

sincere in tendering our thanks for the honorable favor which you have bestowed upon us. And to all the students of the University, and to whomsoever else may be interested in the welfare of the *STUDENT*, we will say, aid us by your subscriptions, contribution and good words of cheer, in making our magazine worthy of the praise of all who are interested in the cause of education in the State.

Some people seem to think that to be able to criticise everybody and everything is one of the peculiar rights of the American. No matter whether or not they understand sufficiently well what they would criticise, to make any criticism from them in place. They live in a free country, where freedom of speech and freedom of the press are much lauded prerogatives, and have they not a right to express their opinions at all times, and in all places? They feel themselves free to criticise, whether the person upon whom their criticism falls be philosopher, priest or politician; or whether that which meets their condemnation or approval be a scientific theory, a speech, or a word. We often carry this thing quite too far. We have no right to criticise what we do not thoroughly understand ourselves, or what we have not given considerable thought and attention. The old saying of caution that we should find fault with nothing done that we cannot do as well ourselves, is, perhaps, a strict rule to live up to, nevertheless it would be better by far to be even thus strict, than to go too much to the other extreme.

We have known members of our literary societies to criticise after this manner: "That oration was too long. It was a bore to the audience, and a disgrace to the Society." What is the result of such criticism? Not good, certainly, for a criticism made in this spirit only wounds, if it do not greatly anger the one upon whom it is made. And then such hasty ill-tempered criticisms are too often unjust, and uncharitable. The production, or perform-

ance, or whatever it may have been, is not by the critic carefully "weighed in the balance, and found wanting," but is judged according to his momentary feelings or caprice. Another person, hearing the same thing, and equally capable of judging of its merits, might with far more fairness, pronounce it excellent.

The lesson that we wish to bring out is just this: we should never make severe criticisms until we have taken second thought upon the matter, and then we should do so charitably and conscientiously. This rule is a general one, and will apply to all times and places, but we have in mind now not so much its general application, as its special limitation to members of our literary societies. Often very severe, and sometimes unjust criticisms are made, especially by the older members of the societies, upon those who are younger and less experienced in the work. Many of these criticisms, which too often are mere sarcasms, were they made in a charitable and confidential sort of way, might be of great value; but made as they usually are, they wound the feelings, and the result is, generally, injury to the one upon whom they are made.

The criticisms made by the papers upon the public exercises which have from time to time been given by the students of the University, such, for instance, as the Society exhibitions and commencement exercises which come annually with the last days of the college year, have been for the most part just and impartial. The writers of these criticisms certainly can have, (excepting now and then, perhaps, in case of there being a favorite upon the class,) no reasons for lauding this, or condemning that performance, only as impartial merit would seem to demand. But though the criticisms are in general just, and though the writers of them, generally speaking, can have no partial motives for making them otherwise than fair for all, still a criticism will now and then be made upon a performance at these general exercises which is unfair, and which