

ion." Is the one lone landmark of former days the tree on the first page of the *Palo Alto*? Is this tree, the almost sacred landmark of the past, still remembered for the present and will it continue to be remembered in the future by the editors of the *Palo Alto*? Or is this landmark of the past forgotten, or is it merely overshadowed by the great landmark erected for the benefit of future ages?

#### ALUMNI AND FORMER STUDENTS.

Editor Alumni Department, HESPERIAN:

The discussion in your paper about the advisability of the university continuing a member of the N. C. O. A. I have read with considerable interest. A leading editorial on this subject in a late number I have read with amusement and wonder. The amusement was caused by the dense ignorance of facts displayed; the wonder of seeing such a snapshot article in THE HESPERIAN. I refer to the editorial insisting that the university orators wrote their state contest orations before breakfast, and committed them while eating, or at some other absurd time.

Now, unless my memory fails me, Professor Warner, your first representative, worked as long as nine months on his oration. The reputation that he enjoys, and the position he holds, are a sufficient guarantee that his oration was not of the before-breakfast sort. On the contrary it was probably a finer oration than any that has ever been produced in this state, by a college student. If he did write it before breakfast and commit it while eating, I wish some of the rest of you would go and do likewise. The undersigned had the misfortune (seriously) to be your second representative in the memorable Crete contest. He worked at least nine months on his speech. Mr. Fogarty your third representative worked, to the writers positive knowledge, three months on his, and more for all the writer knows to the contrary. Mr. Chappell your fourth and last representative worked on his speech for over twelve months. So much for the before-breakfast business.

College oratory can never acquire the dignity of a business-like pursuit. Oratory is not pursued calmly and quietly like history, botany, or engineering. Its main purpose seems to be to afford some one an opportunity for displaying himself amid applause and blue lights and to ward off consumption by furnishing vigorous lung exercise to the students in general. This you will not believe. But they of us who have been there are united in this opinion. Why did not Mr. Fogarty and the writer enter a second time? It was admitted without qualification that they could have carried the day had they tried again. Simply because the glory and loveliness of inter-collegiate oratory had passed away as far as they were concerned. They had learned by experience how superficial and insincere college oratory at bottom is.

This is largely the way the public feels. The cultured portion of the public throughout the state classes inter-collegiate oratory with tin-horn tootings, statue paintings, foot ball games and other "periodical outbreaks of general cussedness." We, out here in the state, don't care a continental whether the university loses or wins. What we do deplore is to see the university with its reputation for earnest business-like work having anything to do with the insincere, unbusiness-like foolishness of inter-collegiate oratorical contests. There is considerable fun, the writer admits, in going off somewhere on a train, tooting your horns, and yelling your university yell and rattle-brained class yells. But such a precedure should be characteristic of foot ball games, and not of oratory. Between the two there is a great difference. Foot-ball comes under the domain of sport. People look upon it as sport. It affects only the sporting side of university life. Oratory

comes under the domain of business just as do history, chemistry or botany. It effects the educational reputation of the university, the faculty, the curriculum, the thoroughness of the work done. That students and public class both together must be prejudicial all around. The writer fails to see how it can be any thing else. The less you believe, or think you believe that college oratory is profitable, sincere, and business-like when in your hearts you know it is not, the sooner will this inter-collegiate-oratorical-contest foolishness die its predestined death.

This business presents another phase: Most of you heard the inter-state contest two years ago. In addition the writer heard the inter-state contest of three years ago. One who hears much of this cannot but be struck with the great similarity in all college orations. How they reek with conventionalities! Nine out of ten refer in some way to the American eagle, and the stars and stripes, (whoop) the Mayflower, the French Revolution, Egypt, as Church would put it, cut a pretty wide swarth. In college oratory as in something else, I forget what, all roads seem to lead to Rome. If there ever was a college orator who meant what he said in his oration, the writer will gladly pay his railroad expenses for the pleasure of seeing him. The orator may have meant in an artificial momentary way what he said. But to mean it in a sincere, furious, permanent way, with your whole soul, is a very different thing. It is only the latter sort that counts, and to have anything to do with the other pyrotechnic variety in the writer's opinion do not pay.

Why all of you instinctively admit this. Let a boy make a speech on business in your debating club, your athletic or HESPERIAN meetings, or in fact anywhere, and make it with the oratorical contest style of articulation and gesture, and you would laugh him down in short order. You always do it. Yet the same ridiculous mannerisms applied to "oratory" are looked upon as the pink of perfection. How there can be any sense in cultivating a style of speaking, for the sole purpose of gaining a little cheap glory, when the same style applied to serious business affairs makes them ridiculous, the writer, in his obtuseness, fails to see.

The writer in conclusion, also fails to see how anyone of a sound mind can advise the university to have anything more to do with this oratorical-contest foolishness. It tends to make the university ridiculous. It has by your own tacit every-day admission no practical benefits. You yourselves do not look upon it as a serious matter. The writer who has been there can testify from experience that it does not pay in any sense whatever. He knows that three of the four university representatives would advise you to quit.

The writer suppose—nay expects—that a large number of inconsistencies will be shown up in this by some razor-edged intellect. Very sincerely,  
GEO. W. DANVERS.

A recent letter from "Baron" Stoughton now at Harvard divinity school may be of interest. There seems to be a slight vein of homesickness in some portions of it. He does not think there is much enthusiasm at the divinity school nor energy enough in the people of Cambridge to build sidewalks. But one thing that all will be glad to hear is that our university bears a most excellent reputation among the post graduates of Harvard.

"I worked all vacation on a 'topic' for the Hebrew literature class. I just finished it to-night, though I shall have to add my bibliography yet. My subject is the first six chapters of Joshua. I have to separate them into the various documents, of the patching together of which the narrative is made. It is very badly mixed up and I have not cleared it up any, of course."