

Esthetic Essays on Esthetic Subjects

If Agamemnon and Achilles Should Meet Within the Roped Arena

Agamemnon and Achilles were born ahead of their time—some three thousand years too soon. Had they lived at a later date they would have been dazzling ornaments in a profession for which they were eminently fitted. Instead of lording it over a few wretched Greeks bent on murderous proceedings against the Trojans, they might have wielded a mightier scepter in the realm of Esthiana had they flourished in these troubled times of fierce and nebulous assertion. If they could have been brought together in a twenty-four foot ring and allowed to fight it out, they might have reached some tangible understanding as to their relative merits, and it is really a pity that such a meeting could not have been arranged, since both showed such rare gifts of volubility and braggadocio. Had such an event taken place, Homer could have divided his great work in an altogether different manner than he did. He would have had plenty of material to work with; for his tantalizingly long-winded style would have allowed him to devote a book for each round, and the Muse would have been glad to set him straight on all the proceedings.

What a glorious spectacle it would have been—a fistie combat between these stalwart pugs. How nobly grand is the picture that rises in one's imagination as one relaxes into a contemplative mood. Overhead are the gods, seated in a hammock suspended in the clouds. In the ring stand the two chief actors sparring for an opening. Keenly alert and intent on all their movements stands the time-keeper, wise old Nestor, watch in hand, ever ready to spring some judicious advice, cautioning them to confine their operations to the region above the belt and not to hit in the clinches. On a raised dais by the ring sits the snake-charmer who was responsible for all the racket, clapping her hands in wild glee as one mighty fist finds a mark, or exchanging winks with the beautiful Teucer who stands idly by looking on. Ready for action stand the seconds with their water pails, camphor bottles, and sponges. Groped around the ring stand the stately Grecian heroes, each one backing his favorites with bronze tipped spears, noble slaves and dearly won coin, and clamoring for odds, or giving the same. Tawny-haired Menelaus, good at the war cry, looms up in their midst, emitting whoops of satisfaction whenever the shepherd of the host secures a good lead, or quieting the clamor of the opposition whenever things go the other way. Ulysses, sly dog, stands silently keeping his own counsel, waiting for the issue of the combat to become a certainty before he lays his bets. Ajax—the man who like Orgetorix made an end to his life—and his brother, who forget to put lightning rods on his ship and suffered in consequence, take mental notes of all the tricks and feints employed, laying up a stock of knowledge that will be useful to them later. Diomedes and all the rest are there, and back of them stand the hot pallor—the valiant Greeks—who shout when the leaders shout and hold their tongues when the leaders are silent. And afar off are the Trojans crowded on their wall, watching the fray, while Hector burns sacrifices in the groves of Ida, in hopes that Achilles may meet disaster.

But the gods are too busy to notice him. The scene before them is too interesting. Now it is Agamemnon who lands the death-bringing uppercut upon the exposed jaw, and now it is Achilles who bores in with a whack resembling the crash of a noble ash felled on the mountain side by the woodman's axe—even a keen-edged axe. With right good will they thump each other, even as the sturdy housewife belabors her lazy spouse with a thick broom-stick, when he desirerth not to work. Now one falls back with reeling brain and limbs unstrung, with darkness descending upon his eyes, only to be revived by the honey-sweet wine, and to light in with greater zest. Thus it goes throughout the weary rounds. Above them sit Hera and Aphrodite, looking daggers at each other, each one ready to dodge down and pull up the stakes or swipe the time keeper's fob, if her

favorite gets into a tight place. From afar comes the tremulous voice of Thetis, beseeching Zeus to honor her son with the victory and threatening to go back on him if he doesn't.

Who will win? Who'll get the girl? The fight was never fought and so there's no telling. Naturally one would wager on Achilles, but the fates are uncertain and the surest way of keeping your money is not to bet.

Such a combat as has been just portrayed would have been much better than the empty fulminations which constitute the action of the first book of the Illiad, and had Homer been alive to his opportunity and arranged a fistie combat such as above outlined, the study of Greek would today be the most popular in the whole curriculum. If Shakespeare could have told him about the tide that has such a portentous effect in the affairs of men, he might have seen his opportunity. He gives us all the preliminaries of the prize fight and then disappoints us by side-tracking the main event and bringing in a very poor substitute. And by the way, this seems to be a good proof that Homer wrote only the first book of the Illiad and some one else finished the rest. For it is apparent from the trend of the conversation in the first book that he intended a prize fight, for otherwise what would be the use of all that blowing? As it is there seems to be nothing to reconcile the first book to the rest of the poem, and hence Homer must have been dull witted or he neglected his opportunity, or he was not the author of the balance of the poem.

In the Field of Debate.

On the California-Stanford debate, one of the chief academic events of the year, on the Pacific coast, attention at those institutions is now centering. A recent number of "The Daily Californian" contains a lengthy account of the final preliminary contest.

When at Stanford Professor Ross figured prominently in the training of these teams for annual debates. The question for this year is: "Resolved, That the system of criminal procedure in France menaces the liberties of the individual." To direct the training of Stanford students in logical composition and debate President Jordan last year appointed Professor R. M. Alden (Harvard), then instructor in English in the University of Pennsylvania.

Ames and Drake debate the English cabinet and the presidential system of the United States, their merits for the government of a free people.

The law department of the University of Missouri has arranged a debate with the Kansas City Law School. Each class will elect the debaters. The question will probably be, "Resolved, That appeals in criminal cases as a matter of right should be abolished."

For the Missouri-Texas debate Missouri has got Texas to accept the question Yale and Harvard thrashed out last month: "Resolved, That the history of trade unions in the United States for the last twenty years shows a tendency detrimental to the general welfare."

For the Missouri-Illinois debate a Monroe Doctrine question has been agreed on. Unlike the question Kansas is trying to get Nebraska to accept, however, it is definite. It is "Resolved, That the United States ought to abandon its policy of invariably resisting the extension of European dominion in South America."

In the new series arranged by Missouri and Texas the teams will be composed of only two instead of three men.

You All Know Him.

One of the best bills of the present season has been engaged by the management of the Lyric theatre for next week and will be headed by the popular Lincoln instrumental comedian, Mr. Fred A. Karcher. Others to appear are Jack and Paul, a very clever comedy sketch team, and Miss Belle Stewart, a high class vocalist, together with new pictures and songs.

The Co-Op's the Place To Get Your Books and Supplies 2nd Semester Books and Supplies

For all Departments.

Law Books, Medical Books, Engineering Books,
Art Supplies, Second Hand Books,

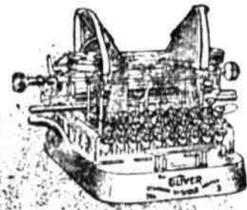
The Co-Op Owned and Operated
By Students

The Shadow

OF
The
OLIVER
Typewriter

The Standard Visible Writer

EXTENDS OVER
ALL THE
EARTH



ART
CATALOG
FREE
ON
APPLICATION

The
OLIVER
Typewriter Co.
OMAHA
NEB.

Homeseekers' Excursions.

On February 2 and 16, March 1 and 5, April 5 and 19. Tickets will be sold at one fare plus \$2.00. Return limit 21 days. The points to which they will be sold are as follows: All points in Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and Texas; also to many points in New Mexico, Arkansas, Arizona and Louisiana.

Call and get full information.



City office
Cor. 10th and
O street

Depot Office
7th and P St.
Lincoln, Neb.

LINDSEY'S CIGAR STORE

Up-to-Date Soda Fountain
and Magazines.

118 North 11th Street.

POWELL'S BILLIARD AND POOL HALL

was opened this fall with tables all newly covered, best cues and balls, newly papered, everything up-to-date, including customers.

B. P. POWELL, 146 N 11th St. Phone L 664

Rates \$1.00 and \$1.25 Per Day.
Special Rates by the Week.

BOYD HOTEL

MRS. KATE MARTIN, PROP.
Only one block from B. & M. Depot. Only one
block from Post Office. Near all
street car lines.

731 E Street. Lincoln, Nebraska

GEO. A. WILSON CONTRACTOR AND BUILDER

Office and Shop, 222 S. 12th. Telephone B 1397

Estimates furnished upon application.
Job work promptly attended to.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA