pursue. Mankind is longing and waiting for our help. And as we are on the very eve of severing the various ties which have long bound us together, and realizing that life with its opportunities is given us to live but once; that the hopes and expectations of our fathers are centered in us, and realizing that the destiny of our nation will soon be placed in the hands of her young men, let us be worthy of whatever trust may be committed to our charge, and with the object of life ever before us, let us by "thinking most, feeling noblest, and acting best make life, death, and that vast forever one grand, sweet song."

X But now you priceless gems of Richmond on the James, what *can* I say to you? The time has come, you know, for us to tear ourselves away. And oh! how hard it goes with all of us.

It is true that we shall find a superfluity of the fair sex in our respective towns and neighborhoods, but not such as some of whom Richmond can proudly boast. We shall hold in tender memory the visits you have made us in our masculine solitude. They have always been pleasant to *us* at least. The only thing we regret is that they were not frequent enough. And if the reason of this was that you have at any time felt yourselves insulted by being confronted with a dozen or two concentrated gazes, please forgive us; for we were not prompted by any desire to be rude, but by something else called by another name. But I must defer the rest of this, since I am informed that each one for himself will attend to what naturally comes at this juncture. Other sweeter and sadder words, too, many of you will hear, and they will come best in softer tones than I can use. And now, citizens of Richmond, whose homes and churches have been open to us, and whose kindness and co-operation have

met us on every side, let me as the mouth-piece of the students of Richmond College extend to you our hearty thanks, with the hope that you will be as generous and as kind to our successors next session as you have been to us.

Now, old "Mess," for three long years I have chewed thy delicious steaks and partaken of thy hospitality; for three long years I have eaten thy excellent rolls *Baked Brown* in a *Tin-can*. Fare the well! at least fare better than you ever caused me to fare. In parting

now, friends, gentlemen of the Board of Trustees and Faculty, we acknowledge our indebtedness to this institution. Under your instruction, professors, we have learned, both from precept and example, that life is not an "empty dream," but that "life is real life in earnest." And now long may this grand old institution live, long may she continue to stand as a light-house of America, and as an everlasting monument to Education's glory.

Philologian Debate.

Resolved, That oratory has more to do with shaping public opinion than the press.—WM. SMITH, JR.

On taking a glance at the effects of oratory and the press from ancient times to the present, and from my very limited knowledge of ancient history, oratory was evidently the ruling factor in shaping public opinion during the ages in which Demosthenes and Cicero lived. And it seems that this was greatly due to the scarcity of writing material, and the imperfect mode of communicating thought in written sentences. But as centuries succeeded centuries, and as nations advanced in civilization, science, literature, and the invention of labor-saving machinery, the power of the press to form public sentiment advanced, until it gained the power over oratory, and to-day it reigns supreme as the main factor in shaping public opinion.

While oratory may have the power to wield at will fierce assemblies of men, the press is the potent factor in shaping the opinion of men, especially the intelligent.

But the gentlemen on the affirmative will tell you that oratory has the power to sway an audience at pleasure. But the question, Does it shape, or is it more efficient in forming public opinion than the press.

The following facts prove that it does not: First, because, under the exciting influence of eloquence decisions are hastily formed, and are often changed when a more considerate view of the subject is taken. For example: Suppose two gentlemen discuss a subject or deliver orations before an audience. One of them is an eloquent speaker, the other a good logician. The eloquent speaker produces a more favorable impression on the auditors. Their speeches go before the public through the press; the decision is to the reverse.

Hence, we draw our second conclusion, namely, that oratory appeals to the emotions of man rather than to the highest of intellectual operations—reason. Reason must precede the formation of an opinion. It was reason that developed the power of steam and electricity; and thus the press, in appealing to reason is a more sufficient means of moulding the opinions of men.

And again, we draw our third conclusion, namely, that through the press the discussion, essay, or oration reaches the people self-possessed, and presents to them, while their minds are calm and cool, different views of the subject.

Fourth, and lastly, because oratory does not reach as many people as the press; therefore the press is the potent

factor in moulding the opinion of men.

And thus oratory is like a spring that bursts forth during a wet season, and continues to bubble while it has this temporary support, but when this ceases it loses much of its former effect, and has nothing to sustain it. But the press is like a rivulet that breaks forth from hill or dale, with an inexhaustible fountain for its source, continuing to roll on through all seasons, winding its way down the declivities, through the rough valleys, spreading and increasing

in volume as it goes, imparting moisture to the thirsty soil; it rushes on to the deep and mighty ocean, the great highway of the world.

As the sun is the great source of light, so the press is the great source of knowledge. And as the sun holds the earth in its orbit by gravitation, so the press controls the shaping of public opinion by appealing to reason—the highest of intellectual processes while the mind is calm and cool.

Commencement.

Prof. HARRIS' closing address.

This Commencement has been in every respect most satisfactory. On Sunday evening Dr. Boyd, with equal eloquence and unction, presents to us the highest and holiest of all obligations. On Monday, the chosen representatives of the two Literary Societies proved themselves mindful of their high obligations, and prepared to undertake them. On Tuesday, the clear-voiced orator from the banks of the Kanawha bore us along in the circling wings of trope and metaphor, while he thrilled us with his nicely-fitted and burning words. Last evening the Alumni orator conquered our reason with his strong thought and sententious expression, while the poet charmed us away from all things of time and sense into the land of myth and legend, and taught our captive hearts the power of love.

To-night the rising tide has held its own. We older men, trustees and alumni, have gone back in memory to live over the scenes of our Commencement, and fair women have showered smiles and flowers upon the erect forms of medalist and graduate.

But this ecstatic sort of existence cannot last, and it is now my duty, la-

dies and gentlemen, to let you down, as gently as I may, to practical, every-day life again.

Standing at the close of a college session, the commencement of these young gentlemen, it is natural to look first backward, then forward. The retrospective glance is to me personally a sad one. My pathway, for the major part of ten long months, has been shadowed by sickness, darkened by despondency, beset with sorrows, and thickly strewn with sufferings—all the more real because in some part imaginary. Often have I taken up the words of Father Ryan—

"My feet are weary, and my hands are tired;
My heart oppressed;
And I desire, what I have long desired,
Rest—only rest."

Even the sunny days in which it was my privilege to gallop over the prairies of Texas or revel amid the wonders of the land of the Aztecs, wore the sombre tints of absence from a loved home and were clouded with a constant consciousness of neglected duties. And so, my heart goes out in fullest, truest sympathy with any who have failed to attain a coveted

honor, or to pass a prescribed examination, for I, too, have failed—utterly, miserably failed—to realize the fond hopes, the ardent desires, with which I stood here a year ago. Scientists tell us that sickness is a crime—that it comes from disobedience to some one or other of the great unwritten and eternal laws of nature. So from the depths of my sadness I must say *peccavi, peccavi*—it was all my fault; and if so, then I can, perchance, get rid of the fault and amend my life for the future. But there is another and a better ground for hope, which I may present in other words from my favorite poem :

O, yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood ;
That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete.

Let me, therefore, dismiss this strain, so inappropriate to our present surroundings, by exhorting myself and any who, like me, have failed this session to look up and gird ourselves to do better hereafter.

For my excellent and honored colleagues, and for most of those who have attended their instructions, the session has been a success, as the well-won honors awarded here-to-night sufficiently prove. Two new features have marked our college work. By the liberality of one of Richmond's most public-spirited citizens, Mr. B. F. Johnson, we have been enabled to procure a course of regular and systematic physical culture. Each student who chose to avail himself of the privilege has been carefully examined to discover any defects and advised in reference to special exercises, in order to secure complete and symmetrical development. These classes, meeting daily, have been thoroughly drilled in a system of exercises devised for the healthful growth of two of the organs which have been called the

tripod of life—viz., lungs and heart; we rely upon the Professors of Latin and Mathematics for the due culture of the third—the brain. This instruction, whether judged by its scientific basis or the comparison of measurements at the close and at the opening of the session, or by the performances on our Field Day, April 5th, or by the Y. M. C. A. contest of May 11th, in which every one of our students who entered the lists bore off a prize—judged by any or all of these, the Department of Physical Culture has been a decided success.

For another new feature we have to thank the Trustees, who, at their meeting in December, passed a resolution suggesting to the professors the propriety of inviting the public to attend some of their regular lectures. The suggestion was adopted by three of us, and I take occasion to return thus publicly our hearty thanks to many ladies and gentlemen who cheered us by their attendance. It did us good to be made to feel that so many of Richmond's best citizens are interested in our work. It was of great benefit to our classes to realize that so many intelligent people take interest in what had seemed to some of us the dry details of Greek literature, the abstruse methods in psychology, or the bewildering number and motions of suns and satellites. We hope to have next session a larger, more varied, and every way better course of public lectures, and we trust that it will draw the city and the college into still nearer and warmer sympathy. May I whisper, *sub rosa*, that this may, perchance, prove an entering wedge towards what some among us are desiring, but others are not yet prepared for, the admission of young ladies to equal rights and privileges in all our college classes.

To you, young gentlemen, Bachelors and Masters of Arts, I have a word in parting. You know what these diplomas have cost in long and arduous labor, in close and exact attention to detail, coupled with wider, comprehen-

sive views, in steady application and patient toil. The same price you must pay for the more solid and more valuable honors you are yet to win in the practice of law, in the ministry of the gospel, in the chair of the instructor, in the marts of trade. Anywhere, everywhere, honest work, minute care, keen attention to duty, will win a sure reward.

I have been seriously considering the propriety of suggesting a change in the time-honored titles you may henceforth wear, by putting *in* for *of*, for, believe me, you two are not yet Masters, nor you six crowned with the laurel berry, which denotes victors, of Arts. You are but upon the great threshold of the great temple, entitled now and prepared to enter her magnificent precincts. You are Masters, you are Bachelors in Arts. It must be your life-long work to change the sign of entrance into the sign of possession.

As you go forth, you carry our hopes, our good wishes. We shall hope to see your faces from time to time, as you shall find opportunity, to renew the recollections of college days, and to mingle with your brother alumni in planning for the higher honor and wider usefulness of Alma Mater. We shall hope often to hear of you as nobly succeeding in the conflicts of life. You

will belong to the 20th century. In the world on which you are to enter are many torrents, more resistless than the floods which have recently devastated our low lands—many dams of loose construction and long standing, against which the forces of pride or of passion are surging angrily, and threatening a far worse devastation than that of the Conemaugh Valley. It will be yours to discern the signs of the times, to give warning of the danger or to avert it, either by strengthening or by breaking gradually the walls of constitution or of custom. You will probably labor in and for the 20th century. Your opportunities surpass those of any who have preceded you. So live, so labor, that you shall be at any moment prepared for the great final examination; and for the solemn award of the Source of all science, the end of all learning.

It only remains for me first to extend my hearty congratulations to these under-graduates for the progress they have made, to wish them a happy vacation, and to express my hope that we shall meet again in September, with fresh zeal and eager resolves for the work of next session; and second, to thank the audience for their kindly interest in our exercises, and lastly, in behalf of trustees and faculty to pronounce the session of 1888-9 closed.

LOCALS.

Homeward bound!

Who will weep when *we* are gone?

What is the trouble with the sad-looking student? He has a "Darling Mary" in the city. You can guess the rest.

Mr. S., on returning from a boat-ride down the James, declared that he knew

the tide had not come in, because the water had not risen on the boats. "Tricky The Second," ought to give "Little Willie" a few lessons in Physics.

Prof. H.: "Mr. G., have you an idea of a pretty girl?"

Mr. G.: "I think so."

Prof. H.: "Is it simple or complex?"

Mr. G.: "Rather complex, I think, sir."

"To be a man is the greatest thing in the world, unless it is to be a—woman."—*Rev. W. E. Hall.*

"Little B.": "Say, M., my father has the best watch in Alabama. He set it by a barometer last fall and it has not lost but five seconds since."

"Christianity is a religion of charity."
—*Rev. W. E. Hall.*

"We mathematicians use something sharper than a surgeon's knife. We cut with planes which are all edge."—*Prof. E. B. Smith.*

Young lady (on field-day, looking at a certain young fellow, who is more than three feet high): "Isn't that Mr. Long-fellow?"

"No one is entirely good, and no one entirely bad."—*Prof. Harris.*

A certain student says that his hair is beginning to get grey, and so thinks that it was time he was getting himself a rib. We would rather suggest a little more backbone for the young fellow.

Mr. D.: "What is life?"

Mr. M.: "The process of living, I guess."

"If the chicken in his shell might reason that he is developing for a higher life outside his shell, may we not reason that we are developing and preparing for a higher life outside the tabernacle of flesh?"

Prof. T.: "Mr. L., what does desire show as to our nature?"

Mr. L.: "In self-sufficiency, sir."

Rat to Mr. F.: "Do you know who wrote Xenophon's *Anabasis*?"

Mr. F.: "Why, Herodotus, of course; didn't you know that?"

Mr. S.: "The President called the society to order, and was led in prayer by the chaplain."

"It would take a forty-horse power microscope to see a geometrical line."
Prof. Smith.

It's reported that Gen. Grant once heard an old negro praying as follows:

"Let your first, last, and best confidant be your mother."

It is said that a woman's tongue is only three inches long, and yet she can kill a man six feet high.

The students and friends of the College were highly favored with a course of lectures, by Prof. C. H. Winston, on Astronomy by diagrams. The following was the programme: Solar system (sun, earth, and moon), May the 21st; the Stellar universe (comets, meteors, fixed stars, and nebulae), May 23d.

These lectures were among the best of this session, and were entertaining and instructive to all whose privilege it was to attend them.

Mr. R.: "Say, K., do you tell your girl in every letter that you love her?"

Mr. K.: "No, that would be *pleonastic*."

Recently a wagon passed through Kansas City, which bore the following words on its cover: "Chintz-Buged in Illinois, Sicloned in Nebraska, White-Capped in Indiana, Bald-Knobbed in Missouri, Prohibited in Kansas. Oklahomy or Bust!"

Some time ago Mr. D. and Mr. T. were passing by Washington's headquarters on Main street, when Mr. D. remarked that that was Washington's old headquarters, whereupon Mr. T. exclaimed, "Is that where Walter Raleigh was tried for treason!"

"O Lord, we bless you for sending us Gen. Butler. He is one of us, O Lord. He may have a white skin, but he's got a black heart."

Prof. B.: "Here the Greeks found that an equal-sided square was a bad form in which to march."

Sometimes the hair is very light,
Some is of auburn strai(i)n;
Tommie has no hair at all,
But he "gets there just the same."

Prof. P. to Mr. H.: "What were some of the buildings erected by the Normans?"

Mr. H.: "London Bridge, the Tower of London, and the Pyramids."

Mr. H.—n, after listening to a learned lecture on Biology by Prof. H. Newell Martin, M. A., LL.D., Ph. D., F. R. S., declared that Botany is a science of insects.

We are glad to note a marked improvement in the Bible reading of a certain student. Doubtless it's due, however, to the fact that he recently purchased a new Bible for himself. We might say to many, "Go thou and do likewise."

Mr. L.: "I have a very bad case of dyspepsia in my pocket-book."

We deeply sympathize with you, "Bro. L."

"A Preston county, W. Va., man has a horse that will eat grass, but won't eat hay; so he got the horse a pair of green glass spectacles, and now says that he can keep him fat on wheat straw."

We do not intend to vouch for the truthfulness of the above statement, but should any of our readers find this plan a profitable one, we shall feel fully repaid for our trouble.

Mr. L., on approaching the flight of stairs that led to his dormitory, lazily remarked, "O, I wish we had a *refrigerator* to take us up stairs, instead of having to walk."

Mr. H. (looking through the College catalogue): "What does this 'James Thomas, Jr., Philosophy' mean?"

Mr. L.: "Why, it was endowed by James Thomas, Jr."

Mr. H.: "Was there no Philosophy before that time?"

Suppose you ask Plato, Mr. H.

Some time since a stranger asked if our College building was the penitentiary. What will they take us for next, I wonder?

There is given every year in each of our literary societies a medal known as the best debater's medal, which is awarded the member who proves himself to be the best debater. There is also given in each society a medal known as the improvement medal, which is awarded the member who makes the most improvement in debating during the session. These medals are awarded by a vote of the members of each society respectively.

At the close of the present session, the best debater's medal in the Mu Sigma Rho Society was awarded W. Owen Carver, of Tennessee, and in Philologist Society, A. J. Ramsey, of Virginia.

In Mu Sigma Rho Society, the improvement medal was awarded B. B. Robinson, of California, and in Philologist Society, Willie Smith, of Virginia.

The reader's medal, endowed by Dr. Geo. B. Steel, was awarded C. T. Kincaid, of Tennessee.

The reading class is under the control of Prof. Pollard, who gives instruction in reading regularly during each session. And at the close of the session there is a public contest in reading, and the medal is awarded the best reader.

The Woods medal, founded by Hiram Woods, Esq., of Baltimore, was won by J. H. Franklin, of Virginia, for best declamation. This medal is awarded annually by a committee at a public contest, open to all the students of the college.

The Tanner medal, founded by Colonel William E. Tanner, one of the trustees and best friends of the college, which is given to the most proficient graduate in Greek, was awarded Claybrook James, of Richmond.

The Joint Writers' medal, given by the two Literary Societies, was awarded W. B. Loving, of Virginia, for the best literary production written for and published in the *College Messenger*. This contest is open to all members of the Literary Societies.

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES.—Commencement exercises opened on Sunday night, June the 16th, with a sermon by Rev. W. W. Boyd, D. D., of Newark, N. J. Dr. Boyd had chosen as his text John ix., 4: "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day." He treated the subject under the heads of "Relation of the Christian's life to the Christian's work," and "the grounds of the Christian's obligations to humanity." Dr. Boyd used no notes. His sermon was manly, eloquent, and highly instructive. It was an earnest presentation of Gospel truth, unadulterated by the taint of any of the popular heresies of the day. Dr. Boyd has won a well-deserved reputation as a broad, free thinker and a Christian gentleman, and we would be delighted to have him repeat his visit among us.

On Monday night the first exercise of the joint celebration of the two Literary Societies came off. At an early hour the College chapel was filled by a large and brilliant audience of the fairest daughters and best sons of our beautiful city, who had come with smiles and flowers and words of encouragement for the boys whom they had learned to

love, and who in turn were greatly beloved by the boys. The chapel had not only been decorated with evergreens and potted plants, but an innovation had been made by draping the columns and arches with college colors of crimson, gold, and black. Music was rendered by Voelker's band. The exercises were opened by Rev. W. W. Landrum, of Richmond.

The salutatory was delivered by the final President of Philologian Society, Mr. C. T. Kincanon, of Tennessee. He discoursed upon "The Student's Life," tracing his pathway from the time he leaves his happy boyhood home until he completes his college course. Much of his speech was written in metre, and was highly creditable to its author.

The next speaker was Mr. R. Lyle Motley, of Pittsylvania county, Va., final orator of Mu Sigma Rho Society. His subject was "Dignity of Labor." This gentleman's speech occurs in another column, and therefore demands no further notice here.

The final orator of Philologian Society was Mr. Curtis L. Laws, of Loudoun county, Va. His theme was the query, "Was Edgar Allan Poe a Madman?" This gentleman's speech also occurs in another part of the *Messenger*, and will speak for itself.

Last on the programme was the valedictory. This sad, sweet duty fell to the lot of Mr. J. W. Whitehead, of Pittsylvania county, Va., final president of Mu Sigma Rho Society.

His allusions to college customs and jokes were numerous and highly amusing. But this was interspersed with much practical truth and cheer. He exhorted his fellow-students to awake to the duties of the hour; to remain in their own Southland, and assist in elevating her to her rightful position among the peoples of the earth.

All the speakers acquitted themselves well, and were the happy recipients of many beautiful floral tributes.

The second night of the joint cele-

bration was presided over by Mayor J. T. Ellyson, of Richmond, a former member of Mu Sigma Rho Society, who had been chosen final president for that occasion by the two societies.

Mayor Ellyson introduced the orator of the evening, Hon. Henry S. Walker, Secretary of the Commonwealth of West Virginia, who had been elected by the societies to represent them on this occasion. Mr. Walker's theme was "The Opportunities of the Scholar as a Citizen of the Republic." We feel that for us to undertake anything like a description of this grand speech would be to make a failure, and do the brilliant orator great injustice. Suffice it to say that Mr. Walker's address was eloquent, entertaining, and instructive in the highest sense; and the beautiful and inspiring sentiments it contained awakened responsive echoes in every breast.

The third night of the commencement was devoted to the reunion of the Society of Alumni, which was presided over by Rev. R. R. Acree, of Petersburg, president of the Society of Alumni. The music for the occasion was rendered by Messrs. Buchanan, Farrar, Motley, Ramsey, Gay, Taylor, and Kincaid, all students of the College, and Messrs. Leftwich and Watkins, of the city.

Prof. P. B. Reynolds, who fills the chair of English in West Virginia University, was the chosen orator of the evening. His subject was "The Typical Modern College Man." Professor Reynolds is an old graduate of the College, who has gone out into the world and won for himself a wide reputation as a thorough Christian gentleman and scholar. So he was welcomed back to the College by warm hearts and open arms. The speech of Professor Reynolds was an earnest and thoughtful production of a cultured intellect. It was delivered in a pleasing and attractive manner, and was warmly applauded.

Professor L. R. Hamberlin, of Ala-

bama, who had been elected to read a poem, was then introduced. Professor Hamberlin presented himself in a free and easy manner rarely seen. The poem evoked tumultuous applause. The recital held the audience enthralled, and when the poet closed they seemed perfectly carried away, so great was the enthusiasm. Never before in the history of our commencement exercises has such praise been bestowed upon a speaker. At the close of the exercises the Society of Alumni adjourned to the Thomas Memorial Hall, where the banquet was held, and a most pleasant hour was spent by the "old boys."

The commencement proper came off on Thursday night, June the 20th. The evening was taken up in awarding diplomas and other college honors. Professor H. H. Harris, Chairman of the Faculty, presided in his usual quiet and graceful manner, and made a fine closing talk, in which there was valuable advice for all, especially for the graduates, to whom he more especially addressed his remarks. At the close of Professor Harris' remarks, Hon. H. K. Ellyson came forward and announced that an honor had been conferred upon him. This honor, he explained, had been conferred upon him by the students of the college, and consisted in the selection of himself to present to Professor Harris a handsome arm-chair as a slight token of their love for him and their appreciation of his efforts in their behalf, and his kindness and affection which he had ever shown for them. The entire Commencement of five nights was claimed by all to be a success, and proved highly enjoyable to all.

The trustees in their meeting conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity upon Professor P. B. Reynolds, Rev. C. A. Stakely, and Prof. B. A. Taylor. The degree of LL. D. was conferred upon Prof. A. F. Fleet, of Missouri University.

Thus another year has closed upon us, and we step from beneath the classic

shades of our dear old *Alma Mater*. Many of us will not return again; but where'er we go, where'er we be, pleas-

ant memories will crowd our minds when we think of the happy days spent at RICHMOND COLLEGE.

PERSONALS.

We have been favored with visits from quite a number of our old college mates within the last month. We mention—

J. W. Reams, '87-8, who is now preaching in his native county, Charlotte. Many of us suspected that he was here more for the purpose of seeing his "Darling Mary" than anything else. We certainly hope that he feels amply paid for his visit.

E. M. Pilcher, '87-8, also called on us. When we saw him we could but think of the Chinnee whom he personated so elegantly in the jollification of '86-7.

W. T. Creath, who was compelled on account of ill-health to leave college about the middle of this session, has recovered almost entirely and is now a pastor. He thinks that he yet lacks one thing essential to a good pastor. May he be successful in obtaining that *sine qua non*.

M. E. Parish, M. A., 1887-8, was here during the commencement. He rather expects to teach at West Point again next session. Teaching has not lessened, so far as we can judge, his fondness for telling amusing stories.

J. D. Martin, B. A., '87-8, is now principal of the Chester Female Institute. We wish him much success in his efforts to educate the young women of this South land.

E. B. Pollard, M. A., '85-6, returned a few weeks ago a graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. We were glad to have him with us during our commencement exercises. We hear that he expects to preach at Leigh-street Church this summer. Should we be

able to visit Richmond during the time, we would be pleased to hear him.

W. C. Robinson, M. A., '86-7, was with us. He has been teaching most satisfactorily at Homestead Academy for two sessions, but is uncertain whether he will remain longer.

J. E. Tompkins, B. A., '87-8, after a successful session as teacher, came to help his old fellow-students enjoy receiving the honors won by a session of hard work. But while here he did not fail to improve the opportunity to see Miss ——. Perhaps, indeed, the Commencement was only an excuse. He has decided to become a school-boy again. This time to study medicine.

We were visited also by Geo. C. Abbit, who is now a successful minister.

We enjoyed the presence of C. R. Cruikshanks, of whom we have heard a little secret. It is that before this June has passed he will receive the addition of a better-half.

H. L. Moorman and LeRoy Lyon were present at the commencement.

The pleasant countenance of C. D. Roy, B. A., '86-7, was present to brighten the commencement week.

Perhaps the one of the old students who was most welcomed, and whose presence was most enjoyed, was Prof. L. R. Hamberlin, of Louisiana. Some of the ladies said that his appearance was that of a mere youth; but when on Wednesday night he poured forth in sweetest strains his poem before the Alumni, the audience was charmed. He proved himself quite equal to the occasion, and all were constrained to believe that he is a born poet.

The "Girls' Home School" of Luray, Von Bora College. It is so called from Va., conducted by Rev. Dr. J. I. Miller, the maiden name of Martin Luther's has been chartered under the name of wife.



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