THE VIDETTE-REPORTER.

VOL. XV.
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NO. 15.

The typical paper of to-day is a semi-monthly or weekly publication, showing in articles of a light, and would-be amusing, character. Very rarely a little genuine wit finds its way into the columns of such a journal. But, as a rule, the effort to be witty is much more apparent than the wit itself. Often, too, the demand for reading of this kind leads to consequences of an exceedingly dangerous nature. The slave, upon whom devolves the task of humorous composition, is, in the dire extremities to which he constantly finds himself reduced, tempted to a reckless indulgence in personalities—to regard all that happens as mate for the public tongue.

The text is seen as contributions of the past were concluded on true principles than our own.

The above reflections were suggested in part by an examination which we have had occasion to make of the third volume of the "Aubrey Notes." This was a paper published at Greenoncle, Engadine, in the interests of the University. The date of the first number is April 18, 1872. Besides articles in prose of various degrees of merit and on many subjects, we notice a large number in poetry. What is more noticeable, however, is the fact that these poetical contributions are of unusual excellence.

The following is among the opening stanzas of a poem entitled "Our Native Land!":

"Our happy land! the first bright beams of day
Are reflected in its hills, her lakes are bright,
While other empire tremble to decay.
And fade into the distance of the years.

There is not the world's most noble city, where
The throne of glory is exalted,
And planted in the firmament.

We should like to quote more, but we have sufficient space. Suffice it to say, however, that a poem of even tolerable merit is the rarest of rarities in a college paper of to-day.

When particular bright stars in the theatrical firmament desire to make a small fortune, we advise them to let Audacity do the work. Gambetta rivaled St. Denis in the early appearance in Iowa City, and Pau. We're literally been ignored by the "pro-fess-ion" this winter.

I read the following in another editorial of Ten Years Before the Mast: "Immediately after the war, he (Gambetta) distinguished himself by proposing the deposition of the Imperial Dynasty, and proclaiming the Republic of France."

I do not but I express very nearly the opinion of most of those who have some idea of French affairs in this country. It is, however, as erroneous as a statement of this nature can be.

The battle of Sedan took place September 1st and 2d, 1870. The French Republic was declared September 4th, or at least as soon as the German victory at Sedan became fully known in Paris. The Germans had captured the head of the government, i.e., Napoleon III and either taken prisoners or kept in close confinement about 40,000 of the imperial troops. The Parthians, thus being freed from all danger coming from the imperialists, simply did what other people would have done under the same circumstances. They declared, or, rather, the motion of Jules Favre, the dynasty expired, and returned to the state of things existing previous to the establishment of the dynasty. By the provisional government, then established, Gambetta received the position of Minister of the Interior. As such, he left Paris in a balloon, and, while Paris was slowly starved to death, carried on a foolish resistance from a safe distance. Rising in a balloon was the most heroic thing he ever did,—he never came within ten miles of shooting distance otherwise, except at a duel a year or two ago, when the distance was somewhat less.

The restoration of the French republic was due to the valor of German soldiers and the genius of her generals, precisely as the gain of Rome by Victor Emmanuel. Without the French victory at Sedan, Italy would not have obtained Venetia; but for the overthrow of Napoleon through the battles of Toulouse, Grassville, and Sedan, she would not have had Rome, which was guarded for the Pope by a French army corps.

After Germany had done all these things at the expense of so much blood and to many orators like Wendell Phillips hailed her in regular billingsgate for not stopping at Sedan. In this Mr. Wendell Phillips, who, like most orators, is nothing if not superficial, fully agreed with Gambetta. Gambetta was just good enough to free France from a tyranny which her own people, Republicans though they claimed to be, had not even dared to resist; German blood was good enough to shed for the consolidation of Italy; but for gaining herself solid guaranties of peace in the future, she must not think it. Gambetta resisted the demands of Germany when there was not the slightest hope of a successful resistance. He did not drop his colors, but he seriously hurt France.

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All communications should be addressed to THE VIDETTE-REPORTER, Iowa City, Iowa.

The work in the gymnasium is given very good satisfaction, and the apparatus is all that could be desired, but there is one thing in the way of improvement which we would like to suggest. As a natural consequence more or less dust rises from the floor when the practicing is going on, and is injurious to the lungs. Some may be troubled to prevent this needless expense of health. Dust could, I am sure, we understand, very frequently be used for this purpose with good results. It matters not what is used as the object is accomplished, and the injurious part of the exercise in the gymnasium removed.

The entertainment given by Miss May Robinson at the Opera House, Tuesday evening was a complete success, notwithstanding some of those who were to take part in the programme were unable to appear. Miss Robinson was greeted by a good audience, although the weather was unsuited to the occasion. Her appearance on the stage brought a storm of applause, and her rendering of "Sister and I" assured her friends that they would not be disappointed with the entertainment. Miss Robinson must have made good use of her time and opportunities while in the College of Oratory at Boston, for her rendering is superior to that of many prominent orators. The programme was interwoven with music by Miss Ada Mac Price and Prof. Fisk, and the timely arrival of Prof. Knight in the city added one more enjoyable feature to the entertainment, as Mr. Knight was prevailed upon to favor his friends with some of his best selections.

Theilbader, Howard Crowsh, in his recent address before the 6 B. K. Society, of Harvard, takes occasion to emphasize the value of a literary, as opposed to a mere mechanical knowledge of the ancient classics. The idea is by no means new, but of sufficient importance to warrant frequent iteration. He, to whom the masterpieces of Greek history, poetry, and philosophy, are a source of great delight as they were to Pitt, Maunly, and the like, must remain the exclusive province of the few, as it is not in the expense of something better than versatility.
THE CULTURE OF PURE LITERATURE.

By Irving S. Buchman.

In the first place, What is pure literature, and in the second, What may be gained for culture by its study.

The general term "literature" has long been used with such latitude of significance, that by it we now understand to mean less than the recorded utterances of the wise in all ages. Pure literature, however—that is, literature in and of itself—includes, of the immense mass of the world's recorded wisdom, but the merest fragment. It sustains to literature in general very much the same relation that grace sustains to form or melody to sound. In other words, pure literature embraces only the works of taste and imagination, while literature in general embraces those of history, science, and philosophy, as well. Pure literature, therefore, belongs wholly in the realms of the aesthetic. It holds a place between art, architecture, poetry, and music—addresses itself to the sensibilities as contradistinguished from the intellect, and has for its object the realization of beauty.

In this last respect, pure literature partakes of the essential nature of Art, of which Beauty is the sole end. Truth there may be, and with it perhaps a grace, only so far as they are one with Beauty. Were we able entirely to separate Beauty from those elements, they could have no place in Art. As it is, however, Truth, Tast, and Beauty are, in their last synthesis, a unit; hence Art without them is impossible. The problem of music, therefore, is to achieve the realization of the Beautiful through the effects of sound; that of sculpture and painting through those of form and color; and that of pure literature by words.

The spiritual element in language, the vital principle of unity whereby its several parts are linked together and pervaded, we call style. It is worthy of observation, moreover, that reality as style may vary in a writer, nothing being so impossible to define. We may discover its leading principles, give here and there, perception, a hint of some of its evidences, but it is not and cannot be exhausted. The thing itself escapes. Pervade it with critical scalpel throughout all the nerves and tissues of speech, and we have only dead nerves and tissues. But give over the search, and life returns to them. In other words, the spiritual element in language is much more apt to be apprehended than is the spiritual element in sound, form, or color. Even to the sensibilities it makes itself manifest "by the skill with which it offends itself." There are in speech, however, some positive traits. Its spirit renders it organic. Not only does subordination of parts exist, but it exists in obedience to the vital principle. Hence, perfect unity and completeness in the body of the purely literary product. Instead of mere mechanism, there is rather a union of the members that the destruction of one imperils the life of all. Nor in this does pure literature differ from the other arts. There is the same subtle sympathy of the elements in the statue or picture that there is in the prose or poem. The colors of Botticelli, and, in imagination, disturb but a single line and the sensation is painful. It is so because what we see is not merely the destruction of nicely adjusted mechanical relations, painful as that must be, but a violation of the ideal and spiritual. We feel that we stimulate a crime. Any work, therefore, be it of chisel or pen, toward which we can have this feeling, is esteemed of the world's homage to the last; for, being spiritual in its nature, it subsists itself to the most permanent and enduring element in man.

If now we ask: To the literature of which we go for our best models of style, the answer is—the literature of Greece. That of no other country had its origin among a people at once so sensitive to Beauty and richly endowed with the faculty for its expression: not merely in sculpture and letters with which to express it; for that the Greeks knew, and made the Plato, even logic was made an art. Indeed, whether we consider the achievements of the Greek mind in history, architecture, poetry, or speculation, we are alike impressed with the evidence thereof displayed of the mastery of the Beautiful. The True and the Good are not excluded; but, while Beauty is prized for itself, Truth and Goodness are prized because of Beauty.

This close alliance to the principles of art, of course, observable throughout the whole of Greek literature, is more distinctly manifest in the works of the dramatists of ancient Greece, for it is manifest in those of all the dramatists, but supremely in the works of Sophocles; for him in Hellenic speech became pure literature, and hence pure Art. When we speak thus, however, we are not unmindful of the claims of Schlegel. His geniuses might be far that of Sophocles, Schiller, and Homer; but for that very reason less amenable to rule. Against Etrurians, on the contrary (the third of the great Artificers), lies painted in the web of human life; that is, the artist is not a seeker—of anything but rather the art is a seeker after style, after the definition of the Beautiful. Yet, when all has been said, and the Antigone and Edipus of Sophocles left out of the account, one would come to the conclusion that the qualities of the style, to the Prometheus Bound and Orestes of Sophocles, or the Medea of Euripides—words to averaged modulation, and the limits of the ages have not prevailed against them.

We have no desire here to discuss in detail the question of language; but the fact that models of pure literature such as these exist in the Greek tongue, must ever inspire the lover of the Beautiful with a passion for its study. Were the Prometheus or the Antigone a mere system of ideas to be intellectually apprehended, he might resort to translation. But, in the purely literary product, style is the essential element, and style is untranslatable. Exquisite as the flavor of Donatello's "Statue," it is also as the flavor of the reverse is true; men may eat more than they observe. The soul withdrawn from the contemplation of external things and turned back upon itself, analyzes its own states. Thus the spiritual nature is developed which demands a more subtle interpreter than the word or the medium, and finds its music in the spiritual. The noblest symphony were incapable of expressing the agony and heroism of the Luscinian, in any other language than the Greek. Art, in a word, be it plastic, pictorial, or literary, must be studied in its models. Through them we look into the soul where dwelt the ideals which they embody, and a half hour with Phidias, Michael Angelo, or Sophocles, is worth an age in the company of their imitators.

To the question then, What is pure literature, we return the answer—first, because it is an Art; second, that it is an art: the essential element of which is style; third, that for our best models we must look to Greece; and lastly, that these models should be studied in themselves.

The further question, How does pure literature stand related to culture, involves both the question of the relation of literature to culture, and that of the relation of culture to the pure literature to the other arts. The aim of all Art we have defined to be the realization of the Beautiful. But why seek for its realization? We reply, because that which most, of all the parts of the universe after is expression. He can only pretend the thoughts of man from all parts of the earth, for fitting utterance is the thing most prized by men. Now the Beautiful, both in feeling and idea, is part of the soul, and hence demands expression. We give it utterance in music, painting, poetry, and sculpture, thus satisfying its feeling, and idea of the soul, and hence demands expression. We give it utterance in music, painting, poetry, and sculpture, thus satisfying its feeling, and idea of the soul, and hence demands expression. It is the instrument of culture in its aesthetic branch.

A system now from the consideration of Art in general to that of the different arts, it is plain that they must take rank and precedence according as they meet the conditions which are essential to the expression of the Beautiful. Tried by this test, it will be found that, in point of combined variety and exactness of expression, poetry comes last, followed by sculpture, the ascending scale, by sculpture, painting, and poetry. Music, however, is the instrument of culture in its aesthetic branch. The music of Sophocles is fitted to be the organ of expression for the vague and boundless yearnings of the soul—those inarticulate desires which reach out after the Infinite. Sculpture, on the contrary, is amenable to none but defined and exact. An evidence of taste, we should pronounce it, rather than of feeling for, in music, beauty assumes the severest aspect consistent with itself. Hence an age of sculpture and an age of music are never the same. The one implies the prevalence of objective tenden- cies—a disposition to observe more than to reflect, and so, in Art, a supreme regard for form and contour. In the other, the reverse is true; men may look to Greek, the greefs of the all others, and the same may judge the noblest and most universal instrument of culture.

In this respect, pure literature partakes of the essential nature of Art, of which Beauty is the sole end. Truth there may be, and with it perhaps a grace, only so far as they are one with Beauty. Were we able entirely to separate Beauty from those elements, they could have no place in Art. As it is, however, Truth, Tast, and Beauty are, in their last synthesis, a unit; hence Art without them is impossible. The problem of music, therefore, is to achieve the realization of the Beautiful through the effects of sound; that of sculpture and painting through those of form and color; and that of pure literature by words.

The true art, therefore, being understood to signify that perfect symmetry of mind which results from the due poised and balance of the various powers, Art is the instrument of culture in its aesthetic branch.

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A large number of the officials at the head of the present administration are college men.

President Arthur is a graduate of Union, David Davis of Kenyon, Fredrying-off the Randolphs, Lincoln of Harvard, Polygait of Oberlin, Brewer of Princeton.

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The Vidette-Reporter.

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PUBLIC OPINION AND THE COURTS.

The telegraph brings word that Supreme Court of Iowa has held prohibitory amendment to be of no validity on account of defects in the proceedings preliminary to its submission to the people. These columns would probably not be the appropriate place to discuss the decision, even if the full opinion were accessible, but in view of the common interest in some of the newspapers in publication of such possible action, and the severe criticisms to which the decision will unquestionably be subjected by many quarters, it is worth considering in what relation the court does stand, regards public opinion, and to what length newspaper criticism may properly extend.

That the Judges are not to be looked upon as out of the reach of public comment or opinion must be frankly admitted. They are public servants, elected to perform certain duties. Their fitness & the performance of these duties fairly and truly is proper subject of inquiry. If they are unfaithful or incompetent let it be known, that their places may be filled with able and better men. Neither is their action safe from judicial or public censure.

It is not the purpose of this column to consider the daily business of the courts but what is the public & the world to think about what goes on there? What is the cited all times? What is the greatness of all things? Space; because it contains all that is created. What is the quickest of all things? Thought; because in a moment it can fly to the end of the universe. What is the strongest? Necessity; because it makes men face all the demands of life. What is the most difficult? To know yourself. What is the most constant of all things? Space; because it remains the same after man after he has lost everything. Try some of Epp's Cough Drops.

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LAW DEPARTMENT.
J. W. Boyer, Editor.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE COURTS.

The telegraph brings word that the Supreme Court of Iowa has held the public's enjoyment to be of no validity on account of defects in the proceedings preliminary to its submission to the people. These columns would probably not be the appropriate place to discuss the decision, even if the full opinion were accessible, but in view of the comments made in some of the newspapers in anticipation of such possible action, and of the severe criticism to which the decision would unquestionably be subjected in many quarters, it is worth considering in what relation the court does stand, as regards public opinion, and to what length newspaper criticism may properly go to puzzle Thales, of the wise men of Athens, if he arose and married her, in my own-in-law, and my own mother, because she's my wife. Some time ago I sent him a son; he was my own-in-law, and my uncle, your stepfather's wife, i.e., my mother's brother's wife, i.e., my uncle. If there was a fault, he was of no account, at the same time, he was the son of a rich man's wife, and my own mother was my mother's wife's husband and same time. And, as a lawyer's great-grandson I was my own granddaughters' granddaughter.

The Judges are not to be looked upon as an out of reach of public comment or opinion must be frankly granted. They are public servants, elected to perform certain duties. Their fitness for the performance of these duties faithfully and ably is proper to be canvassed. If they have erred in the law, let it be known, that their places may be filled with abler and better men. Neither is their action in any particular case to be misunderstood, as something too sacred to be discussed. If they have erred in the law, let it be made apparent, that the error may be corrected in time. There is little to be gained and much to be lost by blindly assenting, with owl-like solemnity, while error is being pronounced for truth.

But in criticising the action of the court in a particular case, it is to be remembered that it is not designed, in our form of government, to decide questions of law by popular vote. The Judges are servants of the people, not to carry out the will of the people in each particular case. If, alas! was popular, one day, is but a democratic translation of the words higher and more responsible duty, for they are required to take an oath that they will, to the best of their knowledge and ability, administer justice according to law, equally to the rich and the poor. Whether or not they have faithfully performed this duty, is the only question that can rightly be raised as to their action. It is necessary, therefore, in calling their action in question, to look at it from a legal standpoint. It is certainly not presumptuous to say that no one who has not a legal training is competent to do this. No matter how well informed a man might be, or how little, he would not think of criticising a doctor for using one kind of medicine when another is required, without any particular case, but would leave that to medical experts. Law, like medicine, is a branch of special knowledge and skill. Popular sentiment can and does compete with the harshest judge. If it seemed sometimes that the courts hold them

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Sloth makes all things difficult, while industry makes them easy; and he that riseth late must toil all day, and shall scarce undertake his business at night, while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him.—Fraselin.