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It is not by any means a pleasant duty to have to write an editorial article under such a title as this, but a statement which appeared in a recent number of *Black and White* in connection with the magnificent offer made to the War Office by the Rector of this University, seems to demand a categorical contradiction on our part. The paragraph alluded to runs as follows:—"Unpatriotic pro-Boerism has unfortunately been only too prevalent among graduates of that otherwise venerable institution, and it is pleasant to find that their vagaries are counter-balanced by so splendid an example of true Imperial spirit." Did such an imputation proceed from a less respectable and usually reliable source, its refutation would be a matter of supererogation. It is difficult to guess on what foundation this accusation is based, unless it be on the fact that one of our most distinguished young medical graduates offered his services at the Boer capital, prompted solely by his zeal for the cause of Science and of humanity. The absence of any sympathy on his part with the hostile republic is clearly proved by his being now professionally employed in one of the British base hospitals in Natal, and we think, we are safe in maintaining that no more loyal patriotic and devoted body of citizens exists in the United Kingdom than the graduates of Aberdeen University. Many of our graduates are serving Her Majesty in various capacities in different parts of the world, and the "Imperial spirit" of those at home is no less indubitable, though the opportunity for displaying it may not hitherto have been afforded. We do not believe that there is a single member of this University, past or present, who is not proud of the splendid and practical manner in which our Rector is aiding the cause which every loyal subject wishes to see triumphant. Regarding the position of our undergraduates, little need be said. The fact that so large a proportion of them are efficient volunteers, and that of these a considerable number, in the midst of their academic curriculum, offered themselves for active service in South Africa, is quite sufficient to free them from the ban of the imaginative writer in *Black and*

**Alleged
Pro-Boerism.**

White. At least two candidates have come forward for the Royal Artillery Commissions offered to members of the University, and we know of very many more who would have been only too eager to accept them had it not been for the consideration of the insufficiency of the regimental pay in the commissioned ranks of the army, and also the gravity of such a step as changing at a moment's notice one's entire professional prospects and career. Let our critics be assured that should ever the necessity arise, the sons of our Alma Mater will acquit themselves in a manner worthy both of British subjects and Scottish gentlemen.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY GYMNASIUM. ITS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC LIFE.

[BY PROFESSOR JOSIAH ROYCE.]

I HAVE been asked by the editors of *Alma Mater* to say something regarding the place that, in Harvard, and in similar modern American Universities, the Gymnasium, as a centre for the athletic concerns of the University, has come to occupy in the life and interests of the students. The request was, as a fact, first made a year since, during my former visit, as a Lecturer, to this institution. But, at that time, a multiplicity of engagements prevented me from finding time for the desired paper during my brief stay. I cannot let the present opportunity go by without contributing my word to the explanation of a matter that, as I understand, may possess some practical interest to the students of the University of Aberdeen, at a time when the desirability of a Gymnasium is still under discussion, in academic circles here. I am no expert in athletic matters, and I can speak merely as an officer of Harvard, with regard to our general experience of the modern developments in the organization of physical training. The moral of my little story ought to prove, however, obvious enough, without any expert comments.

Forty years ago, or more, before the modern developments in American University life took place, there were indeed athletic contests, from

year to year, amongst the various classes within any one American College, or amongst the representative boat crews, or other athletic organizations of our various larger institutions, such as Harvard and Yale. But the old fashioned College Gymnasium, while it was frequently to be found, I believe, in our various Colleges, was no very highly organized establishment. A building, equipped with some simple apparatus for exercise, was left in charge of the necessary caretaker, whoever he might be, and was open to students probably, in most cases, for voluntary exercise. Yet how each man used the apparatus, and whether or no he exercised with any skill or care—all that was left, very largely, to the individual man himself. Exercise in gymnasium had no necessary relation to the training of the athletic crews or teams for their regular contests. There was little or no systematic provision for teaching methods of exercise. Private interests, and chance emulations, governed what individuals did in the gymnasium. And, doubtless, certain students often did themselves injury by defective methods of exercise, and by overstrain.

But the modern University gymnasium, with us (as, for instance, the Hemenway Gymnasium at Harvard), is a large, and, in its way, a stately building, equipped with manifold and elaborate apparatus. It is put under the charge of a Director, who is by early education a medical man, and whose life is now devoted to the profession of physical training. It employs, in one way or another, quite a corps of instructors in physical training, of assistants, and other servants. It keeps extensive records, containing the results of the physical examination of the thousands of students who, in the course of years, have come under the care of its officers. These records get, as time goes on, a very considerable Anthropological value, so that the gymnasium is, in its way, a genuine contributor to science, as well as an institution for cultivating the physical powers of students. It contains an "Exhibition Room," where the athletic trophies that our University organizations have won are preserved and shown; where, also, the records of individual athletes are displayed, and where, in addition, some of the principal statistical data bearing upon the averages and the variations of the physical measurements of large numbers of students are set forth in charts and in tables. The gymnasium is one of the central places, also, for the whole athletic life of the place. Here, during our long and inclement winter, the athletic teams can carry on, under a proper shelter, their training for the out-of-door sports that are only possible with us in the open season. Cunningly devised apparatus enables the boat crew to engage, thus, during the months

when the river may be frozen, in a preliminary training for the inter-academic races that will not occur until June. Such preliminary work, of course, must be much supplemented afterwards upon the water, and all concerned rejoice when a favourable spring brings the crews early on to the river. But, without the gymnasium, much of the present winter preparation for the open-air sports would be, in our Eastern American climate, impossible. And for the general body of students, who are not prominent athletes, the gymnasium provides opportunities for winter exercise which, in the close season, when tennis, golf, and the other out-of-door sports are inaccessible, are extremely valuable for the general health of the whole University.

Attendance at the Gymnasium is, of course, voluntary. But it is very general. Every student has an official right to receive, at his own request, a physical examination, made under the care of the medical director of the Gymnasium. As a result of this examination, the student receives a card, prescribing the kinds and the amounts of exercise that are suited to the best development of his individual organism. The large variety of modern apparatus with which the Gymnasium is equipped makes possible a very considerable differentiation of the kinds and systems of exercise thus prescribed; and, while both the physical examination itself, and the following out of the prescribed course of exercises are, for the ordinary student, purely voluntary matters, of which he is at liberty to avail himself or not, as he pleases, many a young man is aided to attain a symmetrical physical development, and many a student with this or that unsuspected or misinterpreted physical defect or weakness, is assisted in avoiding evil consequences, through the advice thus freely offered by the medical director. Very general use is made of this opportunity for physical examination. But the examination itself is a required thing only in case of men who are candidates for membership in any of the regular athletic teams of the University. Such a requirement is intended with us to avoid any official responsibility for the presence in our public athletic contests of men who might be, by reason of a weak heart, or of some other possibly unappreciated defect, in danger of doing themselves injury by any specially severe exercise. Meanwhile, as was just pointed out, the records of the great numbers of physical examinations that are made in successive years, by reason of this very system, become in their turn of great value in guiding our knowledge, both of the average young American, and of the way in which physical training influences him. In 1893, part of the exhibit of Harvard University at the Chicago Exposition consisted of charts based upon our physical records

up to that date ; and a model statue of the average American youth of twenty years of age, fashioned, by an artist, upon the basis of our physical records, was shown upon that occasion. A collection of similar statistics, if made in other places and countries, would do much, in the course of time, to give us a more accurate knowledge of the physical types of modern mankind,—a knowledge which, I need not say, despite the large collections of facts made by the military authorities of various European countries, is still imperfect.

As a consequence of beginning his course of physical training at the University under such intelligent medical advice, the student is much more likely to be guided in the whole conduct of his academic life by wholesome motives. He becomes from the start interested, in a good, and not in a morbid, way, in his own physical condition. Even when he has no distinctively athletic ambitions, he submits thenceforth to frequent tests of weight, lung capacity, strength, and the like, in order to see how his condition is improving. He becomes interested in seeing that it does improve. If he feels at any time vaguely out of health, he looks rather to rational physical training than to drugs or to stimulants for aid. Good physical habits tend to be viewed by the public opinion of the student body rather as matters for a due personal pride than as signs of a too scrupulous or of a mean-spirited nature. Accordingly, strong motives in favour of self-discipline, and against dissipation, are encouraged by a system whose best features, of course, belong to its purely voluntary aspects. The Gymnasium is thus a strongly moralizing influence in the life of the University. It encourages good order, regular habits, and a wholesome attitude towards life. While it is no substitute for out-of-door sports, and is not intended to be such, it has the advantage of offering opportunities for exercise that are not dependent upon the state of the weather ; and in the end, by its whole influence upon the organization of exercise, it tends greatly to the improvement of all the out-of-doors sports themselves, and to success in the latter.

The indirect influence of the Gymnasium upon our care for the health of our students has also been great. Once having become familiar with the services rendered by the medical director of the Gymnasium, we have come to see the need of having a medical officer in general charge of the health of the University. And such an officer now exists, whose work is carried on apart from that of the Gymnasium itself ; although I believe that the newer office has arisen by differentiation, from the older office. The general medical adviser of the University has the task of knowing about the state of health of the whole

body. If any student is ill, this officer is responsible for discovering the fact (usually through the voluntary report of the patient or of his friends, or through the examination of the daily returns of absences from lectures), and for making sure that the case has some medical supervision. The medical adviser of the University does not indeed force his own services upon anybody ; but he may be voluntarily consulted, free of charge, by any student : he makes sure, as just said, that no student is ill without receiving such care and medical advice, from *some* competent source, as the case may require ; and he is especially concerned to protect the student body from the dangers of contagious diseases, in case they begin to appear amongst us. The time was, amongst us, years ago, when a student, falling suddenly ill, might be ignorantly nursed by his kindly roommate. The case might prove to be, let us say, diphtheria. Before any medical aid was summoned by the two young men, in their ignorance of the nature of the danger, the voluntary nurse might have caught the infection. In an actual, and pathetic case, reported amongst us years ago, the original sufferer recovered. His friend and fellow student, the voluntary nurse, died. Against just such dangers the present system secures us as well as a reasonable care can do. And, for the same reason, it is now almost impossible, at Harvard, that a poor and ambitious student, living nearly out of sight in his own lodgings, should starve himself for weeks and months into a serious illness,—all without receiving the care that is due to his self-sacrifice. Our present system would early detect the fact that something was wrong, and without any unwise interference with his liberty, would offer him the aid that man owes to his brother.

These matters may seem a little remote from the interests of a Gymnasium. But my point is that, with us, the one system would seem, in a great measure at least, to have led to the other. I think of the Gymnasium as above all a centre for the organization of the physical welfare of the student body. And organization breeds organization. One way of co-operation leads to another. That the Gymnasium is also a centre for the organization of athletic training, and so of athletic success in inter-academic contests, is obviously true. But this function is not the only one, nor is it the chief one amongst the good things that the Gymnasium tends to accomplish for the whole life of the University.

A modern Gymnasium is a costly institution. It must probably be the product, not of a general public subscription, but of the deed of a single wealthy benefactor, or of a few such benefactors. So it has been, in most similar cases, with us.

Still, communities have their various habits ; and, perhaps, with you, a general subscription might in time lead to the acquisition of the needed funds. But Universities have in any case the right (we in America think it the duty) to appeal, repeatedly, and in the most definite way, for the aid and support of their public. Whatever individuals or communities do for their University, they can never give more than they receive from the University, in the form of the spiritual goods that sound learning, progressive science, and serious thought bring to the regions where they flourish, and in the form of that best of all gifts which a nation can receive, namely, the gift, in each new generation, of a company of trained and studious youth, sound of body, stout of heart, and wise of mind, who at the University are prepared to undertake their part in their country's world-wide tasks and services, and to share in her glories.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, U.S.A.

VOX EXULANTIS.

The Grove itself resembled Ida's Wood,
And Simois seemed the well-dissembled Flood.
—Dryden's *Virgil*.

I.

To Clutha's stream awhile my feet repair,
If haply wandering where fate, not choice,
Hath fixed my lot, I may even here rejoice
To find in Nature solace for my care.
What though the grimy smoke bedim the air
As from Vulcanian furnace, and the noise
Of Man's fierce toil dull Nature's sweeter voice,
Yet fair is Clutha's stream, his banks are fair.

It is not Clutha's murmur that I hear,
Not Clutha's waves my thoughts are fixed upon,
But high above his surges sounding near,
With that sweet song they sang in days long
gone,
Like far-off music, float upon mine ear
The blended voices of the Dee and Don.

II.

As some old man borne down with weight of years,
Expectant listening for the last dread call,
Forgets his wealth, his lands, his learning, all
His high ambitions, all his hopes and fears
And all he strove for in his prime ; and hears
The simple prayer which in his father's hall
He lisped beside his mother's knee ; then fall
From grateful lips his thanks, with grateful tears.

So in the lapse of time we learn to know
That what is best in us to will or do,
Not to ourselves, but unto thee we owe,
Dear Alma Mater ! May thy sons be true,
And ever more and more our bosoms glow
With mindful gratitude and reverence due !

J. M.

BYGONE DAYS AT ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES.

(Continued from Vol. xv., p. 176.)

VIII.

KING'S COLLEGE IN 1844.

BY THE REV. DUNCAN ANDERSON, M.A.¹

ON a bleak morning near the end of October, between the year 1840 and a decade later, somewhat over one hundred and fifty competitors sat down in the long room of King's College, to test their skill in an academic tourney, that had, after all, but a few prizes to offer, and where also, the great majority would feel like the unhorsed knights of old, when sword and lance both lay shivered on the ground.

No roll was called, for the competition was open to Scotland, or, for that matter, to the world at large : and had a "heathen Chineese" and a fur-clad Esquimaux presented themselves at that table, they would have found a place, and, provided their Latinity was up to the mark, they had as good a chance of success as the Scottish youth who had studied his classics in some of the famous Grammar Schools of the north.

Two or three professors were on duty. Poor little Tulloch² went limping round the room, as anxious and fidgety as if he were one of the competitors himself ; Greek "Habby,"³ though old and frail, still held his own, and looked as if, when in his prime, he would have been more likely to have proved the victor in an old-time wrestling match than to win the poet's crown at the Olympic games.

And last, though not least, came burly Prosody, as we always called our Professor of Humanity.⁴ We believed, indeed, that Prosody would rather have arrayed himself in a Roman toga than encase his massive limbs in the more artificial habiliments of a modern Scot. I never looked at him without dreaming of Cicero, and it was generally believed, at least amongst the "Bageants," that Prosody thought in Latin hexameters.

The version, as it was called, was slowly dictated, and thereafter we all bent ourselves resolutely to our task. The only book allowed us was the ordinary Latin dictionary, and keen eyes watched that no other tome or notes of any kind were used. The hours wore on in profound stillness, broken only by the peculiar sound that a hundred and fifty pens, operating all at the same

¹ M.A. King's College, 1848 ; Presbyterian Minister, Monymusk, Canada ; author of *Lays of Canada, Scottish Folk-lore, From Pinafore to Gown, &c.*

² John Tulloch, Professor of Mathematics, 1811-51.

³ Hugh Macpherson, Professor of Greek, 1797-1854. For explanation of the nickname, see Maclean's *Life at a Northern University* (p. 31)—a book too little known by the present generation of students.

⁴ Patrick Forbes, Professor of Humanity, 1817-47.