

LITERARY.

One of the most valuable periodicals recently added to the university library is *Public Opinion*. It contains the pith of the most important news of the country. It will pay students to examine it.

In the *Strand* of this month Max O'Rell speaks in his usual happy and lively way of American women. While he is quite positive that there is no such thing as a typical American *man*, he is equally positive that the American *lady* is typical. The following interesting extract shows why he holds this opinion: "In France you will see monsieur and madame arrive together... talking and smiling at each other—though married. Equal footing. In England you will see John Bull leading the way. He does not like dining in public and thinks it very hard that he should not have the dining room all to himself... Meek and demure, with eyes cast down, follows Mrs. John Bull. But in America! Oh, in America, behold the dignified, nay, majestic entry of Mrs. Jonathan; a perfect queen going towards her throne, bestowing a glance on her subjects right and left—and Jonathan behind.

Mr. Lowell was a prodigious worker and had many of the unmethodical habits that are said to come with genius. He disliked details and rules, and took up correspondence, reading, and physical exercise without the slightest regard to order. He was a careful reader and possessed great powers of concentration. The production of a poem or essay of any considerable length was always carried on under severe mental tension and, as a result, he would be mentally and physically exhausted. To break up the continuity of his work, his wife and daughter often resorted to ingenious expedients, and in this way saved him from absolute prostration. He always gave considerable thought to the plans of his essays and poems of which he would make a skeleton and fill it out as he wrote. Discarding desks, he always wrote on a pasteboard pad which rested on his knees; he was careful in composition, and the pages of his copy would be filled with erasures and interlineations.

[The columns of this department are always open to such original work as may come under the approval of its editor. We print below an original sketch submitted to the department of English by Morgan M. Maghee, '92.—Ed.]

Camped on the side of a mountain was a party of hunters. They had started from the ranch early in the morning, and had reached the camping ground in time to be well prepared for night. As darkness crept up from the valley, they collected around the camp-fire to enjoy its brightness, to discuss the events of that day, and to forecast the events of the next.

Their destination was a small lake near the summit of the mountain. To reach this lake, they had yet seven miles to go. Though the distance was short, the road, or rather the trail, was difficult. For it wound up the side of the rugged mountain, through dense timber, along huge banks of snow, to the very summit of the mountain, then down a short distance to the lake. To add to the difficulty, the trail was dim and was obstructed by much fallen timber.

Appreciating the difficulties, the party intended to make an early start next morning. So, before light had fairly reached the valley below, the horses were saddled, the tent struck, and necessary provisions packed in the panniers ready to be placed upon the pack-horse. But the pack-horse was not ready—a chronic condition with such animals. He seemed to feel that the party was imposing upon him; and,

although it was only by use of his heels that he could express his resentment, he became very expressive. The hunters understood him; they were sorry for him; but they could not help him.

When he realized the uselessness of his exertions, he sulkily submitted to the inevitable. As the panniers were placed in position he groaned. As the load increased in weight, his groans increased until they were of such magnitude as to alarm the youngest hunter. That person looked for some sign of alarm in the faces of his companions; but as he could detect none he remained silent.

When at last the pack was securely lashed and all was ready to start, the pack-horse with a groan calculated to move the inexperienced sank to the ground.

At this the young hunter, no longer able to restrain himself, exclaimed: "I knew that that load was too heavy." But one of the more experienced members reached for a club that was near by. The pack-horse saw and understood. His understanding greatly lightened his load, judging from the way he got up. In fact, after this, the animal moved so willingly and so briskly that the young hunter, who was leading him, began to realize that pack-horses are queer creatures. He realized, too, before he had gone far that they experienced a feeling akin to revenge. At least that is the only plausible theory by which he could explain the pack-horse's invariable practice of going on the wrong side of every tree—a practice which consumed considerable time.

To make progress more rapid, the hunter turned the animal loose and attempted to drive him. This plan worked excellently until the pack-horse came to two trees that were too close together to allow him to pass with his pack. As might have been expected, he made the attempt and was wedged in between the trees before the young hunter could interfere.

When tightly wedged the animal ceased to struggle and waited patiently to be extricated. It was not from the young hunter then that the pack-horse received sympathy. In fact the very patience of the animal seemed to exasperate him. Noticing this, one of the older hunters wisely took charge of the animal after it had been extricated and repacked; and the party moved forward to the lake.

As for the young hunter, the beauty of the lake and the grandeur of the surroundings made him forget, for a time, his experience with the pack-horse, and brought his temper again to its normal condition. He could cherish no gloomy or revengeful thoughts as he looked upon that peaceful lake that was surrounded on three sides by impassible mountains covered with timber and capped with snow. As he looked down through the clear, pure water of the lake and saw beautiful speckled trout darting about at a depth of twenty-five or thirty feet, he felt contented with himself and with the world. In this state of feeling he thought that no one could be so morose and unimaginative as to be unaffected by such scenery.

MORGAN M. MAGHEE.

A Communication.

To Editor of THE HESPERIAN:

In the last issue of THE HESPERIAN an editorial says in defense of the recently adopted elective system: "We believe this system will give the student just what preparation he needs to cope with the trials and tribulations of life. Life is too short to become acquainted with all the knowledge that the learned men have ever possessed. Most students enter college with a future career mapped out. . . . If the student chooses sciences for his field of operation, it is highly commendable that he should study science."

The above lines, express, as I know, the opinions of many students, and of a few educators. But, do they not express