

the cause of the Boers was the cause of the Puritan fathers is without historical basis. If the Puritans, under George Washington, a hundred and twenty-five years ago, had fought England because the boat-loads of emigrants that came over after the Mayflower had deposited her first load, desired representation, and desired it in vain, they might be compared to the Boers now, who began the fight after an ultimatum refusing the request for representation. Our forefathers were obstinate, but they were English and it is an undeserved calumny to compare them to the Boers of the Transvaal.

The Carnegie Library.

While the library site is still coquetting with O, Eleventh, N and J streets, it is well enough to remember that there is only one thing to be considered and that is the greatest convenience of the greatest number of people. The donor, Mr. Carnegie, is not giving this library for the purpose of increasing the value of contiguous real estate. His intention is to give books to the bookless and a reading room to the homeless, to offer students the free and continuous use of a rich man's library to give to the wretched, the aspiring and the hopeless a place to read. And in the rich man's list of blessings if he be not painfully limited, the chief of his possessions is books and a place to read them in. Friends are exacting, disappointing and easily misled. They will not be put aside without apology and the best of earthly friends are not responsive to the moods which occasionally control even the best disciplined temperament. But a book can be selected for the occasion and the mood. A man need not possess more than three to be supplied with the best comfort, the highest beauty and the most profound learning there is in the world. And one of these may be spared and still leave the man comfort, beauty, knowledge and inspiration.

That Mr. Carnegie has discovered that money will not buy much for a man, after all, is apparent by his giving it away. That his experiments in spending money have further taught him that books bring the largest returns and most lasting satisfaction is also evident in his donations for the erection of libraries.

From the days of the monastical library, where only the monks read the books, until today wherein the libraries are being thrown open to the people to select their own books from the shelves, books have been jealously guarded, then by church officers now by boards of various degrees of generosity and humanity.

I have several good reasons for believing that the Lincoln library board is composed of an unusually intelligent and devoted body of men and women, who will decide upon a site in the same spirit that Mr. Carnegie gave the library. A site, like that selected by the Boston library board, in the midst of the aristocratic part of the city where every householder has a large library of his own, is not the place for a library. The bookless need to be entreated, need to have objections like those of distance and inconvenience removed before they will consent to accept the salvation of books. Those who have formed the reading habit are like the ninety and nine—it is not necessary to consult their convenience. They are saved, and speaking from a literary point of view, they do not need a shepherd's care.

If the library is erected in the heart of the south of O street residence district, it is certain that lit-

erary salvation will not visit the bottoms in the next century. If placed further down town a few waifs from the submerged district might stray in and be dazzled and diverted by the sight of books and the comfortable interior. As the drunkards are said to lay all their degeneration to their first glass many an aged scholar attributes his accumulation of learning and his love of literature to the first devotee who exhorted him to drink deep of the Pierian spring and dive keepers have the sense to plant their traps in the paths and near the homes of the game they hunt. Church vestrys and library boards build their lures to a higher life just as far away from the ignorant, wicked and poverty stricken as they can get. And that is one reason why the saloons and dives are so much more popular and accomplish so much destruction. They are very close to the men that Christ surrounded himself with. College settlements were started by someone who said there was not a carpenter in the Carpenter's church and their influence has been as immediate as the saloons.

The Carnegie library is a rich man's offering to the poor. We have no right to place that gift where the poor cannot conveniently use it.

Sophomorical Stories.

Miss Willa Cather's review of "The Gentleman from Indiana" by Booth Tarkington in this edition of The Courier has given name and form to the distasteful hero worship that characterizes most of the stories of college men. The three or four Princeton men to whom the pages of the magazines and the valves of the book publisher's heart are mysteriously open, are prolific but rather tiresome writers. Nothing is so tiresome to outsiders as unshared enthusiasm vociferously and repeatedly expressed and insisted upon. Undergraduates are always under the influence of some enthusiasm or some emotion unintelligible to the rest of the world which has won a diploma of *sang-froid* and can walk the streets and attend the theatre in company with friends quite unobtrusively.

The football hero exploited by Mr. Tarkington, and the other two Princeton men I have in mind, whose names are not yet of quite household familiarity are popular writers just because there are two or three hundred thousand undergraduates in this country ready to bawl themselves hoarse and the neighborhood deaf, and who are always ready to perform any sort of feudal hereditary service for the few distinguished men in their college who can kick or run or throw a curved ball. The homage offered and accepted is out of proportion to the merits and achievements of the boy it is offered to. But this does not signify. He is carried on shoulders and ranks everybody in the college world and undergraduates know no other. For and to these worshippers the college yarns of the deeds, poses, favorite drinks, sacred oaths and costumes of a football Saladin are written. It is a large and tempting clientele, which if the publisher can secure, means large profits. The rest of the world which has got beyond skittles and beer, but reads the news books is still obliged to listen to the college boy in literature and make one of his audience.

It is particularly gratifying that the undergraduate body of the university of Nebraska is not given to slopping over in the Princeton style. Although the students of this university are frequently charged with bad manners in public places, they cannot justly be charged with the

offensive sentimentality and lack of common sense that seems to have broken out in Princeton. A rough reserve and bluntness characterizes the western student. That day when he unhitches horses and hitches himself between the poles of an athlete's carriage has not arrived. The breadth of his horizon and the heritage of his ancestors who broke the virgin sod and struggled barehanded with the forces of nature may keep him from the mac-worship which has rotted the fibre of Oxford, Cambridge and some of the older schools in this country.

Miss Cather.

The long struggle for recognition which discourages so many young writers has not dismayed Miss Cather, though she may have grown tired waiting for congenial employment. Recent acceptance of stories and a poem by three well known publishers is very gratifying to her many friends in Nebraska. The very clever and interesting letters which Miss Cather contributes to The Courier have served besides, the purpose of a weekly message to the hundreds of people who believe in the integrity of Miss Cather's inspiration and culture.

Even Mr. Walt Mason of Beatrice who commonly objects to Miss Cather's measuring books and plays by an art rule will rejoice that the nose of one member of his fraternity, a nose so long tightly pressed to the grindstone, is to be lifted out of our sphere into one more congenial, rarer and more worth while to breath.

THE PASSING SHOW

WILLA CATHER

A Popular Western Novel.

"You may cut him clean
of his foot-ball hair,
An' lock his toys away,
But you can't make a man
of a college star
If you try till his dyin' day."

"The Gentleman From Indiana" is a lucky book: it has been much talked about and it has had a large sale. I believe that Mr. Booth Tarkington, the author, was graduated from Princeton in '93, and that he has since been employed with this novel in which he wished to transcribe that part of the Comedie Humaine which transpires in a little town in the middle west. He takes "John Harkless," who had been a great man at college, and sets him down in Plattville, Indiana, to work out his destiny as the editor of a small country newspaper. "Harkless" apparently had been one of those perennial college stars of whom "great things" are expected—Lincoln has known a few of them, and concerning most of them it is still "expecting." He had been surrounded by that luster which occasionally incapacitates a man for usefulness in active life, so he went off into the wilderness where he could hide his halo and be comfortable. But even then he was not comfortable, his college popularity having spoiled him for any sort of grown-up living. Indeed, he was a most uncomfortable young man, and had he not impoverished himself by buying a perfectly worthless newspaper from a Chicago agent at a fancy price, he would never have stuck it out in Plattville, but would have returned to the country where he was considered a great man, and would have attended fraternity banquets and gone to football games with his col-

lege colors tied to his cane, and tooted a fish horn and talked about college spirit, even after the gray hairs had begun to come, and he might even have sunk to the device of "posting" in the hope that callow Freshmen would still point him out as the man who used to be "the great Harkless." Have we not of old time seen them thus in Lincoln, these remarkable students who somehow fail to make any deep impression in wider fields, and who drift back to post and cultivate a standing with lower classmen and passionately insist upon being "great." Probably Mr. Tarkington would not agree with my opinion of his hero, but he must admit that his hero hungered after all these things as a boarding school girl does after the chum who used to eat caramels with her and curl her front hair and sew bows on her slippers.

Well, "Harkless" worried through some seven years of this kind of life, and then a girl came to Plattville whom he had known when she was a child; in the days when he went yachting with Mrs. "Van Skuyt" who either wore or carried roses habitually—I am unable to discover which—and when the band always played "Hail the Conquering Hero" when he approached, and he couldn't even walk out with a lady that impassioned freshmen did not snatch him up and bear him off on their shoulders, shouting "Skal to the Viking!" Naturally this young lady brought back many pleasant memories of better days, and she was the cousin of his college chum "Tom Meredith," and she sang Schubert's Serenade and looked like a marquise, and "Harkless" made enterprising love to her just the first chance he got. When the Marquise, whose everyday name was "Helen," slightly discouraged him, he rushed wildly, madly out into the storm—at least I think that is the way he did it, and let the Whitecaps get him. Now the Whitecaps had been after him for a long time because of the lofty moral tone of the Carlow County "Herald," and when they got him they left as little of him as possible. For days he was missing and could not be located anywhere, and the good citizens of Plattville did nothing but stand on the street corners and wring their hands and weep for their beloved young editor.—Country editors are so beloved!

Finally Harkless was found shot to pieces in a hospital in a neighboring town, and in his delirium he sang college songs and "heard the seniors singing on the stairs," and was always trying to steal the clapper from the college bell, which childish trend of thought shows how little seven years of the world had done for him. While he was ill the Marquise from the Philadelphia finishing school ran his paper for him and wrote political editorials and leaders on the petroleum possibilities of Indiana, which craft it is the especial aim of all finishing schools to impart, and when he recovered she recompensed him for his sufferings with her affections, and because of the wide influence of the aforesaid finishing school editorials, political honors were heaped upon him.

The first few chapters of Mr. Tarkington's novel are exceedingly well written. The wide-streeted prairie town with its low framed buildings, its side walk loafers and store box whittlers who, when the sun got hot, slouched over to the court house yard and whittled at the fence under the trees where the farmers tied their horses, are well done. But as Mr. Kipling once remarked, local color is a dangerous thing in the hands of a