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THE FOCUS

Volume I

FARMVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1911

Number 3

The Lily

The queen of the garden, with jewels bedecked,
Its fragrance breathed into the air—
A message of love, a message in vain—
My own love was blooming elsewhere.

The violet also its beauty displayed,
As it trembled 'mid sunshine and dew,
But, frail little flower, though much I admire,
My heart to my love is still true.

The wild flowers nodded and beckoned in glee,
As the wind their graceful heads bent,
Yet, what is their beauty to me, dear love,
Since you have been graciously sent?

My lily of beauty far rarer than pearls,
Of richness beyond price of gold,
My emblem of purity, gentleness, truth,
That speaks of the heart and the soul.

These are the reasons the numberless charms
Of the others I never could see:
Each flower is loved for the love it doth bring—
My lily brings most love to me.

IRMA ELIZABETH PHILLIPS,
Argus, '11.

Defense of Marcus Brutus



IN Julius Cæsar, Shakespeare has presented to us a rare type of mankind. We scarcely ever find a man with a stronger character than Brutus. He seems to have been of a temper exactly framed for virtue, honor, and nobleness, so much so that he was esteemed by the people, beloved by his friends, admired by the best men, and not hated by his enemies themselves. Even the partisans of Cæsar ascribed to Brutus everything that had the appearance of honor and generosity in the conspiracy; and all that was of a contrary complexion they laid to the charge of Cassius. Brutus was steady and inflexible to maintain his purpose for what he thought right and honest. No flattery could ever prevail upon him to listen to unjust petitions.

When Rome was divided into two factions, and Pompey and Cæsar were taking up arms against each other, perhaps it seems strange that Brutus did not join Cæsar, as was generally expected, because his father had been put to death by Pompey. He, however, thinking it his duty to sacrifice his own private feelings to the interest of his country, and judging Pompey's to be the better cause, took part with him; though formerly he would not so much as salute, or take any notice of Pompey, esteeming it a pollution to have the least conversation with the murderer of his father. Now he looked upon him as the head of the commonwealth, and not as the individual man. It was the great love of freedom, of liberty, and of his country, that led him to go against Cæsar. One of Brutus' best friends was Cæsar, and it was very hard for him to conspire against Cæsar, even if he did think it was right and honest.

Then, Brutus' friends, especially Cassius, were continually advising him not to accept any kindness or favor from Cæsar, whom they regarded as a tyrant. They begged him not to express any honor to Cæsar's merit or virtue, but to unbend his strength and undermine Cæsar's vigor of purpose.

Cassius, a man of fierce disposition, hated Cæsar, and as a consequence continually fired and stirred Brutus up against him. Brutus felt the rule of Cæsar an oppression, but Cassius hated the ruler. Among other reasons on which he grounded his enmity against Cæsar, the loss of his lions which he had procured when he was an edile elect, was one; for Cæsar, finding these in Megara, when that city was taken by Calenus, seized them for himself. Because of this he was very anxious to have revenge on Cæsar. So he used all his persuasive powers to lead Brutus on to the undertaking of the conspiracy.

When Cassius went about soliciting friends to engage in this plot against Cæsar, all whom he tried readily consented, if Brutus would be the head of it. Now, Brutus felt that the noblest spirits of Rome for virtue, birth, or courage, were depending upon him, and he strove to do the right.

When he consented to be the head of the conspiracy, therefore, he did it for the love of his people and of his country, not for malice against Cæsar. He felt that the liberty of his people was at stake, and he was willing to give up his life for it, if necessary. It required an heroic soul and a truly intrepid spirit so much as to entertain the thought of crushing Cæsar. Any one would have admired the unconcerned temper and the steady resolution of these men in their most dangerous undertaking.

After Cæsar's death, even the enemies of Brutus did not accuse him of killing Cæsar in order to get empire or power. Antony himself said that Brutus was the only man that conspired against Cæsar out of a sense of glory and the apparent

justice of the action, and not against the man himself. It is plain, by what he himself writes, that Brutus relied on his own virtue, for in a letter to Atticus, he writes that he should either restore liberty to the people of Rome or die, and be himself out of the reach of slavery.

In a conversation with Cassius just before a battle, Brutus said, "I have already given up my life to my country on the Ides of March, when Cæsar was killed; and have lived since then a second life for her sake, with liberty and honor."

To sum it all up, Brutus was urged and pushed on to join the conspiracy by letters and pleadings of his friends, especially by the persuasions of Cassius. Then he believed he was doing right to destroy Cæsar, because, in getting rid of him, the leader of the tyrannical government was gone. He did not think of the individual man, when he was conspiring against Cæsar, but of the liberty of his people; he did not think of gaining power and empire for himself, but of freeing his country.

IRMA FRANCES PRICE,
Argus, '12.

Eyes

There are eyes that beam with a loving glow,
Softly and shyly appealing ;
There are eyes that with brightness and mirth overflow,
While smiles through the lashes are stealing ;
There are eyes that are dreamy, far-gazing and sad,
Back into the past dimly reaching ;
There are eyes that are mischievous, hopelessly bad,
Still, approval are always beseeching ;
There are eyes that are innocent, eyes that are wise,
Eyes that are thoughtful—questioning eyes ;
There are eyes that are gloriously, sparkingly bright,
Eyes that do rival the stars of the night ;
There are eyes in whose dark and fathomless depths
One gazing would never tire—
But give me the soft, deep, love-lighted eyes
That speak with a hidden fire.

ELIZABETH HART,
Argus, '12.

Fate and a Fog



RS. LANDOR'S morning-room was a litter of maps and railway guides. In the midst Mrs. Landor's maid moved calmly about, putting the finishing touches to the packing of her mistress's voluminous wardrobe.

"Let's start in the morning, and take the sleeper at Warren to-morrow night, Aunt Anna," suggested Daphne Maywood, Mrs. Warren's orphan niece, with a faint show of interest.

"No; it's flat and hot between here and Warren. We'll take the sleeper at this end, to-night. That will put us into Warren at daybreak, and from there on, if you remember, we shall be among the mountains."

Daphne was silent, and her aunt resumed her study of the railway guides.

"Look, Daphne," she exclaimed, pointing to an insignificant black dot among the network of lines on the map. "We pass right by that little place where we were last summer."

"Yes, Aunt Anna," said Daphne, without looking, however.

"Pine Crest Inn, wasn't it?—or some such name. Excellent fare, I remember . . . By the way, that was where you met that Philip Gwynne. Where is he now—do you know?"

"Abroad, I believe," Daphne replied evenly.

"You managed that affair badly, Daphne. Such a nice fellow. He had money, too."

Daphne said nothing; her little strategy had failed. For had they covered the first part of the journey by day, they would have reached Warren at night, and as they sped north, Daphne might have slipped by the little black dot on the map under cover of darkness, all unknowing when the train should

pause at the place in her heart. Well, it could not be helped! Daphne cultivated philosophy nowadays.

But before going to sleep in her berth that night she pulled down and carefully fastened the leathern window curtain, in order that, in the first half-conscious moment of waking next morning, there might be no chance of the dear blue hills taking her unawares before she could collect her forces for the day.

During the night, however, fate and the shaking of the train freed the curtain, and when Daphne opened her eyes it was upon a sweep of blue mountains, rising in pearl and azure into the high sunlight of early morning.

At the familiar sight she caught her breath in a half sob, and the thought of Philip, which all these months—ever since their foolish quarrel in the winter—she had been striving so painfully to forget, rose in her heart like a tide, blotting out all else.

All day, from the car window, the blue hills bore her company, silent reminders of her vanished happiness, until she could resist their appeal no longer. In the overwhelming grip of her emotions she was a stranger to herself. She, who all her young life till now had come and gone with gentle docility at the bidding of others, knew, all at once, that she should not be able to pass that little station in the lap of the hills; that when they should come to it, she should rise and leave the train, impelled by this something, stronger than the habit of obedience itself; that she should not be able to resist doing so.

As this was borne in upon her, she glanced oddly at her aunt, absorbed in a magazine, and was conscious of a faint stir of humor as she pictured the shock to her aunt's conventions.

But as the day wore on she swung slowly back to normal. She was still determined to leave the train at Pine Crest, but

it occurred to her that by appealing to her aunt she might be able to accomplish her desire in a less sensational manner. Arriving at this conclusion, however, she discovered it to be no easy matter to broach the subject, and it was late in the afternoon, and the place of her dreams but two stations away, when she at last took her desperate courage in hand.

"Aunt Anna——"

"Yes, Daphne," absently responded her aunt, without lifting her eyes from the page before her.

"I should like very much to stop over a day at Pine Crest, Aunt Anna—if you don't mind." It was out at last, and Daphne braced herself for the quick look of amused inquiry that followed.

"But there'll be absolutely nobody there, child," expostulated Mrs. Landor, eying her niece curiously. "It's too early in the season for much of a crowd."

"I know——" stammered Daphne, helplessly.

"We should miss our connections," argued her aunt further.

"We could make the same connections this time to-morrow," pleaded Daphne.

"But, why on earth, Daphne——" began Mrs. Landor.

"I can't explain," the girl broke in hurriedly, and then, with a great effort, added: "But I want it, as I never before wanted anything in my life, Aunt Anna." She realized now how foolish had been her wild plans of a few hours ago.

"Well, of course, if you feel in that way about it." Could it be possible that her aunt meant to consent? "Only for the one day?"

"Only the one day," breathed Daphne. She leaned back in her seat, suddenly conscious of feeling very tired and a trifle faint.

"You're an odd little thing, Daphne," summed up Mrs. Landor, with no intention of being unkind, and turned to

give the maid instructions as to the abrupt change in their plans.

Thus it came about that the driver of the stage to Pine Crest Inn found three passengers awaiting him when he drove up to the station to meet the afternoon train from the South. He endeavored to explain something to Daphne's aunt, but she waved him imperiously aside, and with an expression that would have done credit to a heathen stoic, climbed within. Daphne followed, with a detached air of soft melancholy, for on every hand things spoke to her of Philip.

When they arrived at the inn, however, the driver's earlier reluctance was made plain. The inn was not open, the proprietor objected—would not be open, in fact, till the following week. But when Mrs. Landor smoothly explained that they desired to remain only the night and the next day, adding that the matter of expense for the privilege was a mere detail, his objections melted away in a bustle of preparation for their comfort and entertainment, and Daphne was secure of her wish, which was, that she might spend one day here amid the surroundings made dear to her through association with the man she still loved. Afterwards, she told herself, she would go away and put the thought of him and the memory of this day out of her life. But first, she must have her day.

At dinner, Daphne forced herself to make conversation, knowing that nothing so quickly put her aunt out of humor as a silent meal. But it proved up-hill work, for her aunt was not in a responsive mood, and Daphne was glad when, after the dessert, Mrs. Landor proposed that they have their coffee in the salon.

The evening lagged along until at last Mrs. Landor, with some good-natured grumbling at Daphne for being responsible for this solitary night among the hills, rose to retire, and Daphne herself was free to escape from the empty cheerless-

ness of the salon and the petty exactions of her aunt's boredom, to the sanctuary of her bedroom. With a sigh of relief she locked the door behind her, and felt her way to where a window marked its pale square upon the darkness.

The cool dusk of the spring night welcomed her with the softness of a caress, as she leaned to meet it, her face upturned to the dark circle of the hills and the quiet stars. By degrees the tension of the day relaxed; the painful sense of irretrievable loss and desolation that had haunted her for the past twenty-four hours ceased to trouble her; the weight upon her heart lifted. For the first time since they had parted the thought of Philip brought no pang. Sitting down in the low chair by the window, in the shelter of the friendly dark, she yielded herself up to remembrance.

Here—only last spring—she had trusted with love! Here—only one little year ago!—she and Philip had found the gate of Eden ajar one April morning. One moment, it all seemed very far away, as though the chronicle of another's joy, in some happier planet; the next, so exquisitely near, that the year of estrangement between fell away like the flimsy substance of a dream, leaving her face to face with the memory of the day on which Philip had told her of his love.

It seemed to her only yesterday that she had stood on the veranda below her window there—only yesterday, that Philip had come up from the tennis court, the sun on the warm brown of his tumbled hair, laughter, and something else, in the depths of his grey eyes, to ask her a question. Such an absurd question! Would she climb Olympus with him?

Olympus was a mountain near the inn, of easy access, known far and wide as the Indian's Table, from a large flat boulder upon its summit, but the young people at the inn that season, in joke among themselves, had dubbed it Olympus, because of the many couples who discovered paradise upon it.

It was a favorite spot for picnics, sketching parties, and strolls in general among all the guests of the inn, however, so that an invitation to climb Olympus did not mean, *per se*, a proposal of matrimony. Nevertheless, Daphne had blushed over her acceptance, she remembered—not at the mere fact of his having asked her to climb the mountain with him—they had climbed it often and often before—but because of the something else in his steady glance. She blushed again now at the memory of it.

They had climbed Olympus by a new way that Philip had discovered the day before, returning from a tramp to old Elk Horn on the other side. She called to mind what an exquisite day it had been; how near had seemed the blue above them. By standing a-tiptoe, one might have almost touched heaven with one's finger-tips.

Just over the brow of the hill, beneath an overhanging shelf of rock, a tiny spring bubbled up among ferns and moss. About it myrtle, alder, and laurel had made a wall of green, shutting the world away, and here Philip had asked her to become his wife.

Every day thereafter they had trysted here. Together they had watched the pale pink buds upon the laurel come to full blossom and fade; together, had marked the progress of the small family in the nest among the alders, until the tiny wings had grown strong enough to fly away from the leafy home; and when the hot days of summer came in this retreat, whose green coolness had seemed to bear a charm against the heat, they had kept still their festival of spring.

With such thoughts as these, Daphne sat far into the night. At last, spent by her emotions, she fell asleep in her chair and dreamed of Philip. She thought that she went up the mountain to meet him, and found him standing by the spring among the alders, awaiting her as of old.

When she awoke the wan light of morning sifted dimly through the laurels. Olympus and the neighboring peaks were tipped with flame, but the silent inn, and the little village at the foot of the slope, still slept in shadow.

Daphne shivered in the chill air that poured in through the open window, and touching her hair, damp with the night's dews, strove to recall how it happened that she was sitting there at that hour of the morning. Ah, her dream! At the memory of it the small pulses in her throat awoke; her lips curled to a smile. An unreasoning joy took possession of her, as her thoughts took shape under its spell. Of course, it was only a dream, but——

In tremulous haste she laid aside the crumpled gown of yesterday for one of snowy crispness, and with fingers that shook with eagerness, rearranged the fair masses of her hair in a fashion that Philip had been wont to admire. Pausing only long enough to slip a note beneath her aunt's door, she ran softly down the stairs and left the inn by a side entrance that gave upon the tennis courts, but as she crossed the deserted asphalt, she gave but a fleeting thought to the merry games of the previous summer, her mind obsessed by her dream.

An old orchard and a bit of woodland brought her to the foot of the mountain. In spite of the obliterating touch of spring she found, without difficulty, the faint trail of a year ago, leading upward through a sea of daisies. The flowers, too, had returned. A moment she bent to them, in exquisite welcome, inhaling their perfume, and passed on.

Halfway up the mountain, at a turn of the path, she paused to take breath. Looking down, she observed that the mist was rising in a white bank from the valley below. The village was already lost to view, church spire and all, and as she gazed, fascinated, she saw it steal upon the inn, surround it, swallow it up, and creep on up the mountain side.

From bush to boulder she watched its silent, swift approach; marked it engulf a flowering thorn, white as itself, in which a bird sat singing. The song ceased. Her glance ranged wide; as far as the eye could see now, the world was all a great white sea, in which the tops of mountains swam as islands.

Suddenly, it struck her that if the mist should overtake her before she reached her goal, she might not be able to find her way to it. At the thought she turned and hurried up the path, but she had tarried too long, and in spite of her efforts to keep abreast of the creeping whiteness, the mist veils closed about her.

She felt no alarm, however; it would be a tedious undertaking to pick her way through the fog, but that she could do so, she did not for a moment doubt.

Only after an hour of fruitless wandering was it borne in upon her that she had missed the trail. As the realization of this grew, she sank down upon a convenient stone to reason a way out of her predicament. She recalled that an hour earlier it had promised a fair day; doubtless, the sun would soon dispel the mist. And if it did not, and she failed to return to the inn by a reasonable hour, they would search for her. So that all she had to do, in either event, was to possess her soul in patience and remain quietly where she was.

So dense was the fog that Daphne could not discern her own hand, held at arm's length from her body. As the white mass swept up the mountain it constantly resolved itself into myriad shapes, fantastic, grotesque, as the arabesques of sleep. As they pressed silently past her the fancy grew upon Daphne that perhaps they were the old discarded dreams of the gods, flung carelessly to earth for mortals to unravel. Marooned on her rock, she watched the ghostly pageant flit by.

She had no idea of the passage of time, having left her watch at the inn, and whether she had been sitting there one hour or two, she did not know, when she heard some one coming up the mountain.

The fog muffled all sound, and they were quite near before she heard them. Silently, she listened, as the quick footfalls approached, drew opposite to where she sat, a few feet away, and without pausing, passed on up the mountain.

She started to her feet to call out, but checked the impulse as suddenly as it came; there was something uncanny about footfalls in a mist. But they were becoming fainter with each moment that passed, and in a new, swiftly-mounting fear of being left there in the mist alone, she was impelled to follow them.

After the first few uncertain steps, her feet found the path, which made it easier going. Now and then she paused to free her skirts of an officious bramble, or stumbled over a stone. Once she almost fell, as a handful of gravel gave way beneath her feet.

Pressing on again, it was several moments before she realized that the sound she had been following had ceased. She stopped abruptly to listen. Only the drip of the fog, from leaf and twig, broke the stillness. Whoever it was, there in the mist ahead, was listening too.

For the first time it occurred to Daphne to wonder who or what it might be that waited for her up the trail yonder. At the idea her imagination took alarm, and all at once the curling mist became a sinister thing, peopled with grisly presences, who watched her with hostile intent. She was afraid to go on; she became afraid to remain where she was.

Her suspense was fast becoming unbearable, when the footfalls rang out anew, proceeding on up the trail. In her unutterable relief, to find that they were not coming toward her, she forgot for a moment her fear of being left

behind. But as the sound grew faint in the distance once more her panic returned, and she was again forced to follow after. Every few steps she paused, fearful to listen, but her mysterious guide continued to pursue an unflagging course ahead, and by degrees her confidence, in a measure, returned.

The trail after awhile began to descend, and she guessed that they must have passed over the brow of the mountain. They might even be within a stone's throw of the spring—Philip's spring and hers—for aught she knew to the contrary.

The descent became abrupt, the path more difficult. Through her little thin-soled shoes, the sharp stones began to bruise her feet. This made her awkward, and soon, in spite of her caution, one turned beneath her, dislodging another shower of gravel.

She held her breath to listen. The footsteps had stopped again. After what seemed an eternity of waiting, she heard them again—coming toward her.

In sudden blind fear, she turned and ran along the way she had come, but the mist confused her, and she wandered from the trail. Brambles caught at her skirt and scratched her hands; impertinent twigs snatched at her hair and slapped at her face, as she fled.

"Stop! whoever you are," a voice called peremptorily, and at the sound she became motionless, her eyes straining at the mist as though, by sheer force of will, to cleave a passage through its enshrouding folds to that other.

"Where are you?—you, there," it called again in quiet challenge, after a moment of futile searching.

Could it be that there were two voices like that in the world? Daphne asked herself. She again remembered her dream.

"Here!" she answered. To her own ears it sounded scarcely louder than a whisper, and despair seized her, in the fear that she had not been heard. She essayed again

with no better success, and fell to trembling, swaying where she stood. With all the power of her will she strove to retain her consciousness. If she fainted now that voice would pass from her, never to return.

But the world of white about her was receding fast, when suddenly, the mist directly in front of her became violently agitated and there emerged the voice:

“Daphne!”

But Daphne, worn out by the long strain, with little supper the night before and no breakfast, to all of which was added the nightmare of her wanderings in the mist, was beyond giving an account of herself.

When she resumed an interest in mundane affairs, it was to find her head resting on Philip’s knee, the tenderness of Philip’s eyes above her.

“The mist——” she murmured half fearfully, as he bent, with his cheek against hers, to catch what she said.

“It is all gone, dear. See, the sun is shining.”

But her regard was troubled still.

“But—I thought you were abroad,” she whispered, stroking his sleeve, as though to assure herself of his reality.

“I meant to go,” he confessed.

Her eyes questioned him.

“But before I went,” he continued, “I wanted to see this.” His glance strayed from her face to the flowering laurels and the little spring. “So, when the north-bound train slowed up below here three hours ago, to take on water, I dropped off the rear end of the sleeper and came up here, by way of old Elk Horn, intending to catch the local at noon.”

“Then, you are going abroad after all,” she said, forlornly.

He laughed, as at something absurd and preposterous. “Not unless you will go, too. Will you, Daphne?”

ROSE B. DICKENSON,
Cunningham, '11.

The Point of View

Tell me not in mournful numbers
History is the only thing;
But we see it in our slumbers,
"History *first*," one voice doth sing.

Life is real, life is earnest—
History, though, is not its goal;
Of all subjects 'tis the driest,
History does not touch the soul.

Not enjoyment, but just sorrow,
Comes from studying all day long;
Does it fit us for the morrow
When we leave this changing throng?

Life is short and time is fleeting,
English, too, is on our lists;
And our heads like drums are beating,
"English *first*," Room O insists.

In the school's broad field of battle,
"Language methods must excel"—
But we're not dumb, driven cattle,
We will argue and rebel.

Trust no teacher, howe'er pleasant—
Here's another in the fray;
"How to study." is the present
Most important thing to-day."

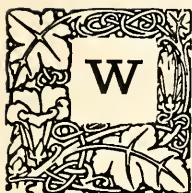
Other lips doth oft remind us
"Arithmetic is *first* in line"—
We departing, leave behind us
Grades that will forever shine;

Grades such that perhaps another,
Looking o'er Black Beauty's page,
Will commend us as a teacher
Fit to serve in any age.

Let us then be up and doing,
Make an *E* in every class;
Still achieving, still pursuing—
Bluff each teacher till we pass.

THURZETTA THOMAS,
Athenian, '12.

The Gentleman From Selisia



THE ghosts were sitting on the top limb of a giant oak, rocking gently back and forth in the breeze. The oak stood by the cabin of an Irish family, who had moved from the city, trying to keep alive in the father of the family that little spark of life left after an accident in the factory where he had worked. For many weeks he had lain in a stupor, knowing neither his wife, nor his children—and now, on a lower branch of the oak, a Banshee was swaying gently with the wind, howling; howling for Tim O'Connor to die.

"I say, Banshee, that's a shame; call it off," said Tom Brent.

He was the ghost of a newspaper reporter who was killed while trying to get a "beat" for his paper—went down the shaft and was smothered.

"Nay," said old Frinzo, "the man's better dead."

The Banshee rejoined us, and we sat there telling one another how our bodies had died, just as, when in the flesh, we used to sit around the fire and tell our friends of some narrow escape we had had from death.

"Say, what's that?" asked Jack Hilliard, suddenly.

Following his gaze, we saw a white, transparent shape hovering 'twixt earth and sky, and looking longingly toward us.

"Oh," said I, "it's the ghost of some one who has just died, and the old fellow hates to give up his earthly habitations."

"Take my word for it," said old Frinzo, "that's no ghost. I've seen too many of them in my day not to know one when I see it."

Frinzo had been a bold buccaneer, and had died in 1573.

"Well, whatever it is, it looks as if it would like to join us; let's call him over and hear his story," said Gray. "It's awfully interesting, anyway, to hear a fellow tell how he drew his last breath."

We turned toward the specter and beckoned. He hesitated an instant, and then floated toward us.

"Come on, chum, and tell us how you died," cried out Hilliard, the irrepressible, as the specter neared the group.

"I didn't," was the laconic reply.

"The deuce you didn't! Then how—why—who——?"

"Hold on a minute, Hilliard," said Brent, "let's introduce ourselves before demanding an autobiographic sketch."

That ceremony over, the conversation drifted back to its former trend.

"I say, old man, you said just now that you didn't die. Now I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I sure would like to know who and what you are," began Hilliard eagerly.

The specter gazed absently off into space for some time, then pulled himself together with a sigh, and faced his audience.

"Friends," he said, slowly, "you see before you not a ghost, nor a specter, nor yet a Banshee—but the astral body of a gentleman from Selisia."

"Then, what are you doing in the Land of Ghosts?" asked Brent.

"My material body was—er—destroyed," said he, sadly.

"This is getting interesting," ejaculated Carlton, who, up to this time, had kept himself in the background. "Please tell us your story."

The stranger seemed on the point of refusing, but thought better of it and said, "To begin with, do any of you gentlemen happen to know where Selisia is?"

"Yes," said Hilliard. "I think it's in Massachusetts."

"No," said the specter, "Selisia is the name of the country located in the torrid zone at the South Pole."

"Torrid zone! South Pole!" cried Hilliard, "Say, what are you giving us?"

The stranger smiled. "I did not expect you to know our country," he said calmly. "We in Selisia know all that goes on in your land, but that is owing to a peculiar property we have, which is not possessed by inhabitants of the known world."

"And what is that?" asked Brent.

"That," said the stranger, "is the art of setting free from its casing the soul, and in our astral bodies going whither-soever we will. It is in this manner that we have preserved throughout the ages all the so-called lost arts of the Egyptians, Medes, and Persians. Selisia is hot because it is so situated that it exactly surrounds the South Pole, and the friction of the earth, turning on its axis, causes the excessive heat. If it were allowed to remain at its real temperature, mortal man would be unable to live there; but by means of magnetic instruments we draw toward our country the icy winds from the so-called polar regions surrounding Selisia. From this mixture of excessive heat and cold we strike that happy medium so desirable. Then there is an attachment on these instruments which draws from the atmosphere all the rain necessary for crops. In this country I was king, and I ruled most leniently. There was almost no crime committed. To be sure, there was some planned, but I punished the criminals before the deeds were perpetrated."

"Gee!" broke in Hilliard, "this is worse than Alice in Wonderland; how did you know that there was any crime planned?"

"By mental telepathy, of course. Our police force reads the minds of the entire population every morning, and if

there is any thought of crime, our officers immediately discover it."

"But you can't punish a man for what he hasn't done," objected Brent.

"We never punish crime in the sense in which you use the word punish," said his majesty. "We take the criminal and place him under the direct care of a highly educated, virtuous citizen who reforms him by moral suasion.

"My subjects all seemed to love me, with the exception of one man. On reading his mind, my officers discovered that he was planning to usurp my throne. I set watch over his every thought, and then, he suddenly seemed to disappear from the face of the earth. He soon came back, and upon searching his mind, only the purest thoughts could be discovered. At stated intervals, however, he would again disappear. Things went on in this way for some time; every day he would disappear from mind for an hour or two. Then my captain of the guard discovered the cause of his seeming disappearance. The man had invented a suit of armor made of two cases of iron. Between these two cases was a perfect vacuum. Now thought, as you know, travels by waves. There being no such waves in a vacuum, the villain could don the suit of armor and think out his despicable plans for usurping my throne, and no one would be the wiser.

"One day I was obliged to leave my own land and visit the unknown regions of the world, so I threw myself down upon a couch, and, in spirit, soared away to other lands, leaving my defenseless body in the empty room. This was the chance my opponent wished. Seizing my material body, he made off with it and secreted it in the inner recess of his stronghold. Then did he proceed to poison the minds of my true subjects against me. It was hard at first, but his mind was strong, and thus you see, my enemy gradually gained a foothold—to-day he is King of Selisia."

The stranger stopped speaking and we sat quiet for a while, then Hilliard asked, "But why do you not return to your material body, inhabit it once again with your soul, and, by mental telepathy, bring back the minds and hearts of your subjects to you again?"

"I thought of that, said his majesty, "but so did my foe, and he took strong measures to prevent its ever happening."

"What did he do?" asked Gray.

The gentleman from Selisia smiled bitterly. "He incased my body in his suit of thought-proof armor, and even if I could reënter my body, my efforts would be futile, for there could be no mental telepathy.

"So, you see," he added, bitterly, as he drifted away, "I am doomed to wander forever in infinite space—a lost soul."

ANNE B. CONWAY,
Argus, '12.



The Power of a Song



ARKNESS had fallen on the old Southern town of Liberty on that eventful night in 1863, and still the lonely Federal sentinel kept his solemn watch. The streets were dark and gloomy, not a soul was stirring, not a light could be seen save in the Federal camp. The dead-white snow covered the ground and lent solemnity to the quiet scene.

But suddenly, in the distance, there broke upon the stillness of the night the sound of tramping feet; and then, before the astonished eyes of the Federals, the whole town was flooded with light. Every house in the streets was brilliantly lighted; for this town was the home of Southern people and the Confederate soldiers were coming!

The officer in command of the Union army rushed to the first house on the square to order that the lights be extinguished. But, as he stood on the porch, he stepped back in surprise, for through the open door of the parlor he saw a young girl dressed in white, with white roses in her dark hair. Seated at the old square piano, in low, sweet tones she was singing "Annie Laurie."

The officer listened to the end, and then, as he turned, he begged, "Won't you sing just one more song?"

She gave him a swift glance, and when she saw his uniform, her beautiful dark eyes expressed the greatest scorn and indignation.

"How dare you, sir?" she began. She hesitated—then slowly returned to the piano.

As the officer stood in the door, she struck a few chords, and then the lively strains of "Dixie" rang out through the still

house. The Federal officer bowed his head in reverence for her loyal spirit, and softly crossing the room, he knelt and kissed her hand—then turned and left the house.

The lights burned all night long that night in the old town of Liberty, and the loyal Southern hearts gave welcome to their Confederate friends.

ELIZABETH DOWNEY,
Cunningham, '13.



The Brook and the Daisies

Little brook, with water bright and clear,
Thou art running, running all the year;
Can you not your story tell,
As you run through field and dell?

Daisies, hanging o'er the clear brook's side,
Beautiful daisies, starry-eyed,
Can't you whisper, and tell me
What the brook sings unto thee?

ESTELLE McCLUNG, '13.

EDITORIALS



Needs of the Library. In spite of the fact that our library is one of the best, in point of the selection and care of the books, there are several changes which could be made in order better to adapt it to the large number of students who are found there at almost every hour of the day.

One thing that all will acknowledge that we have needed, and needed very badly, is a magazine filing system, so that old magazines may be readily accessible, instead of having to search through the back numbers of several years in order to find a certain number. We are glad to see that this need is being supplied and that in a short time no complaints of a missing number will be necessary. Those of us who have had any work in the literary societies, or in our classes, which has taken up current events, have found this to be one great drawback, up to this time, to our well supplied stock of magazines, and will welcome the change.

It is hoped that at some future time we may have a separate reference room, in which all of the works of reference may be kept, in order to relieve the congestion in the library and reading-room by thinning out and dividing the crowd. Of course this is a change which can not take place at once, for it is one requiring money as well as time.

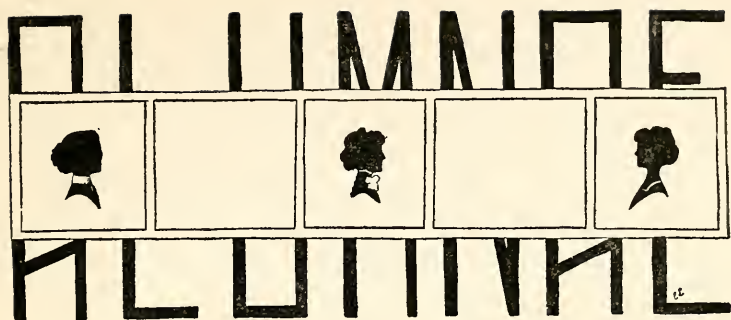
In mentioning the needs of our library, one great duty on the part of the students, which we should not forget, is the need of observing the library rules. These rules are posted

on the doors and in both the library and reading-room, and they certainly require some consideration from the students. Among these rules is one requiring that all magazines and books be returned to their proper places, but how many of us faithfully observe this rule? When we do replace a book on the shelves we are not always careful to see that we put it in its proper place, but merely put it where it requires least exertion. This habit results in a good deal of inconvenience, not only to the librarian, but to the students as well, and it is one which it would be well for us to overcome.



A School Song. Has it ever occurred to you that there is no song which we can call our school song? And what other school or college is without the song that all take pride in! Of course every class and every organization has its own individual songs, but there is not a single song which belongs to the whole school. You may ask why we need a song when we have school yells. Although yells are all right in their places and we certainly don't want to do away with them, they can not take the place of music. The gods themselves used song to give vent to their feelings, but I don't think that yells have been in vogue until recently. We need everything that will draw us together in school spirit, and what could be a finer or a better spirit-raiser than a good, rousing school song set to a familiar tune and sung by every student?

And where are we to get our song? There can be no doubt as to the ability of some of our students to set words to an appropriate tune, or, better still, to compose both words and music. If some incentive could be found to start the fires of genius, THE FOCUS would take great pleasure in publishing in its pages, before the year is past, a song accepted by all of the students as our school song.



Mrs. M. M. Pearson, née Mary White, class of '93, died February 11, 1911, at her home in Bristol, Tenn.

Carrie Brown Taliaferro, class '99, is head of the Department of Mathematics at St. Agnes School, Albany, N. Y.

Nellie Mundy, class '02, is in Farmville doing some special work in Latin. She expects to teach near Farmville, beginning her work the first of March.

Juliette Hundley, class '07, has a position in the High School of Rockingham, N. C.

Dr. William Dana Shelby, Dr. Elizabeth Rosser Carper, married December 28, 1910, Canton, China. Home address, Shameen, Canton, China. Mrs. Shelby, née Elizabeth Carper, was a member of the class of 1901.

Mrs. A. D. Wright, née Mayme Morris Rowe, class '08, is at home at 1601 Highland Park, Richmond, Virginia.

De Berniere Smith, class '06, is taking a course in nursing in Memorial Hospital, Richmond, Virginia.

Mrs. Rea Schnessler, née Gertrude Burton, class '06, lives now at Lafayette, Alabama.

Mrs. J. G. Nesbitt, née Bevie Cox, class '06, lives at Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

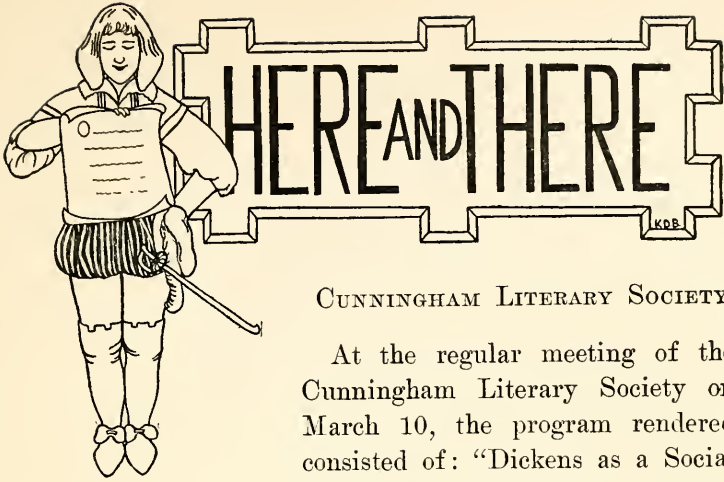
Mrs. J. P. Walker, née Nellie Heath, class '05, is in Flathead Reservation, Polson, Montana, where her husband is doing some Government work. Their home is in Washington, D. C.

Aileen Poole, class '10, who is teaching at Sussex Court House, spent a few days during March visiting Miss Blandy, head of the Kindergarten Department.

Geraldine Fitzgerald, class '08, who is teaching in Danville, Virginia, has been a recent visitor to the school.

Mrs. Geoffrey Creyke, née Alice Paulett, class '05, of Washington, D. C., has been visiting her parents during March. She was accompanied by her son, Geoffrey Creyke, Jr.





CUNNINGHAM LITERARY SOCIETY

At the regular meeting of the Cunningham Literary Society on March 10, the program rendered consisted of: "Dickens as a Social Reformer," by Rose Parrott; "Dickens' Style," by Elizabeth Scott; "The Story of the Cricket on the Hearth," by Mary Towson; a piano duet, by Pearl Justice and Rose Parrott, and a vocal solo, by Grace Woodhouse.

After the adjournment the members remained for the election of new officers, which resulted as follows:

Lilian Byrd.....	President
Louise Eubank.....	Vice-President
Bert Myers.....	Recording Secretary
Louise Ford.....	Corresponding Secretary
Marie Mapp.....	Treasurer
Pearl Parsley.....	Critic
Carrie Rennie.....	Censor
Fanny Bland.....	Reporter

On March 18 an interesting debate took place, the subject being, "Resolved, That the United States should maintain a larger navy." The speakers on the affirmative were Alean Price and Aletha Burroughs; those on the negative were Annie Banks and Grace Woodhouse.

While the judges were rendering their decision, Grace Howell entertained the audience with a piano solo. The decision was in favor of the affirmative.

ARGUS LITERARY SOCIETY

Our study this term is to include some interesting work on the modern drama. We began at one of our recent meetings by the reading of Ibsen's *The Doll House*, presented in an attractive manner by Miss Rebekah Peck, Miss Ruth Dabney and Miss Esme Howell.

On Friday evening, March 17, we were entertained with a short-story meeting. This was both new and enjoyable. The stories were original and well written.

The program was as follows:

The Short Story and the Drama.....	Lucile Cousins
Poem, "A Spring Romance".....	Irma Phillips
Original Story, "The Legend of the Trees".....	Lucile Baldwin
Vocal Solo.....	Edna Landrum
"The Gentleman from Selisia".....	Anne Conway
Music.....	Argus Glee Club

ATHENIAN LITERARY SOCIETY

On Friday evening, March the seventeenth, the Athenian Literary Society held an open meeting in the auditorium. A program appropriate to Saint Patrick's Day was rendered: A trio, "Kathleen Mavourneen," by Misses Pearl Berger, Penelope White and Joe Warren, and a song, "Don't Forget Old Ireland," by the Choral Club, added a great deal to the pleasure of the evening.

We are glad to welcome as a new member of our society Miss Gertrude Martin, of Roanoke.

PIERIAN LITERARY SOCIETY

The regular quarterly election of officers was held on February 23, with the following results:

Virginia Johnson, President; Elizabeth Field, Vice-president; Susie Robinson, Recording Secretary; Daisy Swetnam, Corresponding Secretary; Ethel Ayres, Treas-

urer; Lucile Cole, Critic; Ivy Whitley, Censor; Lucile Snow, Reporter.

During the last month the members of the society have been busy preparing for the open-air play, "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

JEFFERSON-RUFFNER JOINT DEBATE

The first joint debate between the Jefferson and Ruffner Debating Societies was held March 17, in Room H.

The subject for discussion was, "Resolved, That United States Senators should be elected by the direct vote of the people."

The meeting was presided over by Dr. Millidge. Susie Phillippi, of the Jefferson Society, opened for the affirmative, followed by Mabel Peterson of the Ruffner. Ruth Fulton closed for the affirmative, Germania Wingo for the negative.

The judges were Miss Smith, Mr. Grainger, and Mr. Lear. While the decision was being made a delightful piano solo was rendered by Mary Lynn Coleman, of the Ruffner Society. The decision was rendered unanimously in favor of the affirmative.

THE ELEMENTARY PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR

The Elementary Professional Seminar was organized by Miss F. W. Dunn, February 12. Its chief aim is to discuss different problems that will confront the Elementary Professional girls next year, when they begin teaching.

The seminar meets once a week and pursues a program which is prepared by the program committee of its members. Different phases of grading a one-room school has been the subject of the programs. The girls are greatly interested in the work. Many of the members were interested in library work, so Miss Duggar gave the seminar a very interesting and beneficial talk on this subject.

THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The calendar of the association for the month of March has been as follows:

March 4—"Japan;" leader, Miss Lynda Rowe.

March 11—"Respect for Individual Rights;" leader, Miss Lucile Cousins, followed by the report upon the Hollins Council.

March 18—"The World-Wide Association Movement;" an address by Miss Casler, executive secretary of the Virginia-Carolina territory of the Young Women's Christian Associations.

March 25—"Samuel, the Last of the Prophets;" leader, Miss Violet Marshall.

We were very glad to have Miss Casler with us, even though she could remain only a day. We wish she might have been able to stay with us longer; we wish to know her better. However, many of us heard her tell of our association movement and the Seniors invited her to speak to them, also, on "Life Work."

Miss Casler, by her many illustrations, showed us with what effectiveness the association is endeavoring to serve all young women. With its help clubs of factory girls have religious and social gatherings, a gymnasium and lunch-room within the factories where they work; a young woman, who comes into a large city to earn her livelihood, can find a real home with many other girls at the Y. W. C. A. building; the immigrant women are given friendly "helps" as they are accustoming themselves to our civilization; and now the girls out in the country are beginning to form associations that they may come together for all kinds of purposes, perhaps for a class in English literature, health-talks, or their gymnasium practice, or perhaps for their annual club banquet.

So we are proud that we are student members of this world-wide movement, and yet we realize that as we are included

in that most privileged class of young women—which is so small as one-half of one per cent. of all young women in the United States—responsibility of Christian leadership rests upon us, as we go out from school to be teachers. We thank Miss Casler for her broadening and inspiring address.

The budget for the coming year has been drawn up and passed upon by the cabinet; it includes \$90.00 for foreign missions and \$70.00 for missions and philanthropies within our own state, besides its annual contribution of \$100.00 to the National Board and the World's Young Women's Christian Association.





IT OR MISS

B-l-ie (to Pa-l-ne in the library):
"Have you seen anything of the
Virginian-Pilot?"

Pa-l-ne: "Who? No, I don't
know her."

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According to Mr. M-dd-x, Senator Daniel had become so accustomed to running for the senatorship that he still continues making senatorial addresses.

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Mr. G-ai-g-r (quoting Edgar's speech in King Lear):

"'Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd
Than still contemn'd and flattered.'"

Where else do we find Shakespeare expressing his love of sincerity in preferring the simple to court life?"

F. W-l-s-on: "'Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

△ △ △

Therese: "Did you work all your examples on that test?"

Ella: "No, did you?"

Therese: "No; you see, I was in such a hurry I got so scared I was fairly putrified."

N-n-y G-ll-tte: "Miss P-rk-ns, please excuse me from music this term?"

Miss P.: "Why? What is your reason?"

N. G.: "Well, I know how to write the dramatic scales and I thought that was what you were going to teach this term."

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The following is a list of masterpieces and their painters, as the Juniors know them:

The Aurora Borealis, by Raphael.

Cistene Madonna, by Angelo.

Saved, by Michael Angelo.

The Gleaners, by Miehi.

The Madonna, by Sistine.

Pharaoh's Chariots, by Rosa Brownhair.

The Angelus, by Raphael.

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NOTICE—The green team will meet in the faculty room at 4:30.

Dr. Jarman: "That's a very good place for a green team to meet."

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W-l: "Do you study mathematics now?"

G-c: "No, but I study algebra."

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Miss F-l-s (in Industrial Education class): "Where do we get silk?"

First Senior: "From mulberry leaves."

Second Senior: "I thought it was made from worms."

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A-n-e G-r-n-er: "How did the Ruffner and Jefferson debating societies get their names?"

Fl-t-h-r Ba-l-y: "Ruffner was the first president of this school, but I don't know who Jefferson was."

Second-Grade Teacher: "John, will you name the four seasons?"

John (with a know-all air): "Yes'm; salt, vinegar, pepper and cloves."

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HOBBLE! HOBBLE! HOBBLE!

Once I saw a pretty maiden,
 Full of dignity and grace;
 Such a slim and graceful figure,
 Such a winsome little face.

But she wore a narrow hobble,
 How she walked, I do not know—
 Though she "inched along" with caution,
 And her gait was rather slow.

She was lonely in her travels,
 As she hobbled day by day—
 You could tell that hobble coming
 Nearly half a mile away.

But I've lost that little maiden,
 And my heart with grief is bowed;
 She is lost in the confusion,
 She is swallowed in the crowd.

'Tis the universal fashion,
 Now to wear a hobble tight—
 But I think it such a nuisance,
 It should hobble out of sight.

FANNIE WILSON, '13.

EASTER EGGS

Eggs-traordinary as it may appear,
 Eggs-actly at this time each year,
 Eggs-treme artistic tastes the hens do show.
 Eggs-hilarating eggs with colors all aglow,
 Eggs-amples finer never yet were seen ;
 Eggs-isting bright, with blue, pink and green.
 Eggs-hausted must those hens be ; such displays
 Eggs-tol the merits of the fowl that lays.
 Eggs-plain it how you may, it does seem funny ;
 Eggs-amine for the cause, the hen's a bunny.
 Eggs-plorers tell that animals most rare
 Eggs-ist through all the world, but I declare
 Eggs-perience proves that bunnies with four legs
 Eggs-cel not in producing eggs.
 Now you eggs-perts eggs-pect eggs-cellent eggs-amples of eggs
 on Easter Sunday,
 But don't eggs-hibit eggs-traordinary eggs-cuses of eggs-
 haustion on Easter Monday.

Eggs-change.

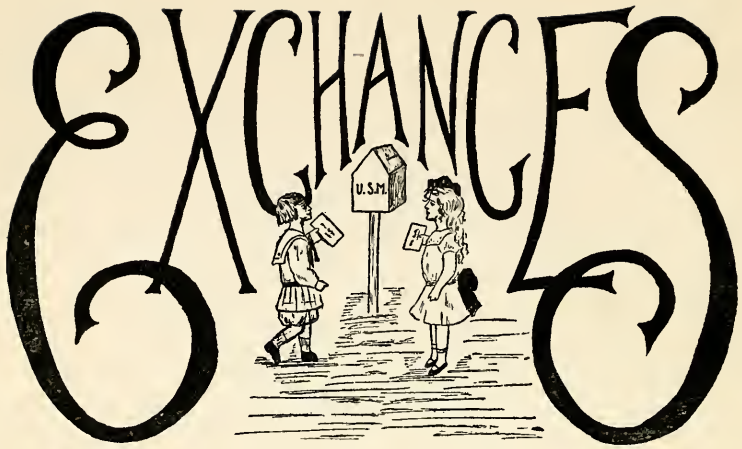
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MORE TRUTH THAN POETRY

I racked my brain, but all in vain,
 A ballad for to make ;
 My inspiration failing then,
 I ate my neighbor's cake.

Her brow grew dark with sudden rage,
 She seized me by the hair ;
 And ever since, alas ! I've worn
 The kind that grew not there.

—*Exchange.*



So far only a few of this month's magazines have found their way to our exchange table. Therefore, we are doubly glad to receive these, and shall endeavor to show our appreciation by the hearty congratulations which we offer to their editors.



As usual, the *William and Mary Literary Magazine* is very much enjoyed by its readers. This is a distinctively college magazine, as each page breathes forth the "Rah! Rah!" spirit so peculiarly characteristic of all men's colleges. In reading the "Letters of a Freshman Found in a Waste-Paper Basket," one is taken into the very life of the college, where he enjoys many a laugh at the Freshman's expense. Evidently the author of the story, "By the Hand of the World," had not fully decided on the plot before he wrote the story. There was good material for an interesting plot, but perhaps the author was in too much of a hurry to spend much time on the matter. The story of "Tim" is more naturally and interestingly told, and the life of Martin Luther is well enough written to please even the most fastidious faculty member. The poetry in this magazine shows more

mature thought than the stories. Especially might this be said of the poem, "At Bruton Church." The author is to be congratulated in that he not only possesses the happy faculty of criticising others' weak attempts at poetry, but he can also furnish them with an example of the right kind.

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In the *Peabody Record* especial mention should be made of the essay on Maeterlinck's "Pelleas and Melisande," and the short sketch "At the Fortune Teller's." There are many good short stories in this issue, but we might suggest that there be one or two good long stories, instead of the many short sketches, which tend to give the magazine a choppy effect. There is a noticeable lack of poetry in this issue.

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We are glad to welcome *The Critic* again as one of our exchanges. It fully justifies its reputation as one of the best of the High School publications in the South. Of its three good stories, "A Modern Priscilla" deserves especial mention, because of the attractive way in which it is told, and the originality of the plot. The joke department is also good.

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The February number of the *Hollins Magazine* comes just in time for us to express our appreciation of its merit. This issue is rather late in coming, but all colleges have "delinquent Peggies," who keep back the publication of the magazine in order that they may finish their essay. The magazine is well gotten up and well balanced, there being just the right proportion of poetry, stories and essays. The essays, "Caps and Bells in Shakespeare," and "Thomas Carlyle," deserve particular mention, also the story, "Her Bro-

ther's Keeper," and the clever little sketch, "A Friendly Sort o' Way." The poems, "Twilight," and the "Call of the Sea," show a true poetic feeling.

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Judging from the poems and stories in *The Skirmisher*, the March issue might be termed, "In Lighter Vein." However, the articles on "The Value of Military Training," and "College Days a Preparation for Life," are worth while. The essay on "Leo Tolstoy" is also interesting and instructive. We fear the poets of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute are rather sentimentally inclined. We wish to acknowledge with thanks the *High School Student* and the *John Marshall Record*.



Locals

Mrs. J. A. Banks, of Victoria, spent several days with her daughter, Miss Annie Banks.

Mrs. M. P. Bradshaw and Mrs. W. T. Woodhouse, of Burkeville, spent Wednesday, March 15, here.

Mrs. Campbell, a returned missionary from China and Korea, spoke to us at prayers, Monday evening, March 20.

Mrs. Adams, of Lynchburg, has been the guest of her daughter, Miss Sue Adams.

We are glad to hear that Natalie Terry is improving. We have all missed her and hope that she will soon be able to be with us again.

Ruth Hunt has been visiting her sister, Mrs. Dickinson, in Cartersville.

Directory of Advertisers

Students, before you do your purchasing, read the advertisements, and patronize those who help you. Make the business men realize they are not wasting money when advertising with THE FOCUS.

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