

## THE BOOK SHELF.

[Conducted by ALBERT LEE, '91.]

The publication, after his death, of Mr. James Sager Norton's "Addresses and Fragments in Prose and Verse," (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.) makes us feel all the more keenly the loss of a Yale man who could have been, had he chosen, as prominent in literature as he was in the law; and, as we read these fragments, we cannot but regret that such a clever poet and witty essayist should have thrown himself away into that hospitable profession which absorbs almost every man who graduates from college without a taste for any particular calling in life. When I say that he threw himself away, I do not wish it to be understood that I consider Mr. Norton's energies were wasted in the field that he selected, (for we know only too well how much good he did and how much success he reaped as a lawyer); but I feel, after reading this posthumous collection of Mr. Norton's writings that the fate which gave Chicago an able lawyer robbed American literature of a brilliant ornament. Even from the few metrical selections included in this volume, it is plain to see that Mr. Norton possessed the gift of rhythm and rhyme to an unusual degree, and a versatility beyond the ordinary. To say which of the poems is the best would be a difficult task, but one which especially appeals to me is that addressed to the late Eugene Field. There is a trick of versification in it that I do not remember having seen before in English, although I think Victor Hugo in an echo lyric, adopted a similar method. The play upon the words comes in an expansion of a repeated exclamation, as "Alas! Alas! a lass she is!" and, "So made, so made, so maidenly!"

The final stanza reads:

"But having seen your face, so mild,  
So pale, so full of animus,  
She can but cry in accents wild,  
Eugene! Eugene! You genius!"

The prose fragments have a distinct literary value, and the addresses delivered upon certain Yale occasions

are almost models of after-dinner oratory. According to Mr. E. G. Mason, who contributes an introduction to the volume, James Russell Lowell was of a similar opinion. Perhaps one of the cleverest allusions in any of the speeches was made at a dinner of the Harvard Association at which Mr. Norton prefaced his remarks by thanking his audience for the unexpected opportunity afforded him of beholding so many Harvard men "pure" and "simple."

Miss Alice E. Sawtelle, who took her degree of Ph. D. in the English Department of Yale in 1896 has published her doctoral thesis, "The Sources of Spenser's Classical Mythology" (Boston: Silver, Burdett & Company.) Prof. Cook, who is the head of our English Department at Yale, and to whom the little volume is dedicated, has contributed a short prefatory note in which he says he thinks there ought to be "a modest place in colleges and schools for a work of this nature; certainly where Spenser is studied, \* \* \* and I guess he is right. The thesis appears to cover the ground, and it must represent an immense amount of labor and research into "sources." But from the point of view of one who prefers the rhyme of Omar to the wisdom of the world's philosophers, it seems that this young woman has put a vast amount of thought and energy into a labor that will really make no man happy,—and it is one of the provinces of women to make men happy. There died in Germany not long ago a professor who had devoted the greater portion of his life to the study of the Noun. On his death bed he said that the only thing he regretted was that he had not given up all his time to the Dative Case.

When I go to the theater I like to see a play that will make me laugh, not one that will bring the lumps to my throat and cause the lady sitting in front of me to sniffle. This same characteristic doubtless leads me to prefer a novel in which the pathetic element is limited or, better yet

wholly absent. Persons similarly constituted will therefore probably not care much about reading "Grip," by John George Winter, (New York: Stone & Kimball), although, aside from the unpleasantness of the subject, the story, as such, is interesting. I don't like to read about people in hard luck; give me the fellow who has money to burn and an inclination to burn it, green fields, fair women and music. You can make just as good literature out of these materials as you can out of want and misery. Better—for the first kind will promote the gaiety of nations. In "Grip" there is a poor devil of an Englishman whose best girl marries a Frenchman, and the Britisher goes to Paris to revenge himself on the lucky man. He gets into a fight with the Paris police and cracks one fellow's head. (By the way, Mr. Winter, or Mrs.—, "gens" is a collective noun, and if you insist upon using French when "policeman" is a very good English word, you should avoid saying a "gens de police,"—a police "people.") Well, to return to our unfortunate, the Englishman is sent to the penitentiary for fifteen years, and a good part of the book is taken up with a description of his sufferings in the Toulon prison. Of course, we know all the time that the hero is going to get out, and he does, but it is unpleasant to hear of his experiences. The character study throughout the book is excellently done, and the main scheme of the plot is strong. It is to be regretted that the author's resources were not sufficient to avoid the use of the old device of having the little sister who looks just as the older sister used to look; but so long as everybody is happy in the end, we should be satisfied. The cover that contains this story is another of this publishing house's successes.

We have also received "A Christmas Masque of Saint Roch," by M. E. M. Davis. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.) and "Mademoiselle Bianche," by John D. Barry, (New York: Stone & Kimball.)

John Penn Brock, 1900, of Lebanon, Pa., has been appointed temporary captain of the Freshman crew.

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## A Memorial to Nathan Hale.

Rev. J. D. Burrell, D. D., '67, preached in chapel Sunday morning and addressed the University meeting in the evening in Dwight Hall. At the University meeting he spoke on Nathan Hale and during the course of his remarks said:

"I understand that a movement is on foot to memorialize, in some proper way, the distinguished sons of Yale. If this shall be done I sincerely trust that Nathan Hale who was graduated in the Class of 1773, will not be forgotten. The most eloquent preacher in New York City is the silent, bronze figure of Hale, standing in City Hall Square, bound for execution, and declaring to the multitudes who pass along Broadway such truths as duty, moral heroism and manhood. What could be better for the inspiration of our undergraduates than to place on the College Campus a similar statue of the patriot spy?"

## Contents of January "Lit."

The January number of the Yale Literary Magazine was put on sale about a week ago and contained the following articles: "The House of Rad," by F. Tiney, '97; "In Clear Dream," poem by F. Wickes, '98; "Lowell's Critical Essays," by N. A. Smyth, '97; "God's Will," poem by R. L. Munger, '97; "In Shadow," by C. P. Kitchel, '97; "Song," poem by R. L. Munger, '97; Savannah La Mar," by F. Wickes, '98; and portfolios by E. C. Streeter, '98, D. DeF. Burrell, '98, H. W. Hincks, '98, H. D. Gallaudet, '98; B. B. Moore, '99, and R. Hooker, '99.

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