

Bard College
Student Newspaper Archive
(1895-1999)

All Rights Reserved. Copyright © 1999 by Bard College

MESSENGER

Vol. 4 No. 9 May, 1898

133	The Tale of a Coat John Henry Heady, 1901
135	Was it a Mistake? Linden Harris White, 1900
139	The Poet Gray and the Elegy Arthur P Kelley, 1901
143	Announcement to the Thinking Public
145	Annandale Verse
149	Editor's Corner
151	A Burning Question [a poem] Ernest Neal Lyon, in Puck.
152	Outlook From the Editor's Sanctum
153	College Notes
154	Clippings [a poem] J.A.P., 1901

The S. Stephen's College Messenger.

Board of Editors:

WATSON BARTEMUS SELVAGE, '98, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

CHARLES B. MCGUIRE, '99.

JAMES ROBERT LACEY, 1900.

J. PAUL GRAHAM, 1901

ROBERT F. KELLEMAN, '99, BUSINESS MANAGER.

OSCAR F. R. TREDER, 1901, ADVERTISING AGENT.

AUGUSTINE H. W. ANDERSON, 1901, SUBSCRIPTION AGENT.

VOL. IV.

ANNANDALE, N. Y., MAY, 1898.

No. 9.

The Tale of a Coat.

I COULD a tail unfold,—and then, by opening up the other part of the coat, smoothing out the sleeves, and shaking it well, could rid it of the odiferous traces of moth-balls, and apply the traditional wet cloth, to the accompaniment of huge globules of perspiration. Then, with the guilty conscience of having cheated the impecunious tailor of a job, I should prepare my person to make a long-neglected call.

Let me assure your minds at the outset that there is no longer anything *owed on* this coat, but that the ensuing eulogy is designed as an *ode to* a coat.

Coat, you have made many friends in your long life. There is one in particular, a wan-faced man, in a little basement, whither, by the shielding night, you have been hurriedly borne, through the dark alley, and surreptitiously committed to the restorative genius of the wizard within, who possesses the secret of the elixir of life. As often as the annual circuit has warned me that the time was waxing full for your periodical ablution, (to use a term from the vocabulary of the ubiquitous, unwashed Brotherhood of Peripatetics), have you entered this cleaner's shop, and, through his art, have again delighted me with the semblance of your former self.

Your assiduous faithfulness, however, wearies me. You have overdone it in this matter. You have selfishly demanded all my love, concentrated upon yourself alone. You have bewitched my eyes to look with indifference at the otherwise enticing shop window, where your rivals were beckoning me, for whose sakes I would now, at last, desert you!

Alas, begone! be stolen; be carried far off somewhere in the dead of night, and be abandoned as the tell-tale morning recognizes you! For I have no heart to cast you from me.

You have, in your day, borne whole generations of perishable buttons, and yards upon yards of binding, and have shed your lining as often as the lizard his skin. Repeatedly have you silenced the proverbial caution against the application of new cloth to an old garment.

Despite your constitutional changes, your identity is not lost. If some one should, however, reconstruct a coat from your cast-off members, with just enough new material, would not your identity be then challenged by your rival self? But let us drop this metaphysical delusion, however, for you can, with equal fairness, conjure up before me as many duplicates of myself, as my age contains periods of seven years.

You have witnessed my pride and my humiliation; my lover's sighs, and rival's fears. You have clothed me in prayer as well as in festivity. Your tails have been parted beneath my declining person in parlors, churches, theatres and street cars; and once, indeed, this gesture was perforce dispensed with, as a slippery side-walk opposed its impertinent broadside to my further precipitate progress.

In your blooming youth you were worn to the accompaniment of gleaming patent leathers, a cane, a gorgeous vest, and a glowing tie; and then only on festive days did you deign to adorn me in public. Each succeeding year your associates have become less select, I regret to say. After you became reconciled to supplying my commoner needs, the world saw you every day, till there came a time when no self-persuasion of mine could tempt me to force your presence again upon the long-tolerant public. Under cover of darkness, or an overcoat, I am still faithful to you, dreading the time when you will follow the inglorious fate of your predecessors, a few of whom yet linger out a wretched existence in degrading employment.

You are fated to inevitable intimacy with the furnace fire, or the spring garden, and attendant implements of husbandry. Of late, too, you have become inured to subordinate yourself to an ignoble hat, which has seen a more prosperous season, or seasons. What pangs of anguish must you suffer when I associate you, high-born coat, with a pair of trousers whose life has been protracted by the diligent use of my bachelor mending-outfit.

It must grieve you to be on equal and familiar terms with those two relics by which my heart and sole are supported, through whose good offices the healing cobbler has now for the third and last time enriched himself.

My aged friend, the evidences of your irreparable age are so obvious, even to my partial eyes, that I long to see you grace the form of some travelling agent of the above-mentioned brotherhood, who by his glib and oft-rehearsed tale of woe, shall elicit my reluctant sympathy. In fact, you have already but narrowly escaped the baser uses of this last estate of man.

It would be of no avail to introduce you to that merchant friend of my chronic penury, who flourishes beneath his three golden "counterfeit present-

ments" of the orb of day. I could not honestly laud your *passé* merits in the presence of this epitome of honesty, and my guilty tongue would desert me for such base ingratitude to you, *Fidelis*.

In sorrow have I sought you, but in prosperity have I scorned you. As the dawn of pecuniary enlargement seemed about to break around me, I have disdained you for the anticipated bliss of a new vesture.

Although each succeeding pay-day has cast you into deeper contempt, yet your ensuing rivals have, in contrast to their own faithlessness, revealed your sterling worth.

My hopes of plutocracy have vanished, and I seek you again, the witness of such a large portion of my life; I weep over you.

Year by year have I calculated the remaining days of your fleeting life, and, with despairing endurance, have launched you forth into still another season, till I hesitate to recount the alternate relapses and renewals of my allegiance to you.

Be thy end befitting to thee, honored one, who hast inspired such conflicting emotions in my breast.

Thy life has been well spent, but, indeed, spent, at last!

John Henry Heady, 1901.

Was it a Mistake?

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

IN one of our New England towns, whose exact name, for obvious reasons, is withheld, there lived for many years a man by the name of Smith—to be precise, and to distinguish him from a few other "Smiths" who hail from that enlightened quarter of the globe, we will state that he was, and is, commonly known to the natives as Squire Hiram Jonathan Smith. Mr. Smith was a well meaning and highly respected resident, having been engaged in business in his earlier days, but was now retired; he had been immediately appointed Justice of the Peace, and was a marked man within the radius of seven miles of his town. Squire Smith, as most great men, had his peculiarities. One was that nature had endowed him with an obstinacy, which was only too apparent when aroused. If he happened to make a statement, or had a notion that such and such a thing was right, he was like a bull on a railroad track—he would not budge from that stand until the train of public opinion ran over him. The Squire was looked up to by most of his fellow-residents as a man of erudition—his opinion commanded great deference. His other peculiarity, that he was one of those mortals who never could understand how anyone could make a mistake. He had conducted his business in such a methodical way that he was never known to err, although some of his helpers were guilty

reliable, allopathic remedies is the man for me; summon him at once. I feel as if I should die!" Away went his dutiful helpmate. Dr. Perkins came, looked very grave, wrote prescriptions for some very vile tasting medicine, and promised to call again in a day or two. Strange to say the old allopathic medicine didn't seem to reach the spot of the ailment and the Squire grew steadily worse. Dr. Perkins did his best but no improvement resulted, and the Squire was sinking rapidly. At times he was unconscious. There was no other doctor nearer than fifty miles except the hated young doctor Gamble. Aunt Betty was distracted. Annette had been a faithful little nurse and there was nothing too hard for her to do. "Why don't you send for Harry—I mean Dr. Gamble—I *know* he can cure uncle. Do send for him Auntie. Uncle is unconscious and will never know, and besides Dr. Perkins says there is no hope and has given him up." Aunt Betty caught at the suggestion like a drowning man catching at a straw. Dr. Gamble was summoned, took the Squire's temperature, listened to his now almost inaudible breathing and set about his task quietly. He took some medicine from his case and forced it down the Squire's throat. He stayed all day and watched his patient continually, towards evening the Squire regained consciousness. Aunt Betty now administered the medicine. Why drag the story out? In less than a week, by his grit and determination, Dr. Gamble had put the Squire on the road to recovery, but he never once ventured near the Squire when he was awake. Aunt Betty was overjoyed. Annette said triumphantly, "I knew he could do it."

TO ERR IS HUMAN.

The Squire was once more himself. "Betty never let me hear you mention that quack Gamble again, or you either Annette for that matter; didn't I tell you Doctor Perkins could pull any one through?" Annette looked pleadingly at Aunt Betty. "Hiram," said Aunt Betty, "Don't be angry with me, but I must tell you the truth. Dr. Perkins has been sick himself the last week or so and had given you up. There was no one else within fifty miles of this place, except a very good young doctor, so I had to send for—for—" "Not that reprobate Gamble," almost howled the Squire. "Hiram, Doctor Gamble saved your life and he is not a quack or a humbug or anything else of the kind, and you should feel as extremely thankful to him as we are that you are with us to-day." The Squire said nothing for a time, but turned his face towards the wall. At last he turned round, "Betty, if Doctor Gamble comes here to-day send him to me instantly." Dr. Gamble came an hour or so after that and immediately entered the sick room. The old Squire was seated in an arm chair propped up with pillows. "Young man," said the Squire, as he eyed the Doctor critically, "I have summoned you to settle our indebtedness, my indebtedness; will you be satisfied with Annette as a partial payment and a snug dowry as the balance? If so, they are yours." Annette

was peeking through the door and came in at this stage of the game with the Squire's medicine. Dr. Gamble advanced and took the first part of his payment by the hand. Aunt Betty bustled in, her kind, old face wreathed in smiles, the Squire said, "Children I have learned one hard lesson in my illness, namely, 'To err is human.'" *Linden Harris White, 1900.*

The Poet Gray and the Elegy.

THE Elegy in a country churchyard, given to the world by the poet Thomas Gray in the year 1750, is perhaps the best known poem in the English language. Well it deserves this distinction, for it is in every sense a real poem, and partakes of the very soul of its author in every line.

Everyone knows the Elegy: so well known has it become that even though one did not know the poem as such, scarcely could any one escape using its familiar phrases. Very many, however, know it only as the Elegy, a great masterpiece of English poetry, and not as Gray's Elegy, every verse overflowing with the poet's soul, and every line characteristic of his being. So I desire to conduct you once more through the old familiar paths of this classic of our language, and let us see how much we can read Gray into it, let us study Gray's life in his Elegy.

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day:
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness, and to me."

Thinking upon this stanza what impression does it leave upon you? Does it not fill you with a sense of loneliness and melancholy, yet a beautiful loneliness, such as you have oftentimes experienced when, in a perhaps too pensive mood, you have watched the great golden sun sink at the close of day. Have thoughts like these never come to you at such times? What if it should never rise again? What if it should leave the world in darkness forever? This impression is due doubtless to Gray's speaking of the curfew as tolling the *knell* of parting, or rather departing, that is *dying*, day; and of its leaving the world to darkness, and to me (*i. e.* Gray), as if in either case it were leaving it to great melancholy.

In the light of this first stanza, and of the second which I shall in a moment quote, it is not surprising that we find him when a mere child at Eton, bringing out in a few lines of Latin hexameter such sentiments as these: "The normal mood of man is one of hesitation between the things of Heaven and Earth. Man yearns forever after superhuman power, and accomplishment, only to discover the narrow scope of his possibility, and at last he has to curb his ambition, and be content with what God and nature have ordained."

Yet, in the Elegy, as also in his other poems, in what pathetic melancholy does he picture those things ordained by God, and nature; but to return to the Elegy:

"Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

* * * * *

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping Owl does to the Moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign."

Here, too, is the same spirit of lonely, nature-loving melancholy, and it pervades the whole poem.

So it was with Gray's life. He was ever subject to deep, pathetic melancholia. When scarcely in his twentieth year we find him writing to his dear friend, West: "When we meet it will be my greatest pleasure to know what you do, read, and how you spend your time, and to tell you what I do *not* read, and how I do not, etc. Take my word, and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business, yet neither nothing, nor something gives me any pleasure." The idleness which this letter seems to imply as a matter of fact existed only in Gray's mind; "He was at this time wandering at will along the less trodden paths of Latin literature, and rapidly laying the foundation of his unequalled acquaintance with the classics." It shows, however, the poetic melancholia of his nature, nursed as it was through his whole life by a constant neglect of bodily exercise.

The year 1738 marked an epoch in Gray's life, and there occurred an event which had the effect of withdrawing him from the sphere of "lonely contemplation" which was his natural environment, and putting him in touch with the great outside world. This was a "grand tour" of Europe, made in company with his dear friend and chum, both at Eton and the University, Horace Walpole. He was upon the continent three years, during which time he was almost wholly free from his wanton melancholy, and his Latin poems (for he had not yet looked with favor on the English Muse), as also his letters of this time, teem with enthusiasm and healthy enjoyment.

Gray had been back from the continent but a short time when he was again plunged into his former gloomy poetic reverie by the death of Richard West, a friend who had been very dear to him; this bereavement was followed by the death of his uncle, and firm supporter, Jonathan Rogers, with but a short interval.

After these sad events Gray removed to the little village of Stoke. Here

he wrote one of his first English poems "An Eton Ode": here also he began the Elegy in October, 1742. The poem was not, however, more than begun at this time, and was not again touched for seven years, when the death of his dear aunt, and her burial in the quaint, quiet churchyard at Stoke seemed to recall to the poet the Elegy which he then completed.

The Elegy is in reality an "Ode to the Unhonored Dead" and in the next stanza this becomes apparent:

"Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Read the poem carefully in connection with Gray's life, and you cannot help feeling that it is the most *natural* poem that could possibly come from his pen:—himself a man of lofty, and pure instincts, living much within himself, an acute sufferer from melancholia, and withal, throughout his life, poor in this world's goods, is it strange that the poet's soul should find expression in these deep, pathetic strains?

That the poem may the better be seen as an outgrowth, and a development from an embryo which had long been a part of his nature, read a verse written by him long before the Elegy was ever dreamed of:

"How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!"

And again,

"No more with reason, and thyself at strife
Give anxious cares, and endless wishes room:
But through the cool sequester'd vale of life
Pursue the silent tenor of thy doom."

This latter stanza, written on the margin of a note book, with pen marks through every word, was doubtless forgotten long e'er he wrote the Elegy, yet we cannot fail to trace the effects of the thought and even the words, in this verse of the Elegy:

"Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray:
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

Gray, too, was an eager reader, and ardent admirer of Hammond, whose quaint old odes and ballads are no longer readable except by antiquarians in literature. From this source, without doubt, came, perhaps unconsciously, that famous stanza quoted by Gen. Wolf, before the siege of Quebec:

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth, e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

For it certainly resembles that stanza in Hammond's "Mournful Ode"

"Ah me! what boots us all our bosted power,
Our golden treasure, and our purple state?
They cannot ward the inevitable hour,
Nor stay the fearful violence of fate."

Did space permit attention could be called to many other interesting features of this poem. In reading the last few stanzas bear in mind that they are the Poet's own words of his own life, and judge for yourself if what I have sought to bring forth, is not here clearly and distinctly portrayed.

"For thee,* who, mindful of th' unonor'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If, 'chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate;

Haply, some hoary-headed swain may say:

"Oft have we seen him, at the peep of dawn
Brushing, with hasty steps, the dews away,
To meet the Sun upon the upland lawn.

* * * * *

Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful, wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love."

"One morn I miss'd him on the 'custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he;

* * * * *

The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne.
Approach and read—for thou can'st read—the lay
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

*Gray.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to Misery all he had—a tear;
He gain'd from Heaven—'twas all he wished—
a friend.

No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode;
There they alike in trembling hope repose,—
The bosom of his Father and his God."

Arthur P. Kelley, 1901.

Announcement to the Thinking Public.

THE *Fuso Lacte Society*, in convention assembled, has seen fit to offer to the public a statement of its aims and purposes; hoping thereby to correct many prevalent errors, and at the same time to so present the benefits of membership that it may no longer be accused of exclusiveness.

This Society has been in existence from the earliest times, and similar statements of its purposes have from age to age been made by individual members; but the records show no previous corporate announcement. That there may be no doubt of the authenticity of this present publication the Society's seal is hereto attached.

Realizing, that since the creation of the universe possibilities of accident have been imminent; *that* tendencies of the terrestrial substance are to absorption, of atmospheric environs, to evaporation; *that* the capabilities of man to overcome these tendencies are exceedingly limited; *and*, furthermore, *that* because of the perverseness of man's nature, or the imperviousness of his mental perception, he ever tends to the non-realization of his limited possibilities, or, if realizing them, is overcome by an excess of futile and immoderate lamentation—considering, therefore, these facts, the members of the Society have ever, since its existence, striven to alleviate the confusion resultant upon the above postulated inevitable irregularities.

Therefore the purposes of this organization are thus formulated:

To disseminate a universal appreciation of the inconsiderateness of an exaggerated, or a perceptible lachrymal demonstration over the precipitated and disseminated contents of any receptable designed for the intact preservation of the fluid substance MILK.

To the accomplishment of its ends the Society imposes upon its members subscription to the following promises:

I.—I will spend at least ten minutes daily upon the consideration of the

exceedingly temporary valuableness, and imminent perishability of all milk in general and especially of that in my possession.

II.—I will keep before me in such prominent position as to be a part of my daily observation a copy of the seal and motto of the Society.

III.—Upon all occasions when the purposes of this Society are liable to frustration, I will refrain from searching for any implement such as spoon, sponge or rag wherewith to interfere with the natural results of the precipitation and dissemination of this very exceedingly temporarily valuable fluid.

IV.—I will use all my natural power toward the prevention of any lachrymal secretion and excretion upon any above stated occasions; and for any weakness or failure in this direction will pay such fines as my superiors in the Society shall impose.

The following regulations are also added:

(a) Violations of the rules of membership in others are to be reported by any member who has paid all his fines.

(b) There are no membership dues.

(c) Reports are to be made, and fines paid, to our local agents, a list of whom accompanies each certificate of membership.

(d) The revenue accruing from fines is devoted to the purchasing, distribution and furthering the use of the *Speedy and Perfect Eradicator of Lacteal Stains, Lachrymal Discolorations, etc., etc.*, specially prepared by the *Common-sense Chemical Co.*

(e) The motto of the Society shall be:

Milk spilt is wet—
One tear is wetter.
Time dries, you bet—
Sense serves you better.

Each certificate must bear the Society's registered seal, the emblems of which are:

Bos, rampant.
Receptacle, inverted.
Lac, disseminated.
Homo, quiescent.

Blanks for application and other information may be secured by correspondence with the

Fuso Lacte Society,
No. 1, Consideration Ave.,
Practicality,
Isle of Urbrains.

ANNANDALE VERSE.

THE LOST TRAVELER.

From the French of Chénedollé.

I.

THE snow from out the lowering sky,
Its blinding torrents filling all the height,
In towering drifts is heaped on high,
Enwrapping Saint Bernard in mantle white.

II.

The way is barred, the path is gone;
And now the eagle's plaintive note resounds
In mournful cries, as night steals on,
And fills the lonely summit's frozen bounds.

III.

On hearing these faint echoes drear,
A traveler lone, benumbed—with fainting breath,
Surrendering hope, sinks low in fear,
And at the chasm's brink awaits his death.

IV.

Then in his wandering thoughts he seems
To see his wife,—his little prattling child:
But on this frozen couch his dreams
In mockery increase his terrors wild.

V.

Yes, all is o'er; his hour has come.
The night descends apace, yet there he lies;
And weighing down his eyelids numb,
A fatal sleep is stealing o'er his eyes.

VI.

Then suddenly, O wondrous tale!
The sound of some faint bell he thinks he hears;
The sound increases through the vale;
And now a light amid the darkness nears.

VII.

While listening, amid his pain,
Across the storm another sound is sent;
A mastiff barked—within his train
A hermit neared, and o'er the traveler bent.

VIII.

The joyful dog no hand deters,
 He knows that Death has let escape his prey;
 E'en now kind charity avers
 A miracle was wrought upon that day.

Alfred Reed Hill, 1901.

THE AMOROUS CLAMS.

ONE time there dwelt a handsome clam
 Deep down in the sea;
 In all the ocean round about
 Lived none as sleek as he.

Near him abode a maiden clam
 Whose beauty was her boast;
 Her eyes were green, her sides were smooth,
 The belle of all the coast.

Now when he saw this damsel fair,
 He knew her charms full well;
 And yearned intensely, day by day,
 To kiss those lips of shell.

One eve he summoned courage up,
 And drifted down her way,
 And stopping near her sang to her
 His love in touching lay:

"Behold in pity, fairest one!
 Thy slave I fain would be;
 And tarry here fore'er and aye,
 With thee beneath the sea."

She heard his song; her heart was moved
 Down to its very core—
 To tell the truth, this maiden fair,
 Had gazed on him before.

And so he feasted on her lips,
 Nor stopped by night nor day;
 Sea-urchins came and ridiculed,
 Yet not a whit cared they.

But one day came an oyster-dredge
 And tore her from his side;
 His heart was broken; "O, ye Fates,
 Ye cruel Fates!" he cried.

But next day came the self-same dredge
 And bore him, too, away,
 From deep in ocean, up and up,
 To see the light of day.

There landed on a heap of clams
 His lost love he espied.
 "Oh joy!" said he, "again, my love,
 Here am I at thy side!"

They joined their lips together tight,
 This amatory pair,
 That they might never separate,
 However they might fare.

They journeyed many leagues by sea,
 Then many miles by land,
 And came at last into a town
 Remote from Ocean's strand.

Now in this town there lived a man
 Who kept a large hotel;
 He bought the clams; his cruel cook
 Disjoined them, shell from shell.

But happy was their lot at last;
 Death parted not these two—
 Next day the groaning board they graced,
 Served up in *one* clam stew.

J. Paul Graham, 1901.

THE MICE AND THE CAT.

FELIS sedet by a hole
 Intenta she, cum omni soul
 Prendre rats.

Mice cucurrerunt over the floor
 In numero duò, tres or more
 Obliti cats.

Felis saw them oculis;
 "I'll have them," inquit she, "I guess
 Dum ludunt."

Tum ille crept towards the group,
 "Habeam" dixit "good rat soup,
 Puiques sunt."

Mice continued all ludere
 Intenti they in ludo vere
 Gaudentur.

Tum rushed the felis into them
 Et tore them omnes limb from limb
 Violenter.

MORAL.

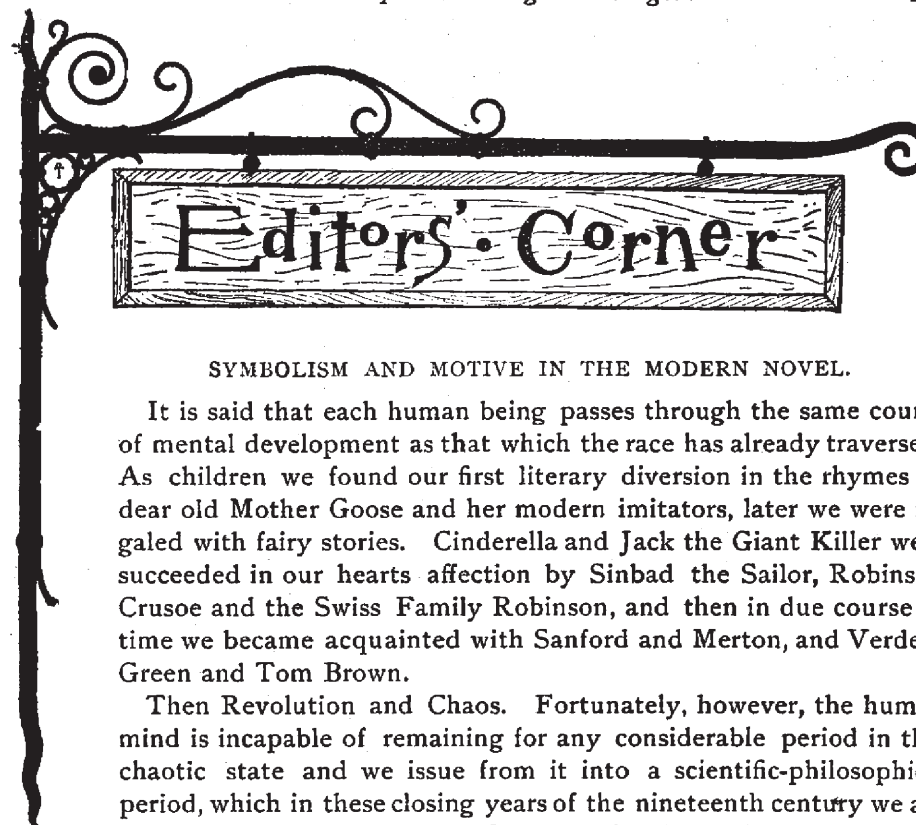
Mures omnes, nunc be shy
 Et aurem praebe all mihi
 Benique.

Si hoc facis—"verbum sat,"
 Avoid a fiendish big tom cat
 Studioso.

WOOLING THE MUSE.

IN ancient days,
 When poets' lays,
 Like Vergil's were the go,
 He'd drink the booze,
 Invoke the Muse,
 Then write a book or so.
 Now, sad but true,
 No muse we woo;
 No muse can be invoked.
 For they, poor dears,
 Of former years,
 Long, long ago have croaked.
 Oh no; instead,
 We scratch our head,
 While verses fret our brains;
 And oft alas!
 Next day in class,
 A flunk rewards our pains.

J. Paul Graham, '01.



SYMBOLISM AND MOTIVE IN THE MODERN NOVEL.

It is said that each human being passes through the same course of mental development as that which the race has already traversed. As children we found our first literary diversion in the rhymes of dear old Mother Goose and her modern imitators, later we were regaled with fairy stories. Cinderella and Jack the Giant Killer were succeeded in our hearts affection by Sinbad the Sailor, Robinson Crusoe and the Swiss Family Robinson, and then in due course of time we became acquainted with Sanford and Merton, and Verdant Green and Tom Brown.

Then Revolution and Chaos. Fortunately, however, the human mind is incapable of remaining for any considerable period in this chaotic state and we issue from it into a scientific-philosophical period, which in these closing years of the nineteenth century we are content to regard as final. What may lay beyond we cannot see, but we are not therefore emboldened to deny that farther advancement is possible. Strangely enough the literature of every nation has begun with poetry and having passed through the period in which the miraculous plays so important a part, and that which is characterized by the spirit of adventure, finally reaches the scientific-philosophical state.

Time was, when the successful novel was a mere record of adventure or a romantic sequence of events, but now the novel must be scientific and philosophical—at least it must appear so. We are hearing a good deal about psychological novels in these days and it is quite necessary for us to be on our guard that we do not accept as infallible the ipse dixit of such irresponsible scribblers as Marie Corelli and her tribe. In fact, only one of these ultra-scientific novelists has the faintest claim to be accepted as an authority on such subjects, and Grant Allen is probably less inclined to dogmatize than most well-informed men. The psychology of the characters in most popular novels consists of various mixtures of contradictory inclinations such as never yet vexed mortal breast; and the novel readers enjoy reading about other people experiencing nervous spasms which they themselves never ex-

perienced nor could experience. The meditation of a suicide or murderer never fail to secure a good sale for a book, and a thoroughly licentious character who is given to soliloquy will assure a second edition within a fortnight.

The literary form and devices of the modern novel afford a very extended field of study. Just at present symbolism seems to be the ruling fad. A man lies dying in a city house and a young girl next door plays "The Dead March" from "Saul" on the piano. The literary people have apartments in which blue is the prevailing color because blue is the mental color, although, perhaps, the word "blue-stocking" has quite as much to do with it. Catastrophes are always accompanied by terrific thunder storms, and the moon shines for the express benefit of lovers every night regardless of its phases. If you are skilled in color symbolism you can tell the heroine's mood from the color of her dress, and when she refuses to marry the Duke that gentleman will walk down the hillside in the fading, golden light of the resplendent orb of day, and two or three snakes will twist themselves into quite extraordinary curves so as to spell "Nit" right across his path.

The psychology of the people who write such insufferable nonsense affords an interesting field of study. Marie Corelli's firework effects are almost enough to label her as one of the absinthe drinkers of which she has written, and Hall Cain has told us in "The Christian" more of his own life history than he will ever acknowledge. No one can successfully describe sensations which they have never experienced, not necessarily in degree, but at least in kind.

Another field of inquiry, which is as yet almost entirely unexplored is that of the motive which has prompted the production of various literary works. The motive behind "Quo Vadis" for instance, seems to be exceedingly questionable. Henry Sienkiewicz displays an acquaintance with the classical Latin authors far above that which is gained even by the most studious collegians. He knows his Horace, Juvenal and Tacitus literally by heart, and he has evidently studied the history of the period with great thoroughness, but what was the motive behind all this? Was it the mere lust of literary fame or of filthy lucre? Much work which is done in these days can be traced to these motives, but the author of "Quo Vadis" is evidently working with a moral purpose. His earlier works dealt with the social problems which are vexing unhappy Poland, just as Maurice Jokai does with the social problems of Hungary, and there seems to be good reason to believe that Sienkiewicz is seeking to contribute something to the solution of a religious problem. S. Peter is a kind of subsidiary hero in this story and his character is skillfully drawn, so that it is only on careful examination that we find that the fisherman is talking like a full-pledged Roman Pope and the populace standing around at his martyrdom speak of him as the Roman rabble of 1870 might have spoken of Pius IX. As he is about to be nailed to the cross, "standing

on the height with his extended right hand he made the sign of the cross, blessing in the hour of death—

Ubi et Orbi!"

And again for fear the lesson may not have been thoroughly taught, next to the last paragraphs reads: "And so Nero passed, as a whirlwind, as a storm, as fire, as war or death passes; but the basilica of Peter rules till now, from the Vatican heights, the city, and the world."

Watson Bartemus Selvage, '98.

A BURNING QUESTION.

A GAIN 'tis graduation day,
The black-gowned senior now holds sway
In exaltation.

The things wise men have said before,
His own ideas, some three or four,
Combine to form that awful bore,
Called an oration.

Cuba he frees, Armenia too,
Offers suggestions to the new
Administration.

Or thrills us with the "War in Greece,"
"Why Silver's Price Must Still Decrease,"
"The Reign of Universal Peace,"
And "Immigration."

He calmly settles every cause,
Amid tumultuous applause,
And admiration.

One question though is left behind,
Still to torment his anxious mind,
Where under heaven shall he find
A situation?

Ernest Neal Lyon, in Puck.



WITH this issue the Editor-in-Chief severs his connection with the MESSENGER, and as he looks back on the past he realizes how far short he has come of his ideals. It is not for him, however, to complain. What he has done has brought its own reward and it only remains for him to thank the Board of Editors and the other members of the college who have supported the MESSENGER during the last year. The number has been very limited. To these gentlemen, and especially to his friend and classman who was the rival candidate for Editor-in-Chief, he extends his most hearty thanks for ready and hearty support. To them, more than to himself, the Editor owes such success as he may have attained, and he gratefully acknowledges the indebtedness.

One of our exchanges recently defined a college paper as a publication to the support of which one per cent. of the college contribute, and with which the other ninety-and-nine per cent. find fault. This definition is altogether too true and it is to be hoped that next year's Board of Editors will find more support and fewer critics. Not that the present Board has cared a rap for its critics. Oh, no! When people who work for the MESSENGER criticize it we shall take it seriously, but we have been too busy to worry about the buzz of the drones. During the last four years the greater part of the literary work done for the MESSENGER has been the output of members of the class of '98, and unless some of the underclassmen go to work in earnest, the fate of the paper may be sad indeed.

College Notes.

—Visitors: Rev. J. Holmes McGuinness, Mus. B., ex-'94; Daniel Verder, ex-'98, and J. B. Greiner, ex-'98 Sp.

—Exams are near.

—The sixth dance of the German Club was postponed from Thursday, April 28, to Tuesday, May 3. The seventh dance was held in Preston Hall, Thursday, May 12.

—On Sunday, May 8, the Janitor failed to hoist the flag. From his bed, where he was enjoying much needed repose after the arduous labors of the week, he sent forth the imperial edict that it was "too windy."

—Rev. Wm. W. Olssen, M.A., D.D., Alumni Professor of Mathematics, celebrated his seventy-first birthday on May 11.

—Hastings, '98, gave a tea in his rooms, Wednesday, May 11.

—An effigy of Sagasta was lynched on the campus a few days ago, and the marksmen of the college fairly riddled the unfortunate puppet with bullets.

—The Mask and Gown Club will produce "A Batchelor of Arts" on Saturday evening, May 28.

—The annual drawing for members of the Mask and Gown Club took place on the night of May 11. The public officers for the session of '98-'99 are Porter, '99, President and White, '00, Manager.

Clippings.

THE SAXON BROTHER.

WHEN Priam shut the gates of Troy
Against the Argive host,
The lords of Crete, of Ithaca,
And Pelops' broken coast,
He dragged the lofty citadel
About his racking ears,
And doomed the ancient city
To that bitter seven years.

The ages in the sight of God
Have like an evening fled,
Since first the Simois rolled the shields
And hemlets of the dead ;
But such countless generations
Told in human cark and care,
Have added up their atoms
To our knowledge and despair.

Man no longer struggles singly,
Or about one city's wall
By petty little kingdoms,
Multitudes succeed or fall ;
The millions of great nations
Crouch glaring face to face,
And the ties of common customs
Shall unite the common race.

Then we pledge our English brother ;
May he take it in good part,
For torn pages are but byognes
And there's fellowship at heart ;
There is common blood and language
Though the deep sea rolls between,
And we'll hear the toast loud mingled
" To America " and " the Queen."

J. A. P., 1901, in Bowdoin Quill.