

One can soon feel that he is in a great intellectual center. With a sort of awe he stands back for this or that great man to pass him, whom he has known only by his books; and simply seeing whom is now quite an event in his life.

The libraries demand especial notice, but want of space for bids. Probably few students realize how great is the privilege of access to them until their college days are past.

No doubt many a student in Yale, as elsewhere, fails to appreciate his privileges. One may spend four years here and then during life be known only as a former successful oarsman or foot ball kicker. Many such a young man might have been a blessing to his race, perhaps, had he lived in Nebraska, and spent less money during his entire college course (earning it all meanwhile) than it costs him now to furnish his room or meet his club expenses. On the other hand, a student from any western state who should spend a year or two at Yale would fail to use his chances if that year or two did not mean great things to him.

R. L. M.

New Haven, Conn., Jan. 29, 1887.

THE BATTLE OF CHALONS.

Below we print the prize oration of the fourth annual Chase and Wheeler contest in oratory, delivered by J. A. Barrett.

In the middle of the fifth century of our era the name of Attila was a synonym for all that is fiendish and cruel in war. Plunder was his watchword; ruin and devastation his footprints. At his beck myriads rose and followed him in victory to the heart of the Empire. From the Caspian to the Baltic, from Asia far westward into Germany tribes had paid him homage. Loyalty and enthusiasm were not the motives of allegiance. The bond was one of subjection and slavish fear. In his hand was the power to hurl an irresistible horde of savages upon his foes and crush them to the dust. He was chief of chiefs among the Huns, the most barbarous not only in their own time, but almost in the history of the world. In their intense hatred of civilized man, in their scorn of his knowledge and customs, in their insatiate love of pillage and murder they were rightly the greatest object of terror that had yet threatened the advancement of society.

Europe was peopled with Aryans. The Germanic, Slavonic and Scandinavian tribes were of one race with those of Greece and Rome, and like them were destined to put forth the full bloom and fruit of national civilization. But the race that came pouring into Europe in the third century after Christ had no community with them. Brute force instead of skill characterized its warfare. Wherever it turned the tribes fled or became essentially Scythian. By the fifth century a vast area was occupied by roving bands whose only purpose was spoil and whose highest ambition was to make civilized lands a hunting ground and human beings victims of the sport. In those rude, fierce warriors was a terrible force which under the leadership of Attila caused the boldest Vandal to tremble and the haughty Caesars to bow and pay him tribute. In 433 the Huns crowned him king and a more terrible warfare at once began. His power increased with each successive inroad and threatened with ever more imminent danger the almost prostrate nations that trembled at his coming.

In 451 the Hun began his westward march. Six hundred thousand warriors followed their fierce chief to ravage the fertile valleys of Belgic Gaul. It was a crisis. The fire of Greek genius that had burned brightly had long since died away. The empire of storied Romulus had run nearly its allotted course. Its grand mission was accomplished. Within

its garner was the harvest of ages. The corn of Thebes, the gold of Susa and the learning of Athens had enriched the kernel of its civilization that in its decay it might be both germ and nourishment of future kingdoms. It was the golden link between past and present. Yet as this long-impending danger finally burst upon the Western Empire in one mighty sweeping wave, it seemed as if the cargo of the old Roman ship, rich with the spoil of nations, must go down in the tempest of barbarism.

On came the scourge of God with his countless host. They crossed the Rhine. They ravaged the land. They sacked and burned the cities. Already the foremost had gathered in siege before the walls of Orleans. Only a city and the Loire now lay between them and the rich country to the southwest. If the invader was stopped it must be quickly. Roman and Goth must put aside their petty jealousies, and join against a common foe. But the presence of danger welded the incoherent elements. Timely aid saved Orleans, and the Huns fell back to the broad plains of the Marne and Seine. The Roman legions followed closely and at length the two antagonists stood face to face. On the one hand was the fierce rabble of savages eager for the fight; on the other the Romans and their allies, desperate in their knowledge of the interests at stake. It was Scythian against Aryan. One was the race of barbarism. For a thousand years it had been on the same level. It had no government, no God. Its religion was the worship of nature. Around a naked sword placed upright in the ground the warriors danced and chanted their hideous war-cries. The other was the race of progress. Its history had been one continual development from a primitive state. Step by step it had advanced to its present position, and if unhindered must go on and on, the circle of its influence spread farther and farther till it touch the uttermost shore. In one there is an utter disregard of law, human or divine; in the other the very highest form of both. For Rome was the only nation in which the clear voice of the law was heard above the unceasing clash of arms, and in its protection there lingered the spark of Christianity that was to burn brighter and brighter with succeeding time. One conquered to destroy, the other to build up. In one there was isolation, in the other the grand idea of national unity. One was a dungeon where passion wears the royal garb stained in the blood of nations; the other an eternal lighthouse whose rays direct the course of civilization through centuries.

When Aryan and Scythian meet one must survive, the other perish. If Attila succeeds, all is lost. Trade and manufactures must cease, schools of learning close, law and christianity become meaningless words, and individual and national progress give way to high handed revelry. If Rome succeeds a new and more glorious era is assured. The outgrowth of the national mind from its earliest dawn, the evolution of many centuries, will still remain the basis of future development.

Never did the sinking sun behold such a battle as it witnessed on the plains of Catalauni. Never was Europe in greater peril. The struggle was fierce and terrible, nor did it cease till the field was shrouded in night. The earliest light of morning gilded a field of human ruin. The legacy of Rome to the future world was bought with the lives of countless thousands. Like a lion at bay the human hydra stood sullenly within his barricade, and, thwarted in his purpose, retired beyond the Rhine. The Hun had come and gone. Europe was saved.

You can find Jas. H. Hooper at the University. Give him your number and he will call for your laundrying.