

theologian will be versed in science as well as in his Bible and with a mind thus enlarged he may be able to unfold the mysteries of earth and upon each new truth Christianity shall discover the seal of divinity."

Following the oration came a song by Dr. Palin Saxby, "The Stories the Stars Could Tell." This was of Mr. Saxby's own composition and we are assured by competent critics that it is a musical gem.

The only girl graduate, Miss Mary L. Jones, then read an essay on the "Influence of the English Ballad." Her appearance was charming, and she read with composure and considerable force, though, as is generally the case with young ladies, her tones were not sufficiently strong to reach the back rows of seats and the persons standing up against the wall.

The following synopsis will give a faint idea of the excellencies of this most pleasing exercise:

The ballad marks a stage in the literary development as certainly as does the stone or iron age mark an era in the industrial growth of a people. English literature has not resulted from evolution. The Elizabethan writers were the result of a violent revolution instead of a national growth.

Originally the ballad was not a native of English soil. The Saxons were not an adventurous people, or if they were, they possessed little imagination to turn their exploits into verse. But with the advent of the Danes came the minstrel and ballad.

The Northmen possessed the vivid imagination necessary to appreciate the poetic in their exploits, and to turn them into the ringing rhyme of the ballad. Wherever they penetrated there the minstrel followed, singing first the songs of his native land, then the deeds of the conquered race.

The ballads of the middle age perfectly mirrored the emotional life of the people, whose feelings were not yet deadened by cruelty. The clear, ringing note of the ballad was martial music to the warrior, exciting him to higher, nobler deeds.

The ballad is pre-eminently the poetry of feudalism, chivalry and the crusades. The wild raids of feudal warfare were its very life; and when these ceased and a more peaceful civilization settled upon England the minstrel passed out of national life.

The middle ages are looked upon as a blank in English literature, and so they are as far as formal expression is concerned. The Greeks are the only people who passed from the simplicity of the ballad to the philosophy of Socrates. The nature of Shakspeare is not the nature of the ballad, but in fact a nature with whole centuries of civilization behind it. A brilliant literature was kept up from Milton, but it lacked national force.

Through all the years of artificial culture civilization was steadily advancing. Social and political growth was accomplished by mental progress. The cultured circle was increasing, now and then including one who still held the ballads of his fathers fresh in his hands.

The group of history in the eighteenth century was not so large but that one vigorous mind could effect all. The fourteenth century literature could not be engrafted on the eighteenth century civilization. The law of nature was at work in England not less than in France, and Scott was the first to advance the new ideas. In poetry Burns and Wordsworth completed the transformation. Poetry is no longer a display of intellect; it is the literature of the emotions, and nowhere does it send such a thrill through the heart as in the short, crisp tones of the ballad.

A piano and organ duet "La Favorita" by Miss Cochran and Dr. Saxby followed. It was an artistic and enjoyable performance. Conway G. McMillan then gave his oration on "Robert Burns," which may be summarized as follows:

There was a time one hundred years ago, when reforms of every nature were characteristic features of the period. Politics, religion, social states were changed. At this time, too, English literature received an impetus in a new direction. The poetry which had so long satisfied the popular craving now became intolerable and reform was demanded. Pope and his school had inflicted their unnatural, bombastic verses upon the people until such writing and style clogged upon the appetite of every reader. Nature had been disregarded. The river of verses had been flowing through artificial groves, but had never reached the virgin forests. Cowper and Burns appeared as leaders of reform. Burns however was the real front of the opposition to artificiality. The environment of Burns' poems gives a clue to their popularity. Freedom, equality, nature, manhood, were the leading ideas of the time. At such a moment the whole world welcomed a writer who embodied such ideas in his verse. Burns had a sympathy

with nature unknown before his time. He drew his inspiration from the humblest sources, but succeeding in creating marvelously beautiful superstructures upon unpretentious foundations. Burns' poetry evidences his sincerity. Every word is born from truth. What Burns says he believes; what he advises has served as his own guide. There is no hollow sham of theatrical sentimentalism about the verse of the Bard of Ayershire, Carlyle tells us that a sincere man is always respected. This utterance found an example in Burns. He was not only natural and sympathetic, but strong in his mental make-up. Although not a scholar he knew how to use the tools of language, and that, too, more artistically than many of those who had better advantages than himself. Thus the genius of Burns is seen to be broad and allcompassing.

Mr. A. G. Warner's subject was an unusual one—"The Lack of Brains"—and he treated it in his characteristic and muscular style. A vigorous, eloquent speaker on all occasions, he fairly out-did himself on this his last appearance as a student of the University. An idea of the thought of his oration may be gleaned from the appended skeleton:

The good to be derived from each new reformatory movement is over-estimated, because of the enthusiasm of its champions. This has been the case with the various religions, the strong government idea and the belief in the social omnipotence of liberty. The latest alleged panacea for all social evils is the reason, supplemented by the work of education. It was at first supposed the reason of the "natural man" could of itself accomplish all things; but that this was a mistake was shown when a courtesan, crowned as a goddess of reason, lead the mob on a devil's dance through Paris, and the failure might have been anticipated from the mental awkwardness which even the keenest intellects had displayed when handling even mathematical problems.

Reformers now preach education as the one thing needful, but education is only a "drawing out" and if there be nothing but folly in a man the best education can do him little good. There graduate from our colleges many fools. The public schools contain many thousands of children who have not brains enough to understand long division. The reasoning powers, like all the rest of man's faculties are in an uncompleted state. The struggle for existence now takes a form which makes life itself depend upon intelligence. No such thing exists as a conflict between labor and capital. It is a struggle between the mentally weak and the mentally strong.

The survival of the fittest implies the extermination of the unfit. Nature does not believe that all men are equal and remorselessly accomplishes the killing of the mentally weak, contending against this elemental law, reason assisted by education must work slowly, painfully, unassuredly. This fact may as well be acknowledged for though some benefits may result from delusion, delusion is not a benefit. Realizing the boundlessness of the work to be accomplished, man will be better circumstanced to do what he is indeed fitted to perform, and though he no longer expects to come up to the horizon, nor lay hands upon the rainbow, though like an undecieved Columbus, he knows that the world is larger than his imagination had ever pictured it, yet he feels that the unknown land of the future is beautiful and bounteous, having beauties to cheer and riches to reward all noble efforts.

Each graduate received a small cart-load of flowers, books, and other favors, besides compliments enough to turn the heads of ordinary individuals.

Mrs. Grace B. Dales closed the programme with an exquisitely given song, after which the usual degrees were conferred upon the graduates. In addition, Hon. A. W. Field and Mr. H. H. Wilson were given permission to attach M. A. to their names, and the degree of B. A. was given Miss Madge Hitchcock, who was a member of the class of '78.

Immediately after the sound of oratory in the Opera House had died away the procession re-formed and returned to the campus, where the cornerstone of the chemical laboratory was laid. Speeches were made by the Chancellor, C. H. Gere, C. A. Holmes, A. W. Field, and Prof. Bessey, Prof. Sherman read a poem, the band played stirring airs and the artillery squads fired a number of guns in honor of this important event in the history of our University.

The most pleasant and successful Commencement ever held here was agreeably brought to a close by the Chancellor's levee in the senate chamber. The hall was filled until a late hour by students and friends of the University, who were bidding adieu to each other and to the college year of 1884-85.