

just as eminent, in a magazine just as well known, finds all sorts of faults in the book, and goes to great pains to pick flaws and show inconsistencies in the book. Take sides by all means, and then get the book and change your views or have them strengthened as the book pleases or displeases you.

\*\*\*

Now that the writers of the French school are attracting so much attention by their productions, they being inferior only to the Russian and English novelists, it may not be out of place to give a short sketch of one of their most popular novels. The scene is laid in France, with branches in nearly every country on the globe, and the description is not only lifelike but true to nature. The story opens with a little conversation on board a ship in the harbor of Paris, in the course of which the hero casually remarks that he is politically so and so. The next thing we see the hero in a dank, dark dock, surrounded by stone walls twenty feet thick. After remaining here some few years, say five, he began to dig his way out, but was unsuccessful. One day he heard a slight picking sound on the floor of his dungeon and upon inquiring into the cause, discovered a man engaged in tunneling the solid rock, making a road to freedom. The other prisoner turned out to be his uncle on his mother's side, and the two soon struck up a friendship. After a time the old man died, leaving all his wealth to his nephew, who, ten or fifteen years after the funeral, escaped. It should be stated, however, that the cause of the uncle's death was due to eating too heartily of the ice cream furnished by the prison contractors. After escaping, the hero went to his uncle's garden and exhumed the latter's treasure, saying as he did so, "I am possessed of this mundane sphere." After getting the money, the hero went to travel in order to complete his education.

Several years after this a strange man appeared in the metropolis of France, a man of vast education and wealth. Of course he was at once the idol of all the feminine hearts. But the friends he made were not all women. After a time, however, misfortune began to overtake his male friends, all of whom had been connected in some way or other with the imprisonment of the innocent young sailor twenty years before. Of course people jumped to the conclusion that the sailor and the fine gentleman were one and the same. After bringing destruction on all his enemies, Mont, the hero, departed for the golden sunny climes of the Orient, saying, as he stepped upon his vessel, "Wait and hope."

The style of this story is inimitable, as those who have read it will testify. Get it and read it during vacation. The book can be procured from any second hand newsdealer.

\*\*\*

Probably a very small number of the students in the University have read Nikolai V. Gogol's "Dead Souls." The book has only lately been placed in the library, but now that it is here there is no reason why many should not take advantage of the opportunity to read it. It is not a new work, in fact its author has been dead many years, but it has been translated into English and published in this country only in the last two or three years. Gogol was one of the first of the modern Russian novelists, and in no way was he unworthy of his successors. The plots of his books, while seeming to be exceedingly simple, yet are really much more involved than appears at first glance. In "Taras Bulba," for example, the story seems at first only concerned with the wild freedom and fierce bravery of a few Cossacks of the fifteenth century, but behind this there is a great deal; the description of all that strange growth, the Cossack state which alone saved Russia from the Mongolian hordes. So

in "Dead Souls," the thread of the narrative is to all appearances, simple enough, but when one reads the book the beauty, and the artful artlessness grow upon him. It was surely no careless, happy-go-lucky writer, that portrayed so clearly all the consummate rascality of the hero of "Dead Souls."

But what are "dead souls?" Well, that is a question that naturally comes up and that ought to be answered. But Gogol does not answer it until he is far along in the midst of his story, and then he tells it in such a gradual, gentle way that the full meaning is not seen at first. Then "dead souls" are deceased muzhiks (peasants, serfs). So, then, this story deals with the qualities (and perhaps the quantity) the death and the hereafter of a simple, uninteresting class? No, it is this way. The "souls" are bought and sold, and that is the story. Tchitchikoff, the hero of the novel, in order to appear before men as a land and slave owner, adopts the expedient of buying dead peasants, not their bodies, to be sure, but their names. This he could do more readily because the owners of serfs had to pay tax on all "souls" whose names were down on the assessors' list, whether they were dead or not. Then every so often a revision of the list took place. Still some owners hesitated and some even refused to sell or give him the bills of sale for the "souls." Of course he did not tell the sellers what he wanted with these dead men's souls, but alleged some fanciful reason, as generosity or eccentricity, a love for psychology or a plan to defeat a stingy old uncle's will. Now, all this seems simple enough, but read the book and see. The idea is certainly a startling one, and one that at first prejudices one against the book, but then one remembers that "soul" means slave, and becomes interested. But in that very meaning of the term "souls" there is much to think of and much to arouse one. A Russian, if asked the amount of his property, would have replied in the old slave days, "So much land and so many souls." Aye, that is it, the most intolerable system of slavery that ever stained this world, a system that claimed to own not only the bodies and lives of its victims, but even maintained its right to the ownership of their very souls, or as much of them as they could keep; that was the old slavery in Russia. Though only the name "soul," was all that could be held in earthly bondage, it was not the will nor the wishes of the slave-owners that kept the soul itself out of their hands. That word "soul" as used to denote a slave opens up to view a long vista of misery and degradation that makes the heart turn sick.

#### HOW THE "NO FINAL" SCHEME WORKS.

Acting Chancellor; (in chapel)—School will close for the term Friday, March 22. Recitations will continue regularly to the last day as by vote of the faculty final examinations have been done away with this term. (Applause.)

Later: Prof. A.—The class will be prepared for an oral quiz Wednesday and then a written review Friday on the work of the term.

Prof. B., Prof. C. and Prof. D.—Ditto.

Prof. E.—The class may omit the recitation they have prepared for this morning and we will have a little written review on the last four hundred pages of the term's work so that I may have something on which to base the standings for the term.

Prof. F., Prof. G., Prof. H., I. "Ditto."

Prof. K.—The class may come prepared to answer any questions I may ask. I will confine myself to topics treated upon by works that may be found in the library.