

## YALE ALUMNI WEEKLY

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## A PLATFORM OF YALE DISCUSSION

Mr. Wells' contribution to the discussion of debate need not be specially pointed out to the WEEKLY readers. Mr. Wells has something to say on the subject; else he would not have written. This is not said by way of compliment, but because the case is in illustration of a point worth making.

People sometimes ask us why we do not invite more general discussion of Yale problems. We confess that we have fought a little shy of it. Discussions have come up on very important matters, and, first and last, a large number of outside names have appeared in the WEEKLY in these three years. They have been good names, and what has been said over them has contributed very much to the usefulness of the paper. But a general discussion has its drawbacks. The very best of people, of strong intellectual force, are often very sure to say things that do nobody any good, and that, furthermore, take a good deal of space in the saying of them.

An editor generally knows very little, but, if he be fairly conscientious in his work, he comes early to a realization of the opportunity for public service which the waste basket affords, and, so far as he is forced to write himself, he daily emphasizes the practical wisdom of Paul—"All things are possible, but all things are not expedient."

It is not at all to the credit of an editor to grow into this frame of mind. The files of his own paper are, to a greater or less extent, the printed and public record of what he ought not to have done. It is not so much fear, or undue caution, that thus grows; one need not learn to travel on the platform, that it is better to be safe than sorry, which is a very weak platform. But the question which it seemeth more and more good to ask, in relation to opportunities for criticism, is the question, "Cui bono?" Very many persons and things seem only to cumber the earth. Is it not a good thing merely to slay and to destroy? This is a tempting question, if one is not concerned with the sequences of annihilation. Construction is such slow work! It is much more glorious to smash things.

There is nothing unpleasant in the WEEKLY's experience with those who have put their oar into Yale waters, that has suggested this confession. But

here is a letter that is helpful and suggestive,—in matters which concern the good of the University. Although not the first one of its kind, it is a very excellent illustration of the kind of letters the WEEKLY ought to have, when there is occasion for them, and we use this opportunity merely to say, that a contribution of this sort, concerning any subject whatever in the University, is always welcome. If its spirit is fair, its processes rational—if it is a letter which tends towards better things for Yale, there is nothing in all the range of Yale interests, whatever may be the conventions concerning it, of which such a letter may not profitably treat. As to whether a letter fulfils the conditions, there may be a difference of opinion, and we will always follow our own opinion. But we will use such light as we have and we will not fear.

Perhaps another week we will have time and space to answer some of Mr. Wells's criticisms, but it is not of so much importance as to make this little platform of Yale discussion.

## THE GLACIER ON THE GREEN.

A few people of a speculative turn of mind are now underwriting certain risks, involved in fixing the time when the glacier on the Green will disappear. Common talk has it that the best scientific minds in the Faculty have been at work on its construction, weight, height, solidity and probable rate of dissolution. A study of Government records and Horace Johnsons have reduced very materially the uncertainties of the element of weather in all calculations. One student has gone over all the figures carefully and has laid very strong emphasis on his belief that the rare days of June will be here before the undermost blade of grass will have a chance to straighten out.

But a word of explanation may be in order for those of an earlier generation who may not be familiar with some of the recent devices of the Street Department of New Haven. There is nothing in this University town that the people consider more sacred than the old Green. The proposition to move back a part of the fence on its lower corner for the space of six inches, in order to relieve the congestion from trolley travel around the old town pump, aroused the wrath of more people simultaneously than any other event in modern history, not even excepting the midnight celebration of the victory at Manila by University professors and brass cannons. This green has been beautifully and carefully written about. Every foot of it is historic. In Spring and Summer it is pointed out with its green grass and its arching elms as New Haven's principal claim to loveliness.

And so it has come to be a habit of the Street Department to use it as a dumping ground, all through the Winter and early Spring, for everything that is superfluous on fifteen or twenty miles of city highways. Snow, ice and slush, are carted there all through the Winter in two and four-horse loads, and the more mud and stones, broken glass, cans and things that can be brought with the snow, the more perfectly the Street Department seems to be doing its duty. They used to spread this material, in a good Winter, about ten or fifteen feet deep all over the upper Green; but it took quite a little time to cover it all over evenly and the snow has been falling rather fast in 1899; so it is all now put in one place, just South of Phelps Gateway. The pile is more than half as high as the roof of Dr. Smyth's church.

Things are going to be lovely when

the thaws begin. The College people say they can not think of anything very much more unhealthful for those who live in the dormitories on the East side of the Campus. But that does not obviate the fact that the Green is the most convenient and inexpensive dumping ground in New Haven. It doesn't bring the Harbor any nearer to talk about health or ordinary considerations of respectable appearance.

Sarcastic people go by it and talk about it. There are a great many sarcastic people in New Haven, and their principal occupation is to talk about things like that. They don't vote or caucus very much, but they do talk, and the funny thing about it is that the more they talk and the brighter and keener their sayings, the more of these things there seem to be to talk about. A common remark is the expression of the hope that the pile will grow so big and store such a quantity of ice, that, when a fierce thaw comes suddenly, the flood will clean out everything on the other side of the Green. (They mean especially City Hall.)

This is not a criticism of anything, but merely a recital of some facts which may be of interest to those who do not live in New Haven. If we have a few more snowstorms, it will be quite worth while to come back to New Haven and see the Street Department's mountain.

## ALUMNI DINNERS.

These are the days of alumni dinners. The last week has been especially prolific in these reunions and they all seem to have been very enthusiastic and helpful times. The alumni banquet is not a new institution, but is one of the many Yale institutions that have developed a good deal in late years as it seems to one who is of these late years. There is more and more effort to make something out of them in the way of helping the University and the way of getting the University's sons into the work. There ought to be still more of it,—a great deal more of it. It is an old, old story, to repeat, that the store of Yale enthusiasm and zeal which these meetings show is a wonderfully valuable asset which has seemed almost unused among the resources of the University. If the right returns do not come from it, there is fault somewhere and it is not with the alumni.

It may be in order to direct special attention to the report in the Boston dinner of the remarks of Prof. Woolsey, which make the first public announcement of bi-centennial plans. It is a very unusual method of announcement

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of these plans and the fact may perhaps be properly commented on another time; but the speech was certainly of the very greatest interest to those who heard it, and we trust its reproduction in the WEEKLY may bring it to the eyes of a large part of the Yale family.

We are particularly indebted to Mr. J. C. Smith of the Boston Association for enabling us to present so complete a report of the dinner there as we have this week. The Chicago dinner, which occurred only Saturday night, was very thoroughly and promptly covered for the WEEKLY, through the zeal and courtesy of Mr. Henry D. Baker, Yale '96, a former member of the Yale News Board.

The WEEKLY can certainly secure some sort of a report of any gathering of Yale men, but it rests with those most interested in these Yale gatherings, whether the report shall be a complete one. It is often practically impossible to secure some special reporter for the occasion. The work must be in the hands of some man who appreciates the situation and can tell what is of particular value.

If the different secretaries of the Associations will keep the WEEKLY informed sufficiently in advance of the date of their dinner, it is almost always possible to secure some one to take care of it. In one important case recently, no notice whatever reached the WEEKLY of the dinner until it had taken place. These omissions, we are very glad to report, are less frequent now than they used to be.

## THE GUNS AT NEW HAVEN.

The return of the guns that were on the Cruiser Yale to New Haven, certainly pleases everybody connected with the University. Nobody wants them here when they are wanted anywhere else, but that this should be their resting place when they are off duty, seems very fitting. The news columns of the WEEKLY have told of the different efforts that have been made and which now seem about to be successful for the accomplishment of this end. It is only due to truth to say that the Secretary of the Navy, Hon. John D. Long, a graduate of Yale's excellent rival and ally, and the Hon. C. A. Boutelle, Chairman of the House Committee on Naval Affairs, have shown unusual kindness and courtesy in the matter. As is shown elsewhere, the Connecticut representatives in Congress have worked with prompt enthusiasm. We beg to thank them in the name of those who gave the guns, and who will appreciate the placing of such a memorial here to mark the enthusiasm of the University in the support of the Government.

Now the sporting pages of the newspapers begin to "reflect" college life. There are full-length pictures of young gentlemen with arms akimbo, legs spread well apart and toes out, baggy uniforms with large letters and broad stripes, hats off and long hair, or cap down over one eye, and faces that read like one of Aguinaldo's earlier proclamations. We will be interested to see how far the martial experiences of the last year have developed the alleged desire of the public for this sort of reproduction of the real college spirit.

## Yale Law School.

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