

ent colleges of the same state, which cannot result in good to the cause of education. There is still another feature which is brought forcibly to mind by the late contest, and that is the oft-condemned habit of plagiarism. The latest and most flagrant instance of this is the case of Mr. Bradshaw, who won first place in the Ohio state contest. This practice is one of the results of personal and college rivalry, and is simply one of the many bad features of oratorical contests. Everything seems to condemn these contests, and it can be but a matter of a very short time before they will be thrown aside.

THERE has been some interest manifested in a field day, now that it has been mentioned so often in our columns, but as yet not enough to inspire someone to take hold of it and push it. Several have spoken to us of their willingness to take part in the exercises and we anticipate that there would be no trouble in providing interesting and lively sports for one day of Commencement week. To have it that week would remove the principal objection to having it and it could fill an afternoon, say Tuesday afternoon, very enjoyably. We ought to have something of this kind and now, when we have the material and the inclination on the part of the participants, we should have no excuse for not having it. If our campus is not large enough the prospects are good to secure the use of the base ball grounds. Some one take hold of it and push it, and we cannot but make it a success. The base ball nine, the cadets and the band are willing, and an organizer only is needed. Walk up, you burly Soph, and take the initiative and success will be yours.

It is reported there is a movement on foot to establish the system of the delivering of the term essays, forensics and orations in chapel. This is a movement which has many arguments in its favor, yet we believe that in this institution, far from good results would follow its establishment. With our present heavy courses students can scarcely find time to prepare their productions for society, while if they were compelled to write a production and deliver it in chapel, they would be deprived of the advantage of using the same production as the term work in composition and in regular society work. The problem would then arise: which is the more important, the regular class work, public rhetoricals, or society work? Class work could not be slighted and therefore either society or public rhetoricals would be. Now this is not mere theory; it has been shown to be a result in other institutions. The question is a live one in Washburn College, of our neighboring state of Kansas, and so live is it that the *Argo* declares that

"either the societies or public rhetoricals must go." So will it confront us, and if we want our societies to stand, if we want the drill and recreation society gives us, we should not consent to public rhetoricals.

A SUMMER IDYL.

The firelight dances before me,
 Something moist from my eyelids I wipe;
 Perhaps it is only the smoke though,
 Curling up from my briarwood pipe.
 My thoughts are scarce worth the telling;
 You've oft heard the same thing before;
 Still I'll tell them, they might interest you,
 An Idyl of Summer no more.
 We met up among the White Mountains,
 That day I shall never forget;
 I remember the place and the hour,
 Yes, Jim, I remember it yet.
 I can hear her voice even now, Jim,
 As she said, while my heart throbs stood still,
 "Say, Mister, Pa told me to ask you,
 How soon you could settle your bill?"

—Lampoon.

COUNT TOLSTOI.

There have been very few writers of fiction, or, indeed, of any other kind of literature, who have so bound themselves up in their works as has Count Lyof Tolstoi. Probably no man ever lived who so thoroughly seized and assimilated what he saw and experienced; which was to be afterwards utilized. It may, therefore, be interesting to study somewhat closely the character of the man, and to discover, if possible, the causes which led him to accomplish his great life work, and to trace their connection with each other.

As W. D. Howells says in his interesting article on Tolstoi, written for *Harper's Weekly*, the mere mention of the Count's birth place conveys to us a vague impression of remoteness, which, however, does not tend to increase our interest in the man. It was in one of those obscure and unimportant villages in eastern Russia, that Tolstoi was born. It was there that he gathered some of those lasting impressions of nature which a child is so quick to perceive and retain, and which he afterwards reproduced so vividly in books. The irksomeness of school life was exceedingly distasteful to him, and, like his predecessor Gogol, he soon abandoned his technical studies, and went out into the world to gain the knowledge he desired by intercourse with his fellow men. And how well he made use of his observations we have only to open his books to discover.

When Tolstoi was about twenty-four, he went on an expedition to the Caucasus, where, in the glorious, free and healthy life of the camp, so different from the narrow, conservative and hot-house existence at St. Petersburg, he learned to look upon human affairs in a light which he had not before thought possible. It can be readily understood what an effect such a mode of existence would have had upon a man of Tolstoi's temperament, and how, granting that he had the requisite ability, he would be led to construct a romance out of the materials so profusely scattered around him. This work he accomplished in "The Cossacks," to me, one of the most fascinating books I have ever read, and that for a reason which I shall presently mention.

In reading any of Tolstoi's novels it should be constantly