

prize poem was like a prize sheep in that it was designed simply for the purposes of exhibition, and for anything else than this, was completely worthless. The same thing may be said of prize orations. The undergraduate orator is not expected to instruct, nor to exhort, nor to tickle his audience. If he attempts any of these things he may be able to succeed measurably in doing any one of them, but he will only get laughed at. It is expected of him that he shall develop in some manner not too original, certain ideas, that he shall use language of a given degree of smoothness and force, and that the whole shall be delivered with the proper inflections of the voice and motions of the body. After leaving school he will have no more occasion to produce such orations than he will have to do the giant swing that he learned in the gymnasium. A man, however, who has sufficient acuteness to adapt means to ends so as to enable him to win an oratorical prize, ought to be able to see the true worth and worthlessness of the thing accomplished and not be duped into thinking himself a genius because he has succeeded in a boyish exercise. Not to the prize orator but to the fellows that have a latent hankering to be prize orators, does an oratorical contest result in the most good. The thought of it is before them in all their rhetorical work, and an unconfessed but eternal hope will induce them to do more good literary work than the most elaborate marking system in the college world could get out of them.

THE idea that students are the most unhealthy class of animals that live outside of Indiana ague swamps is probably false, and certainly ought to be so. Students have allotted to them twenty four full hours per day, and these they are to employ in fitting themselves as completely as may be for the work of life. If sound bodily health is a thing to be obtained by conscious effort, it would seem as though persons so situated would surely have it. Yet even when we leave out of the question those wondrous beings who really delight in a yellow skin, and in what they think an intellectual air, the great majority of students rely upon strenuous efforts for mental improvement, but "trust to luck" for good health. Fortune, however, does better by them than might be expected, and we believe that a better average of health is found among students than in the community as a whole. Town-bred pastoral poets who know nothing about the laboring classes either in the country or elsewhere, are in the habit of uttering twaddle about the health and happiness of those who earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. It is nevertheless a fact that the average laboring man is not healthy. He may be strong but that is another thing. The great oceans of patent medicine that

are being absorbed by the people of this country every year, are not imbibed wholly by fussy old women; but doses that would appall a veterinary surgeon are swallowed by the seeming giants that build our railroads, raise our crops, and quarry our building materials. When any one breaks down while attending school it is promptly known and the ambition to learn something, is thereafter thought to be a very unhealthy one to cherish; but when ill health overtakes a person who is engaged in some other pursuit the misfortune is charged to "providence" and a "humble spirit of obedience" is enjoined. Many instances are known to us where the health of a student has improved after the beginning of the college course, and when such instances are as numerous as they should and might be, the real advantages of a higher education will begin to be enjoyed. The ridiculous "division of labor" which gives fifteen years to growth, ten to mental improvement, and the rest of a man's life to dyspepsia can best be at once abandoned.

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#### CRITICISM.

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The last performance, or rather non-performance, of the Hesperian Board, comes especially under the head of criticism. Treating it generally, many truths may be deduced from it. It gives an excellent opportunity to moralize.

Moral reflection No. 1; that different persons often look at the same thing in opposite ways: as the Romans have it, "quot homines, tot sententiae"

Moral reflection No. 2; that the actor and the one acted upon, sometimes do not agree in the conception of what has passed between them.

Moral reflection No. 3; that even consistent Y. M. C. A. members occasionally get angry.

Moral reflection No. 4; that silence, though golden, may be carried too far.

Moral reflection No. 5; that the doctrine of original sin is forcibly illustrated by the action of the Board. Total depravity is the only explanation of it.

Moral reflection No. 6; that there are some things people will not forgive. Christian charity and brotherly love do not rule in all things yet.

The oratorical contest fever has now broken out in this University. The indications are that it will be attended with the usual quarrels, fights, jealousies, enmities which accompany it elsewhere. Many students will spend their time and energy upon this at the cost of their necessary and essential work. The successful orator suffers the most of all, probably his attention is diverted from his studies for three or four months, and if he has not an extra reserve of common sense, his vanity receives such a stimulus that his intellect is permanently impaired, its growth checked. And to what end? What is there to be obtained worthy of so much labor? True, it is an excellent thing to be able to speak plainly and intelligibly, but this art might be acquired with less trouble and more effectively in other ways.