

A library is the centre of the intellectual life of a college. Its importance cannot be dwelt upon too strongly, and its influence stretches out into the whole country, wherever its readers may chance to go. There is a continual increase of interest taken in the library by the students of the University. This augurs good. Indeed, the most casual observer cannot help noting how the reading of to-day exceeds that of, say, two years ago. Then the ambitious and the most advanced students read considerably, but now the desire to read seems to be universal and all classes are alike earnest and enthusiastic, in consulting the encyclopaedias, dictionaries, gazetteers and periodicals, for they throw light upon the questions we meet with in our studies. When studying some particular topic, or some question of immediate popular interest, students may, with a little help from the librarians, supply themselves with ample information. And besides this library work, the number of books daily drawn and taken home to read, is surprising to one who is not acquainted with the time used upon the text lesson alone. If books are well used they are among the best things that man can possess, or become familiar with, but if abused they are the worst. Thomas Carlyle has said, "Of all the things which man can do or make here below, by far most momentous, wonderful and worthy, are the things we call books." But the true science of reading is something more than to afford amusement for an idle hour. Most readers admit this and yet with many, their own practice is sadly at variance with the principle whose theoretical correctness they readily accept. It should also be remembered that the end and aim to be sought in all reading is something more than the acquirement of knowledge, or the attainment of individual culture, but the proper development of a true and highly personal character, and also to be able to utilize those acquirements in the work of making other men nobler and better than they now are.

STILL there remain a few papers and a few men who spasmodically seize upon our college system, making it a target for their wit and penetrating sarcasm. Men usually who never see the inside of a recitation room, write in the most pertinacious and convincing style upon subjects of which they are perfectly ignorant. Notice the picture they draw of the average college graduate,—a young man with delicate mustache, glasses and cane, who sponges on his father for a living, looks upon the world as a very inferior place and scorns to work for his daily bread—an educated fop who dreams his life away and never amounts to anything. But the typical young man of this inspired genius' creation picks stones until he is twenty-five and then bounds up the ladder of

success into the presidential chair.

In short, colleges are attacked on the ground that their graduates are not "practical" men. Now we do not hesitate to say that, as a class, college graduates are the most practical men in the world and we believe the facts will prove it. This is true even in America where self-educated men are so common, while in England or Germany a university education is almost indispensable to any great success in life. England's statesmen, warriors, writers and inventors are largely composed of her college graduates. Taking into account the comparatively small proportion of her graduates in the community it is astonishing to note how many of them have and still hold position of the highest importance. Among our presidents the Adamses graduated at Harvard, Jefferson, Monroe and Tyler at Williams and Mary, Madison at Princeton, Harrison at Hampden—Sidney, Pierce at Bowdoin, Buchanan at Dickinson, Grant at West Point, Hayes at Kenyon, and Garfield at Williams. Surely this is not a bad record. Then the supreme court of the United States has been largely recruited from the same ranks and a list of the men who have filled the highest positions in our national affairs would not be half completed were we to leave out our college graduates. The record challenges scrutiny in every branch of our social economy. There is no danger that college men will go to the wall, and our indignation is justly aroused when we hear young men being cautioned against such an education on the grounds that it is not practical. There are many liberally educated men who are not strictly practical, but whose lives and examples will aid in making many better men of hundreds of those who find inspiration in the lives of great and good men. There are the professional men, the doctors, lawyers and the clergy, while no mention has been made of the writers—our Bancrofts, our Longfells, Hales and Curtises.

Of course there are men, who, even though they did take a complete course of study, seem to have failed in life, but a college does not claim to create brains and character; its work is to train, improve and develop them, and if such persons had not gone through college, their failure would have been the more certain, the more irretrievable.

Thousands of our young men now, are teaching school, acting as book agents, giving themselves up to the most exacting labor, running into debt and then working for years to pay off the incumbrance; even more, they devote the best part of their lives to gain what is sneered at as impractical, but in due time reaping their reward in social and political success. Consequently, it seems more than careless to deter young men from seeking the best education in their power to obtain, and newspapers would do a