

ments spent in looking over them will show that they constitute an important addition to the equipment of the College of Fine Arts. Thanks in this case are due Mrs. S. C. Elliot, of Lincoln, who alone secured the gift and managed the perplexing business of making the transfer of ownership from the French government to the University of Nebraska. Through carelessness, and perhaps some ignorance, we gave credit for this disinterested labor to the wrong party, even failing to mention the name of Mrs. Elliott. However, she is appreciated by the University, and the Hesperian awkwardly takes off its hat and makes its best bow in recognition of her services.

The impatience that is so often shown by those who are compelled to spend their time in the main building, has excellent grounds. For weeks the sound of the hammer, the mild but penetrating tap of the steam-fitter, the tramp of the laborer and the smell of paint has made consecutive thought difficult and careful study impossible. It appears that "unforeseen circumstances" were responsible for the confusion; though a majority of the students are outspoken in their belief that it can be directly traced to carelessness. This paper believes that the delays that have left us so badly in the lurch at the opening of the year were caused by the desire on the part of the authorities to have the work done in the best possible manner. Contracts in some cases were advertised for a second time, and the remodeling of the chapel was not begun until the plans could be prepared by an architect of acknowledged ability. The present state of affairs is inconvenient, but vastly better than the enjoyment of completed but shoddy improvements.

THAT most important portion of the University, the Library, has been growing in the past few months with a rapidity that is indeed gratifying. A list of the most important works added will appear in these columns shortly. In the meantime, however, every student should examine for himself these new treasures, make a mental note of their location and contents, and resolve to use them. The statement is often made that few below the Junior year know how to make any progress in studying from library books because they are unacquainted with the material and the manner in which it is found. This may be an exaggeration, but it is certain that at least two year's use of the library is necessary before the student can appreciate the value and importance of the knowledge stored on those shelves. The habit of rummaging around the books should be acquired early in the course. It leads to acquaintance, and we are safe in saying that this acquaintance and familiarity does not lead to contempt.

MISCELLANY.

The character of Laertes Shakespeare has portrayed as the direct opposite of Hamlet. He has given him none of the mental characteristics of the latter. We do not find Laertes concerning himself about the question of "to be or not to be." He does not take the trouble to search his own mind, to analyze himself, his thoughts, and motives. That he exists is sufficient to him. The whence and where do not haunt him for a solution. He is content to let such matters take care of themselves. He goes about as a man of the world, merely following the bent of his nature, taking no thought of whither it leads him. He lives as many other men, totally unconscious of his own existence. Its mysteries do not puzzle him. He is saved this inconvenience.

In the first part of the play he obtains permission to go to France, where he leads a life of pleasure just as all other fashionable young men. In this occupation he is entirely absorbed until the news is brought of his father's death. Then he bestirs himself and comes back resolved to avenge the killing of Polonius; for he is really attached to his parent, and is sincere in his grief. Natures of his kind are easily moved, for he is man the animal with his passions and affections. When these are touched he is aroused and unrestrainedly obeys the brute instinct,—revenge. He gives the reins to his feelings and recklessly determines on vengeance at all costs. He does not waste any time in considering from what motive he is acting. Probably he is not aware that he has a motive. He takes no thought of himself or his condition. His mind is fixed on one objective thing, the punishment of the one responsible for his father's death. When he finds Hamlet is the guilty party his rage knows no bounds. The king takes advantage of this opportunity and spurs Laertes on to wreak vengeance. This he does without investigating how much Hamlet was responsible. He poisons his sword for the fencing-contest to make sure of his purpose. But in that his own weapon is turned against him, the poison is brought back upon the poisoner. The presence of death calms Laertes, and he sees for the first time that he has acted hastily and rashly, that he has condemned Hamlet without just cause. He repents of his course, absolves him from guilt, and asks his forgiveness.

Laertes compared with the mass of men is really a superior character. He has many generous and noble impulses. He does not possess the stability and firmness of Horatio. He is not sustained by any serious purpose. For he lacks intellectual power, mental momentum. He is not capable of earnest, sustained thought. It is not his nature to reflect. His acts, like a child's, spring from impulse.

In the play he serves to throw in relief the character of Hamlet by the contrast in their dispositions. Each is the other's negative. The one has a subjective existence, the other an objective, the former's eye is turned within, the latter's without. Laertes' simple and unconscious mode of life is balanced by Hamlet's profound thought and earnestness. Together they illustrate that aphorism of Goethe: "thought expands but lames, action animates but narrows." Hamlet represents the extreme class of the first rule, Laertes the second. He lives only in doing. He has been a man of the world, his whole life has been taken up in its various, petty mechanical duties and pleasures, mostly the latter. His reflective powers, if he has any at all, lie dormant. This mode of life has brought him to rely entirely on action. He knows no other course. When his passions are aroused, he follows his impulse, without any deviation proceeds directly to seek