

difficulties to surmount however. A large number of the new students have little realization of the importance of the literary society or have a disinclination to take up its work. A great many are afflicted with natural bashfulness which, especially if combined with the feelings just mentioned, will keep them out of society work a long time unless some outside influence is brought to bear. We are willing then that a moderate amount of "working" should be applied. We have only a few words of warning and paternal advice to these lately entered. Do not allow yourself to be taken in by exuberant instantaneous friendship or a bewitching glance from a Junior co-ed's eye. Such things have their use but they do not make orators and essayists. Accept all the oysters, candy, flattery and smiles which are offered, but be not unduly influenced thereby. Examine all the literary societies. Choose that one in which you feel that you can do the best and greatest amount of literary work. This may not always be the society which shows off to the greatest advantage in their programs. Such an one may have a number of excellent members who render fine exhibitions of their skill while the younger and less experienced member receives little practice. The social part of society work is certainly important, but any society is sure to have a number of members whose acquaintance will be both pleasant and helpful. If you are wise make literary practice your prime object and give social pleasure a minor place in making your decision. But do not delay, for the sooner you join the more good you obtain from your work.

SINCE the beginning of this year an innovation has been attempted in the matter of Senior orations by having them delivered in chapel before the assembled multitudes. There has been a general objection by all classes though of course there are exceptions. This objection has been shown very strongly in various ways—by boycotting chapel, by leaving the room when orations commenced, by much general talking against the plan and by petitioning the faculty for a change. Perhaps all these methods are not exactly what should be done but it has at least been made evident that the students as a rule do not approve of chapel orations. This change of procedure is doubtless for the purpose of giving the Seniors practice in oratory. This is a most excellent thing and we would be heartily in favor of it if we had no other means of giving this practice. But we have literary societies which are for that especial purpose and others equally important. We hold that these societies are of more importance than any one branch of study in the curriculum. If it has come to the question of society or rhetoric class we say "Down with rhetoric." It is hardly fair to expect that a Senior

will prepare distinct orations for rhetorical and society work. This requires him then to deliver an oration twice, in part at least, before the same audience. Both orator and audience would prefer that this be not so. There seems to us to be no reason why the same rule followed in the other classes should not be applied to the Senior class. If the professor of rhetoric wishes to hear the oration delivered before a large audience, let him attend the society to which each senior belongs and listen to its delivery there. If the students "are not the University," they are a rather important element of it and any attempt upon the lives or prosperity of the literary societies will be followed by trouble.

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#### LITERARY.

Before entering upon the duties of our responsible position, we made a careful study of the chief characteristics, mental and otherwise, of the great writers from the base ball editor of the primal antediluvian Chinese newspaper, down to Coding. If any one peculiarity of the gens attracted our attention more than another it was the proverbial beastly scrawl. Homer recognizes this as existing in his time. You will, no doubt, recall the beautiful simile wherein he likens the writing of the Grecian war correspondents to turkey tracks in soft mud. Now, we thought, this custom is too well established to be departed from. However, we have learned, to our sorrow, that the majority of silver linings have their cloud attachments. The typo, our honored co-laborer for the enlightenment and elevation of mankind, managed to read our word "magnified" as "manifested." If you will make this correction in the note on Mr. Lang's *Forum* article, last issue of THE HESPERIAN, you may be able to find a little meaning in the sentence.

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In a recent number of *The Fortnightly*, George Saintsbury re-discusses a well worn subject in his article on "The Present State of the Novel." It must be almost as amusing as tiresome to the modern masters of fiction to observe the analyses of their works and wrangles over them; that is, if the said masters take time to observe such things, and we are strongly inclined to believe they do not. How critically is each new novel examined, dissected, and re-examined, and how accurately is its precise tendency given and its effect foretold. While Mr. Saintsbury is somewhat given to these ways that critics have, yet he always includes so much that is of real value in his productions that we should take the more charitable plan and profit by his ideas and advice, and, if our time is limited, skip the rest. In the case of the present article, the first four pages may be set down as exceedingly fit material for skipping, consisting almost entirely of a Briton's customary discussion of the merits of first person, and written in the affable, conversational style that our cousins across the water seem to regard as especially winning. The last three pages, however, are worthy to be called good literature. Mr. Saintsbury is rejoiced at the disposition, shown by Mr. Rider Haggard and a few others, to return to the romance. Unquestionably the subjects of manner and custom analysis have become well-worn; as Mr. Saintsbury says, it is "working over and over again in shallow ground, which yields a thinner and weedier return at every cropping". The public is ready for a change, and some change must come.