

HESPERIAN STUDENT.

VOL. 2.

University of Nebraska.

NO. 7

APRIL,

Qui non Profeit, Deficit.

1873.

Work, not Dream.

(FOR THE STUDENT.)

Happy maiden, by your fireside,
Dreaming of your future fate,
Wondering what of love or treasure,
In its fold of mist may wait;
Sit ye not so idly dreaming,
Take the moments as they come;
Let them counted be as treasures,
By the good within them done.

Ardent youth for fame aspiring,
Wishing for the coming day,
When your name in letters golden
Shall outshine the brightest ray;
Stop your dreaming and to labor,
Life you know is but a span;
If you wish for fame and glory,
Catch each moment while you can.

Friends of temperance vainly thinking
That your labor's almost done;
Do not sit there idly sleeping,
Dreaming of the victory won;
There's a field for you to work in,
Long and wide as earth's domain,
Though you spend your life for others,
You will not have lived in vain.

Hopeful christian often stinging
Songs of praise to Him above,
Often praying that the nation
All may know a Savior's love;
If your prayers are ever answered,
You must labor when you can;
Work to save the souls of others,
Labor for the good of man.

Innovations.

In a former number of the STUDENT, we briefly treated the question, whether it would be expedient to abolish compulsory attendance on religious services in our higher institutions of learning.

Connected with this, is that other so called advance in collegiate work, the abolition of compulsory attendance on class instruction of Professors. It is proposed to abandon class instruction in the case of all who do not wish to attend, and to rely on stated examinations as a test of scholarship, and for the award of degrees. To some this course may seem practical and wise, but to most educators in this country, I opine, it will appear to be an "advance backward."

This plan finds a precedent in no country, save Germany, and there only in appearance. The students of German University, who enjoy the liberty which it is proposed to confer on students of American Colleges, are required by law to complete a course of study, equivalent to that of our best institutions of learning, before they can be admitted to any of the Universities. While the youth of Germany are pursuing the studies of our College Curricula, they are subjected to rigorous discipline, and compulsory attendance on class exercises; and unless the youth of our country are found to be more precocious and self-controlled than those abroad, nothing in the experience of the German gymnasia would warrant such an innovation as is contemplated in this country.

Some valid objections against this scheme seem to me to lie on the surface of this question:

1. Parents expect, and rightly too, a more strict supervision over the proficiency

of their children than is possible under the new system. In the regular intercourse of Professor and student, ends should be gained of inestimable value to the latter. Methods of inquiry, discoveries, habits of regular application and sustained effort, personal inspiration, and a growing love for his work, under the stimulating zeal of his Professor are results that naturally follow attendance upon the instruction of one who is worthy to be a counsellor or instructor of the young.

2. Besides that emulation which class exercises tend to produce, will be entirely lost under the new regime. The procrastination and listlessness, which often overtakes even good students, can be counteracted in no way better than by the rigorous exactions of class exercises. With all the stimulating appliances at command the race of "dullards" is alarmingly large; but should the barriers against indifference and inefficiency be broken down the number of the laggards would greatly increase and multiply.

3. In this plan, also, the instruction of Professors is counted as naught. If a student abounding in conceit, imagines that he can succeed without the discussions of the class room, he is virtually encouraged to try it. This faith in one's self-sufficiency must be of that kind which removes mountains. No doubt it is wise to make the student independent in thought and investigation; but should he be allowed to go on blundering or imperfectly grasping facts and principles in the delusive belief that he is completely exhausting the subject of his investigation? The law of justice toward him requires, that his knowledge be tested, that his feeble grasp be strengthened, and his imperfect knowledge supplemented by thorough and comprehensive views of the subject matter of study. No better method will be found of cultivating intellectual modesty, if I may so term it, than by bringing all students to the test of a daily examination. Without this, conceit and pride of knowledge are likely to become insufferable.

In view of the experience and attainment of the class of students who attend even the most advanced of our colleges, I fail to see how the sundering of the daily intercourse between Professor and student in the class room can result in anything but disaster. If it be true, as Prof. Agassiz says, that even Harvard is only a respectable High School, surely it cannot be policy for this our oldest College to abandon compulsory attendance on recitation and lectures.

The condition of all our Colleges is such in respect to the age, habits and scholarship of their students, that it would be the greatest unwisdom to relax the requirement of attending religious services, and the instruction of able Professors. It is only after long discipline, and after habits of character and independent investigation have been formed, that such a system would be practicable in this or any other country.

A. R. B.

How to Read.

It seems to be a concomitant of man's nature that he should read. In his gloomiest or happiest moods a book is his companion. It goes like a messenger of love to the gloomy cell, cheering and comforting the criminal shut up within the iron grates. With gentle tread it enters the artistically frescoed parlors of the rich and there is heartily welcomed by all. Neither in a civilized or enlightened community has it any boundary, nor is it limited to any caste.

But we must not consider a book only as a mere inanimate thing, like a stone, with no emotion or impress; but like man, it has a character, it is emotional, it awakens in us a feeling of joy or fear; it throws around us an influence either for good or evil. Then how important it is that we make the best selections of our books. We should avoid a bad book as we would shun the company of a bad and vicious man; for surely one exerts no greater influence than the other. Show me the literature a man reads, and I will tell you his character and standing in life.

Many read all they can obtain that is exciting and romantic, thus injuring their moral faculties and keeping the mind in a continually excited condition. They lose all taste for that solid and intellectual reading, that not only instructs and benefits one, but strengthens and develops the mental faculties, and raises their tone of thought from the vicious and groveling things of life to that which is noble and grand. No greater misfortune could befall a man than to become so attached to that pernicious and execrable literature, as to lose all taste for that which is deeper and of a better character.

But not only should we be careful in selecting our books, but once having judiciously made our selections, we should not hurriedly read and then lay them by without further notice; for they all should be made the subject of close study. If our only object in reading was simply to pass a pleasant hour, or, as a child in play piles up his blocks for amusement, we should read for only temporary gratification, the time being occupied our object would be gained. All who read alone for this purpose simply parley with the divine gifts of Nature. Our Maker has given faculties and functions not for our own gratification, but for improvement and the achievement of a sound purpose; and he who uses his talents only for temporal pleasure, will inevitably suffer the consequences.

It is not the amount we read but what we remember that will benefit us. We read for improvement and information; and when we forget what we have read, we have not only fallen short of our object, but at the same time are cultivating a habit of inattentiveness and forgetfulness. What an embarrassment it must be to say we have read "Vicar of Wakefield" and yet are unable to tell who Mr. Thorn-

hill is or whether Goldsmith was a married or single man, where he was born, or what his parentage; or to say we have read Homer and are unable to tell who Achilles was, or who Homer himself is supposed to have been or under what circumstances the Iliad was written, or to say we have read all of Tacitus and yet are unable to tell whether Agricola was his father, his brother or neither one. Then let us try to study what read, to understand what we study, and remember what we understand. JOHN TRUELOVE. *also 217 & Snell*

Street Thoughts,

BY A MEDICAL.

In perambulating Granville or Hollis Street, what a number of unsophisticated raganuffins do I observe busily occupied in the meritorious manufacture of slides! With what interest I contemplate that youthful sport, particularly when I regard its probable consequences upon the human understanding in general, and the legs of my fat friend in particular! He falls. When I reflect upon the wonderful construction of the skeleton, and consider to how many dislocations it is liable in such a case, my bosom expands with gratitude to a considerate police to whose non-intervention we are indebted for such chances of practice.

The numerous open trap-doors, which so pleasantly diversify the pavement, attract my attention. Never do I bend to close them. The blessings of our whole profession upon the heads of those who place them at our convenience! Each one may furnish a new and instructive page to the Chapter of Accidents. Considering the slushy, and muddy condition of our streets, I am equally amazed and delighted to see the ladies almost universally going about in thin shoes. This elegant fashion beautifully displays the conformation of the ankle joint, but to your "Medical" it hath a special recommendation. I behold the delicate foot scarcely separated by the thickness of this paper from the mire. I see the exquisite instep undefended but by a mere web. I meditate upon the influence of cold and wet on the frame; I think of the catarrhs, coughs, pleurisies, pneumonias, consumptions, and other interesting affections, that must necessarily result from their application to the feet, and then I reckon up the number of pills, boluses, powders, draughts, mixtures, leeches, and blisters, that will consequently be sent in to the relief of the fair sufferers, calculate what they must come to, and,—wish I had the amount in my pocket.—*Dalhousie Gazette.*

A Michigan school-master says: "I will spell eny man, womun or child in the hull state fur a dickshunary, or kash priez of one hundred dollars a side, the money to be awarded by a komittee of clergimen or skool directors. There has been a darned site of blown about my spellin; now I want them to put me up or to shet up. I won't be put down by a passel of ignorammuses because I differ with noar Webster's style of spellin."—*Ex.*