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LITERARY HONORS.

Signs multiply of the steadily increasing activity of the Yale literary world. Those who are not familiar with the facts, wondered at the story of the growth of the English Department that was told a few months ago in the WEEKLY. That was the report in totals—in round numbers. Incidents here and there are quite as significant. The increase in the number of prizes given for work in English composition of one kind or another, has been very noticeable. To-day the literary student of Yale is incited to special effort along various lines by a very goodly number of honors and compensations, whose winning is well rated. There were fewer some time ago and they were often not taken. One does not hear as much nowadays of failure to award a prize. It came to such a pass some time ago that the sceptical began to taunt the *Lit.* with unwillingness to part with its funds for the *Lit.* medal, because one year after another came and went with no award.

One of the latest prizes to be established is spoken of in another part of this paper. The first award of the prize offered by Professor Cook to students of the University for the best unpublished verse, is a very pleasant chronicle in the story of current Yale life. This last year it was a student in the Graduate Department, and a woman, too, who took it. There were plainly excellent reasons why she should take it, but we trust it will not seem ungallant to observe that it would be particularly pleasant to chronicle the taking of this prize by an undergraduate.

THE AMBITION FOR Y's.

Now it comes up again,—this time for the golfers—the old question of getting a "Y." Uniforms are rather more the order of the day than ever. Anybody who does anything has a cap or a sweater to show for it. One who passes through the Campus on a moderate day in Spring or Fall doubts the statement that the athletic era is at all on the decline. It is rather the rule than the exception to find in any group those who have pulled an oar, in some crew which need not be either a University or a class crew; or who have played on some winning football eleven, outside

of the University or Freshman contests, or who have carried off some pennant, in an informal baseball series. All have caps and these caps testify a healthy athletic life. They make one feel that Yale is taking hold of athletics in a rational and thorough way which has long been desired. These decorations are all right and Y's are all right. But we are not particularly pleased to see the inordinate valuation nowadays put upon the mere possession of the "Y." Personal friends of a player become more interested in the question whether he will finally have an opportunity to play a few minutes in a championship game and so win a "Y," than whether his playing will help the game and whether the game will be played in a good Yale way. "Isn't it great that Blank got his 'Y'?" is one of the first Yale remarks heard after a contest, in which Yale has been badly worsted. This kind of talk suggests a tendency towards individualism which we do not quite like.

THE CREW COACHING.

The work in the development of the Yale crew, which has been begun this year under such favorable circumstances, has been so far carried on most satisfactorily. This does not refer to any particular quality of oarsmanship yet developed, but merely to the spirit with which the training has been taken up by both the coaches and the students, and what it promises for the future of this very important branch of athletics. No one can expect that everything will run perfectly smoothly. There will be many perplexing questions to meet and many conflicting theories to adjust. Some of the problems of crew training are more delicate than those of any other branch of sport, but we fully trust the Captain, in whom still rests the final authority; the head coach, who is as fair-minded as he is zealous, and the other coaches, who are men of Yale loyalty.

WEEKLY INDEXES.

The work of preparing the index of the issues of the WEEKLY for seven years, has proved very much more of an undertaking than even a very careful estimate of the work at the outset suggested. It has involved the creation of a plan of indexing, especially fitted for the contents of the WEEKLY, which had to be worked out anew. Mr. Thompson, who has done the entire work, has pushed it with all possible speed since its inception last Summer, and has already printed the indexes of five volumes. This means that the WEEKLY should be able to distribute the complete series within a comparatively short time. Definite announcement will be made as a reminder when everything is ready. This much is said by way of report on the work.

CURRENT YALE LITERATURE.

A Notable Number.

The January number of the *Law Journal*, which has just appeared, is easily the most notable number which that Journal, and probably any other similar publication, has ever put out.

The opening article is by the Honorable Simeon E. Baldwin, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of Errors, and Professor of Constitutional Law, Corporations and Wills at the Yale Law School. It is on the subject of "The People of the United States"; the article showing in the writer's clear and scholarly way what is meant by that expression as used in the Constitution.

The second article is by Professor William Graham Sumner, and is en-

titled, "The Conquest of the United States by Spain." It is the lecture which Professor Sumner delivered in the Phi Beta Kappa course in College Street Hall, January 16th. This second article would alone make a notable number of any periodical which discusses political or economical questions. A great many who heard this lecture considered that they had never before listened to anything as powerful, from an intellectual standpoint. Of course, the effect of the lecture was heightened by Professor Sumner's delivery of it, and the fact that he has appeared on the lecture platform so infrequently of late. The evidence which he gave, in the material of his lecture, and in his manner of delivery, of his unimpaired force and vigor, increased the interest in what he had to say. But it is hardly necessary to say that the force of the article remains in the printed form. There never has been such interest in the contents of the *Law Journal* as in the contents of this number. This was because the lecture had been secured in advance exclusively for the *Journal* by the foresight of the Board of Editors, and the generosity of Professor Sumner. Those who heard it were anxious to read it, and those who could not hear it were still more eager to see it in printed form. An edition of the *Journal*, of much larger size than usual, has already been issued, and the hope is general that the demand will necessitate further large editions of the *Journal*. The editors of the *Journal* have made a special price on lots of one hundred to a thousand, which gives considerable more chance for its general distribution than there would be on the simple thirty-five cents basis. It ought to be possible to make the address circulate considerably in this way. The editors do not seem at all inclined to make any direct returns in money from their good fortune, but to use it, as far as possible, to increase the reputation of the *Journal*, and indirectly, the school, whose organ it is.

It is unfortunate that the article could not have been more quickly spread about, as it was in the nature of "hot cakes." But the theme is still an absorbing one and those of all schools of political thought, who have the mind to appreciate a rare intellectual effort, however it may oppose their views, will delight in this article.

The last article of the *Journal*, by Prof. Arthur T. Hadley, is one that has already seen light in a different form, in the report of the meeting of the American Economic Association. It is the President's opening address, at the annual meeting of the Association held in New Haven during the holidays. The subject is, "The Relation between Economics and Politics," and the essay, it is unnecessary to say, is of unusual value.

Yale Prize Poems for 1898.

There has recently been placed on sale at the Co-op. and the New Haven book stores, an attractively printed brochure containing the poems which won the Cook Poetry Prize in 1898. This deserves a word of comment, as it marks an important step in the progress of English at Yale.

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There has been, hitherto, no prize for College verse, although the average undergraduate is more sincere and less pedantic in his verse than in his formal essays. Not only does the College offer many prizes for prose, but the *Yale Courant* and the *Yale Lit.* annually award medals for the best story and the best essay submitted by undergraduates. Poetry on the other hand, receives no recognition. It was to remedy this state of affairs that Prof. Cook offered a prize of fifty dollars for the best piece of College verse, and to make the competition sharper, opened it to members of the Graduate Schools. No restrictions are placed on the choice of subjects or the length of the poems. A single fine sonnet might receive the award. In this way, the competition is freed from verses made to order.

Last June, for the first time, the competition warranted the award of the prize and it was given to Miss Martha Hale Shackford, at that time a member of the Graduate Department, and at present an Instructor in English at Vassar. The Judges, Walter R. Page, Richard Watson Gilder, and Charles D. G. Roberts, considered worthy of the prize her set of six sonnets entitled "A Group of Early English Saints," Cuthbert, Columba, Bede, Aidan, Biscop, and Caedmon. The sonnets are purely descriptive, and each presents a carefully drawn picture of these Old English worthies.

It is hoped to make this poetry prize one of Yale's chief literary honors. There has been no difficulty in securing as judges some of the best known authors, and while the prize can never rival the *Lit.* medal, nor is it designed to do so, it will serve the same purpose of stimulating and encouraging literary work at Yale.

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