

THE COLBY ECHO.

NEW SERIES:—VOL. VI, No. 11.

WATERVILLE, ME., FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1902.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

THE SCARLET LETTER

Hawthorne is the greatest psychological writer of modern times, and the "Scarlet Letter" is his masterpiece. The weird legends, the stern and gloomy characters, and the harsh customs of the Puritans offer a congenial field to his genius, and form a somber but appropriate background to the tale of sin and retribution.

Before entering upon a discussion of the "Scarlet Letter," itself, a moment must be spent upon the charming introduction to the novel. In this preface Hawthorne has employed to the full his poems of delineation and good-natured satire, and has given us a humorous account of his experiences in the Custom-house, and a spirited caricature of his colleagues at the port. Any reader who skips this autobiographical sketch misses a rich treat. The style is so pure and unaffected, the portraits are so realistic and ridiculous, and the complaints at his summary ejection from office are so amusing that we would gladly tarry longer here.

In the "Scarlet Letter" Hawthorne describes the effect of a great sin upon a weak man, a strong woman, a character more fiendish than human, a little girl, and the community in which they lived. The emblem of shame, the "scarlet letter," is the main-spring of the story, and it casts its lurid glow through every chapter and almost every page. First embroidered upon the breast of Hester Prynne, it is personified in little Pearl, it eats its way into the breast of the minister, it even appears in the midnight sky, the ghastly portent of future shame. With such power and vigor has Hawthorne impressed this symbol upon our minds that we almost feel it burning on our breast.

Hester Prynne, married without love, comes to America in advance of her husband. Endowed by Nature with a passionate temperament, bound by no ties of love to the husband so many miles away, cast without a friend upon a society whose very strictness encouraged secret crime, was it any wonder that the laggard husband two years afterwards should behold a sight to sear his eyes,—his wife standing up, a statue of ignominy, before the people.

From that time on, under the name of Roger Chillingworth, the injured husband seeks revenge. From a calm, unobtrusive student he is changed to a fiend, preying remorselessly upon his victim's conscience. His victim—for he finds the man who has wronged him, as the vulture scents his prey, however distant. Arthur Dimmesdale, sanctified minister of the strictest of churches, idol of his people, model of asceticism and purity, yes, this godly man has fallen. His position, his good name with his congregation, his sacred vows, his fear and reverence of the Almighty God, did not remove him from human liability to guilt. And whatever he may have been before, after his fall he becomes a contemptible thing. More careful of his social reputation than his immortal soul, he sinks under the lashings of a conscience rankling from the hidden torments of the fiend in human form, Roger Chillingworth.

After he has discovered his wife's dishonor, Chillingworth is pursued by an insatiable longing for revenge upon the man who has destroyed her happiness and his own. He is no longer a human being; he is vengeance personified. And

this is no common vengeance. Not by showing the minister in his true colors will he be satisfied, not by his death alone will he be requited, but he condemns the miserable man to a living death, a spiritual death, the death of his hopes, the death of his ideals, the death of his soul, while his conscience is still alive, smarting more keenly under every blow, never wearied, never destroyed, like the liver of Prometheus which given by night that it might be devoured by day. Only in his death-hour does the minister rise triumphantly superior to his weakness, and before the gathered multitude do penance for his sin.

Hester excites our pity, and even our admiration. She suffers as but few suffer, and yet she still loves and shields her cowardly paramour. At first we hope that she has sincerely repented and will atone for her crime by her sincere penance and humility. She is weak, self-denying, charitable and torn with anxiety for the moral welfare of her child, but we find that it is pride which has borne her up so well, and with a sigh, we recognize that neither public ignominy nor secret torments are powerful for good.

Pearl is the genius of the book. She is the living "scarlet letter," constantly inflicting pain upon her mother's heart, and often causing her to wonder whether her child were not an elf. Pearl possesses as individuality of her own. "In giving her existence, a great law had been broken," and she is always different from other children. She early realizes her position as an outcast from society, and shows almost preternatural shrewdness in ferreting out the meaning of the magic letter and the true position of the minister. She construes the antithetical qualities of sin and innocence, and yet, so cleverly has Hawthorne drawn her that she seems a real child.

The "Scarlet Letter" is written in Hawthorne's best style. The language is flowing and melodious, and at the same time, natural. The English is clear, yet picturesque and artistic. It is a pleasure to read Hawthorne. Every word falls naturally into its proper place, and seldom indeed, does the reader lose the thread of the story. The descriptions of natural scenery strike not only the eye, but the mind as well.

In his keen analysis of motives Hawthorne stands alone. His logic is sound, and many of his sayings show great profundity of thought. The following passage shows what a master of psychology he was.

"But there is a fatality, a feeling so irresistible and inevitable that it has the force of doom, which almost invariably compels human beings to linger around and haunt, ghost-like, the spot where some great and marked event has given the color to their life-time; and still the more irresistibly, the darker the tinge that saddens it."

In Hawthorne, sins always receive their just punishments. He does not, like some authors, paint the pleasures of crime, but the inevitable results of wrong-doing, and so he is, in the highest sense, a moral author.

The Y. W. C. A. meeting at Ladies' Hall on Tuesday evening was led by Lucy Whennman. The topic, "What Shall Vacation Mean to Us," was especially adapted to all, and the meeting was interesting and profitable.

A PAIR OF OLD BOYS.

Not a ripple disturbed the smooth surface of the harbor. The incoming tide crept slowly up the beach. Subdued by distance into soft cadencies the notes of the sea-gulls circling about the fish-weir at the harbor mouth floated up to the little fishing hamlet. The swallows were softly twittering under the eaves of the fish-houses along the shore.

The door of a neat little cottage opened and "Cap'n" Sam, now in his eighty-first year, came out. He went down the walk to the little wicket gate. He stood and took a long, deep breath. Shading his eyes with his old brown hand he gazed down the harbor and across the bay to the distant islands. Again, he turned his eyes up to the harbor head where the advancing tide was driving the clam diggers from their work. Then he looked hesitatingly up the little street to the village church and next down to the boat landing where the street came to an end.

"Mornin', Cap'n Sam," said a voice from across the way. Cap'n Sam looked around and saw a grey-headed man with a long thick-set body and short legs, standing in the opposite dooryard.

"Mornin' ter yerself, Cap'n Joe," said he, "'pears like we'd hev anuther fine day, don't it?"

"It does so," said Cap'n Joe coming across the narrow street.

'Cap'n' Sam came out of his yard saying as he carefully fastened the little gate, "Wouldn't ye like ter take er trip outside ter day, Cap'n Joe?"

"It 'ud be er heap er pleasure," responded Cap'n Joe. "Le's go down ter th' landin' an' see 'f th' men hev cum in f'm hakin' yit."

"I'm with yer," was the rejoinder.

The two men walked slowly down the street side by side. 'Cap'n' Joe was a few months older than his companion. He was once the taller but being of a slighter build his age had bowed him down to the height of 'Cap'n' Sam. He carried in his hand, to assist his progress, an oak stick fitted with a curious piece of fish bone for a handle. This cane he had carried ever since he had lost his wife twenty-five years before. At that time he retired from steady work and hauled up his fishing boat in which he had sailed out and in the harbor from boyhood. From the gunwale of the boat he had made this cane, the ever present companion of his declining days. 'Cap'n' Joe and 'Cap'n' Sam had been companions from their earliest recollection. They had as boys played together by the seashore and learned to swim at the same time. Later they had spent many a day fishing in the same boat and now they were growing old together.

They came to the landing and sat down upon an overturned boat. As they looked out over the water and breathed the fresh, invigorating morning air 'Cap'n' Sam said, "makes er man feel young agin."

"Yes," said his old companion, "I be er reuin' my youth."

"Member how we fool'd ole Zeke Jones right here one day sev'nty year ago?" said 'Cap'n' Sam.

"Waal, I jes guess I dew," said 'Cap'n' Joe, his eye lighting up with pleasurable recollection.

Just then a slight breath of wind came up the harbor and a large piece of wrapping paper fluttered down from a neighboring wharf.

"Pity ter hev th' tide rise an' spile thet without's doin' no good," said 'Cap'n' Joe, "Guess I'll go pick it up." He soon secured the paper and started back to the boat. With a twinkle in his faded old eye 'Cap'n' Sam watched him return.

"Giv' me thet paper," he said. 'Cap'n' Joe stopped. He heard the regular thud of oars against thole pins coming from somewhere beyond the wharf. He gave up the paper with a knowing smile on his face.

"Be ye goin' ter dew it?" he said.

For answer 'Cap'n' Sam picked up a five or six pound beach stone and wrapped it neatly in the paper fastening it with a piece of twine which the thrifty 'Cap'n' Joe produced from his pocket. The old jokers then placed the package conspicuously on the landing raft and haltingly scampered off to hide behind a near-by fish house. The swallows uttering disturbed twitterings flew out from their nests beneath the eaves. A dory came around the end of the wharf. In it was young Jones, a fisherman from a neighboring island, a grandson of old Zeke Jones. He was bringing his wife and children up to the village to do some trading. Mrs. Jones, who was sitting in the stern, spied the parcel on the landing.

"I b'lieve someun's left sump'n on the landin'," she said. Her husband looked around from his position at the oars.

"Guess I'll see w'at 'tis" he said, giving a long vigorous pull to bring his boat to the landing raft. He reached over the gunwale and lifted the innocent looking bundle into his lap. He began to undo the paper, when his wife incited by that impatient curiosity peculiar to women, reached forward and tugged at the end of the string. The heavy stone fell upon Jones's foot. He jumped up with an angry exclamation. Just then the two old men sprang out from their hiding place and burst into loud and delighted laughter.

"Consarn ye, ye blasted old idyots," exclaimed the irritated Jones, as he caught sight of them, "w'at sort uv er Tom fool trick be ye cuttin' up, anyway?"

The old mischiefs sat down chuckling upon the overturned boat like a couple of grinning monkeys. Young Jones threw the stone viciously overboard, fastened his boat to a ring on the raft, helped his family out of the boat and started off up the street. The swallows skimmed along the surface of the water. A robin sang thrillingly from a near by tree.

"Say," said 'Cap'n' Sam, "le's get anuther paper an dew't agin up t' th' other landin'."

The two old cronies started off toward the landing farther up the harbor. Their way led them by an old abandoned wharf. Just as they were at the head of this, 'Cap'n' Joe missed his cane. He must go right back after it.

"I'll wait here," said 'Cap'n' Sam.

'Cap'n' Joe went back and looked around the overturned boat for his precious oaken stick. It was not to be found there. A depressed feeling crept over him. He remembered that he had been behind the fish house. He sought his treasure there and found it.

"Peared like I'd almos' lost Beky over agin," he murmured fondling the beloved stick. He went back to rejoin his companion. He came to the head of

(Continued on third page.)

THE COLBY ECHO.

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Now that North College has gone up in flames the inmates of the other dormitory are beginning to look about them to see what there is to keep South College from taking the same road to destruction. As a matter of fact there is nothing at all to prevent such an occurrence—there was nothing to prevent it in North College, and it happened there. We have all heard of the man who thought there was no danger of his being drowned on a certain sea voyage—he never had been, he said. That argument applies equally well to the safety of South College from fire—as far as it goes. Now it is extremely improbable that when the old dormitory has stood eighty-one years, it is going to burn down to-morrow just because we have begun to think about the possibility of that event; also, the chances are a thousand against one that two dormitories that have stood so long will both be burned within a year. But—it might happen. The building is a perfect fire-trap, cut up by so many wooden partitions, and with double floors—a fire must burn if it once gets fairly started. The stairway is so arranged that a fire at the base is sure to rush straight up through. There are fire-escapes, but they are on the same side of the building as the stairway. Under these circumstances it is only reasonable that the students should begin to ask for some fire-fighting equipment, either chemical extinguishers or water taps with hose in the corridors on the different floors. The Divine Providence has kept the old South College standing for over eighty years in spite of the fact that from twenty to fifty proverbially reckless college students have been living in it most of the time; but it seems almost like tempting Providence, in these days of improved modern appliances, to leave the building so absolutely unprotected as it is.

Some of the North College boys who are rooming in South College are beginning to complain of being homesick, and we cannot altogether blame them. When the spirit of "rowdism" makes itself as evident as it did one afternoon and evening of this week, no one would be blamed for not fully appreciating the

advantages of dormitory life. A great many such things are done through thoughtlessness, but, also, many things are done through a spirit of intentional disorderliness. It would be pertinent to repeat a few remarks from an article published in THE ECHO a few weeks ago, but perhaps that would be rather harping on them too much. We would, however, recommend that some of the students begin to think a little more about cultivating the quality of self-respect. That is rather an important thing to have, as without it, it is hard to win other people's respect; and after all the fun you may make of it or scorn you express for it, the respect of our fellow-men will be rather an essential consideration in any kind of business or professional life.

A few more words may be in order in recognition of the kindness and generosity of the alumni and friends of the college whose expressions of sympathy and offers of assistance have not yet ceased. Thanks to their prompt and generous aid and to the efficient management of those of the Faculty, who have had especial charge of the matter, everything is now going on almost as smoothly as if nothing had happened, and measures are being taken which will provide all the boys in the college with comfortable lodgings next term.

Now that we have adopted the laws recommended for the future government of athletics in the state, we are interested to know what action the other colleges will take regarding them. If they all adopt them considerable disagreement and difficulty ought to be avoided in the future, as the laws are more strict than any that have before been in operation.

On Dec. 15th, one year ago, occurred the heavy rain and washouts. We don't want another flood this year.

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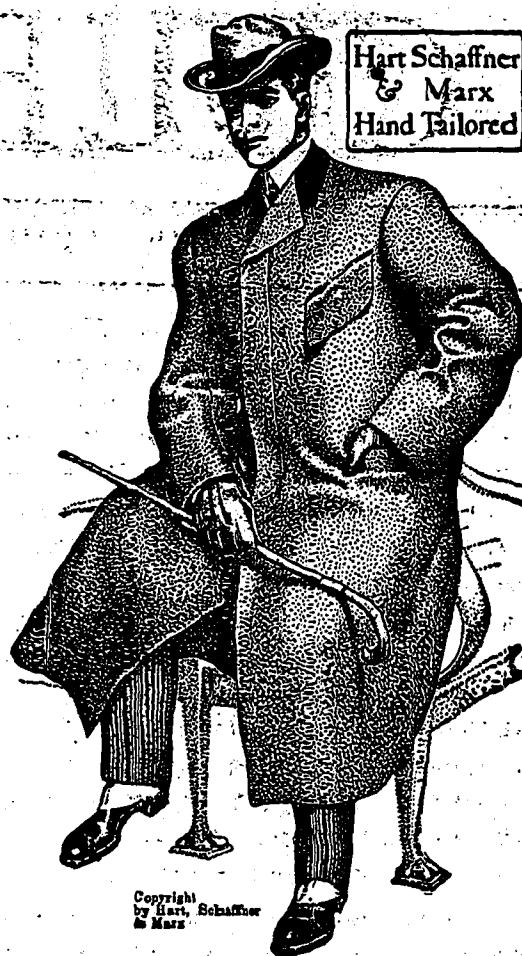
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92

HOW JERUSHA ANN MEHITABLE DYER

Went Sleigh Riding with Hezekiah Ezekiel Hopkins, as Written by Hersel.

Wal, I dunno as I wants tew tell yeou about this sleighride en perticaler, but seein' as how this were the fust, last, and only one I ever had, I guess it's the only one I can recollect to narrate to yeou. This away yeou see 'twas. Ze-kial and I, we had been keepin' company fer some time and pap, he thot Ezekiel kum pretty often, which he did. So pap he says to me says he, "Why don't yeou and Zeke ever go anywhere further 'en the old meetinghouse together? Seems to me, I'd go on a ride once in a while if I was yeou." Wal, this sot me thinkin' an' I hinted arround 'till at last Ezekiel he spunked up, got a currige, an' axt me. I was as happy as a clam I can tell yeou when Zekiel druv up to the door one moonli't night with a dandy looking team and sleigh.

"Hurry up Jerush," he shouted, "this air mare won't stand more'n a minnit."

Yeou can jest jedge haow long it took me to git my buidit on an' get into that currige. 'Twan't no time before we were a spinnin' along slicker'n a weasle.

It was one o' them white nights when everything was still and peaceful like. We soon got into one o' them deluded country roads ware they want much goin' on an' we were all comfortable like when all of a suddint that hoss-pricked up his ears an' off he wint like a sky-rocket. It took Ezekiel's both hands before he got him quieted down, but finally he was peaceful once agin and we got settled once more.

Ezekiel, he had been putty quiet most of the way an' I didn't know but what he were a feelin' sick when he said:

"Ain't this gratifying Jerush?"

I was just about to say it were so, when that air hoss he heard Ezekiel give a little sound like a chirp, chirp, and takin' it I suppose fur a chirrup, off he went like all possessed. Of course Zekiel he want suspectin' it an' so that hoss he jest took them rains into his own hands and away he flew. An' away we flew also, fur seein' we want ready fur no such emergency we want prepared fur nuthin'. Wal we flew through the air a spell when suddintly I kerr down on a piece of ice ware there were about thirty stars floating around, a thing which I ain't never seen since. Soon's I could come to my senses I looked arround fur Zekiel. All I could see of him was his heels a peaking out of a snow-drift. I thot he must be dead but he warn't. He jest jest emerged slowly looking at me in a doleful way.

Ain't this gratifyin', says I.

Well we started towards home seein' as how we couldn't see that hoss nowhere. I did think walking was lots better than ridin', for Ezekiel's spirits begun to rise an' he talked real chipper like. Arter a deep silence, probably you've felt 'em, Ezekiel he dropped his voice real low an' soft an' he says "Jerushie." Naow I thot in course he were goin' to pop an' my heart went pit-a-pat, an' whether his went pity Zekiel or not I don't know, but it oughter. For anybody what will get a person's feelin's up so high as that an' then drop 'em to the freezin' point oughter have somethin' happen to 'em, for all he said were:

"Jerushie, ain't this real gratifyin'?"

Me an' Ezekiel we ain't even been tew the meetin' now fur some time.

MORAL: Don't go ridin' an' git spilt out at jest the wrong time. 'Tain't likely tew be gratifyin'.

'08.

The schedule for next term is posted. Elective blanks should be signed before examinations are over.

A PAIR OF OLD BOYS.

(Continued from first page.)

the old wharf, but 'Cap'n' Sam was not there. Where could he be? 'Cap'n' Joe looked vainly along the shore, then down the wharf. There was an old red handkerchief lying near the outer end, the same handkerchief 'Cap'n' Sam had in his pocket a short time before. But the owner was not to be seen. 'Cap'n' Joe walked falteringly down to the wharf. The old rotten capstan of the wharf was in one place newly broken off. 'Cap'n' Joe's heart sank. He peered cautiously over the edge of the wharf. There on the rising tide floated fragments of the capstan. There too was a faded old cap, the very one which 'Cap'n' Sam had on his head a few minutes before. For a long time old 'Cap'n' Joe stood motionless with his eyes fixed upon the water. Could it be that 'Cap'n' Sam was lying drowned beneath it? The frame of the old man shuddered violently. A brisk wind was now blowing up the harbor. The gulls were circling inland and uttering long piercing screeches. The waves lapped steadily against the piles beneath the wharf. The thud of oars against those pins was again heard. Young Jones was pulling his dory up the harbor. As he came by the old wharf 'Cap'n' Joe shouted hoarsely at him and pointed toward the old cap bobbing up and down upon the dancing waves. Jones pulled in. He turned pale as he saw the broken capstan and the floating cap.

"Where'd he go down?" gasped the young fisherman beginning to drag his boat hook along the bottom.

"Guess he never went!" exclaimed a piping voice from a pile of old lobster traps upon the wharf, as 'Cap'n' Sam crawled from his concealment with a delighted chuckle.

"Waal I declare!" ejaculated 'Cap'n' Joe with a look of intense relief.

Young Jones straightened himself up and looked over the edge of the wharf. "Waal ye dew beat the Dutch fer bein' th' two consarnedest ole fools that ever ketched er lobster."

The old men looked sheepishly at each other and took different ways to their respective homes. They avoided meeting again until the next Sunday when they came face to face upon the steps of the little church. They exchanged guilty glances.

"Mornin' Cap'n Sam," said the elder.

"Mornin' Cap'n Joe," responded the younger.

A. M. W., '08.

Miss Tillay, '08, has been obliged to leave college on account of ill health.

Ernestine Davis, '05, will be obliged to give up her college work for the ensuing term on account of ill health.

The classes in history are to take their examinations on Friday and Saturday of this week, as an accommodation to Dr. Black, who wishes to spend Christmas in Baltimore, his native city.

A meeting of the student body was called after chapel Wednesday morning, and the new laws governing athletics recommended by the committee of representatives from the four Maine colleges, were adopted.

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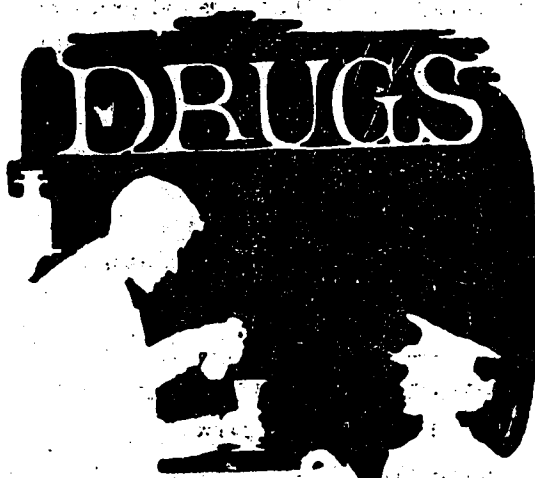
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GIBELETTES.

There is no man so slow that he cannot run fast enough to catch cold.

The *Atlantic Constitution* suggests that Mr. Santos-Dumont might arouse more enthusiasm in his aeronautics by starting a fly-paper.

E. B. W. walked into the drug store down town wearing his craftiest expression.

E. B. W.—“How much is catnip an ounce?”

Mr. D—r—“Five cents.”

E. B. W.—“How much is it for half an ounce?”

Mr. D—r—“Three cents.”

E. B. W.—“I’ll take the other half of the ounce.”

That’s right, boys, empty the contents of the rubbish cans all over the corridors at least every three days, then tumble the cans down stairs along with all the trunks and bedsteads available. The janitor needs occupation—that is what he is paid for. Then, too, the children need amusement—that is what they came to college for.

An Epitaph.

Here lies interred Priscilla Bird,
Who sang on earth till sixty-two.
Now up on high above the sky,
No doubt she sings like sixty—too.

Gibelettes Guessing Contest.

Question No. 2. According to the law of memory by repetition, in how many days will chapel-goers be able to sing Hymn No. 1209 backwards?

Overheard—“I tell you what, —, you’d be a mighty good chap if you only knew when to keep your mouth shut.”
The coat fits lots of us.

“Katie, can you tell me anything about your masters whereabouts?”
“Oi dunno, mum, but Oi think they’re in the wash.”

“THE PASSENGER TRAIN.”

In these last days of the nineteenth century, the big mogul hauling its heavy vestibuled cars is no innovation. Yet in spite of its familiarity there are but very few people who do not enjoy the sight of a passing train. It would seem to the stranger as though the Colby student, if anybody ever does, ought to get tired of puffing engines and banging cars. Yet every incoming train, even every passing shifter, attracts his attention and offers a pleasant diversion from study.

This afternoon, having a few minutes of leisure, I sauntered over to the station and took a position at the upper end of the platform. The four o’clock train soon came in with a rush and a whirl. The bell clanged, the brakes groaned as the train gradually came to a standstill. The fireman was up on the tender with his long fire hook ready to catch the water pipe, while the cars were still in motion. As the engine came to a stop, without a hitch the water spout was caught and pulled over the tender. The fireman sprang to the iron platform, turned the water on, and then while the tank was filling up, fell to shoveling forward the coal necessary for the run to Bangor. The engineer was not idle meanwhile. With his oil-can and wrench in hand he jumped from the cab and made the rounds of his engine. With conscientious carefulness he oiled the bearings, felt of every wheel-box, examined the head-light and tried the big nuts. This done he climbed back into the cab. A brakeman unfastened the coupling and the engine went up the track a short distance for the mail car.

This secured, it returned and joined the rest of the train.

The train made up, the engineer sprang from his cab again and hastened to the office for his orders from the headquarters at Portland. He soon came out with a thin piece of paper in his hands which he read with much care. Climbing the iron steps he placed the paper in a rack by his seat, and was ready for departure. The fireman was already standing at the corner of the tender to receive the conductor’s signal. Soon the baggage trucks clattered away from the car doors, the express wagons drove away and everything was ready for the start. The conductor, watch in hand, glanced hurriedly up and down the train. The “all aboard” rang out and was answered by the “all right here” of the brakemen. The fireman dodged back into the cab and reached for the bell-rope. The great wheels commenced to turn. The iron horse with a mighty shudder as it felt the weight behind it, moved gradually forward, and the train was off.

THE PRESENT OUTLOOK FOR THE COLLEGE.

The letter of Pres. Fellows of the University of Maine to Pres. White, contained the following very significant words with reference to the recent fire:

“I hope that it will result in ultimate good to the college.”

There is no doubt that these words will prove to be a true prophecy. Even now we are beginning to look forward to conditions that will be better than those of the past.

The immediate needs have been cared for and the generosity of Colby’s supporters is not yet exhausted. Very recently a generous gift was received from Col. Shannon to be used at the discretion of those in charge of the present arrangements. By next term ten new rooms will have been completed in the Hersey house, on college Avenue at the north end of the college grounds, for the accommodation of the students, and these rooms will probably continue to be used in future years, being let at lower rate than those in the dormitories on the campus.

Plans for the future are already being formed, even if they are a little indefinite as yet. A central heating plant is the first demand. That will insure sufficient heat for all the college buildings and will greatly diminish the danger of fire. Then, of course, we are looking ahead to a new dormitory. This will be an absolute necessity before long and, that being the case, funds for building it will surely not be lacking.

There are other circumstances, too, which make us look for prosperous days ahead for the college. Repairs are now nearly completed which will make our gymnasium a hundred per cent better than it has ever been before. The college curriculum this year is larger than ever before, several new courses having been introduced. We have an entering class that is the largest one for several years.

When we take everything into consideration, there is every reason to believe that Colby’s outlook for the future is fully as good as it has ever been and that the late disaster, as we called it, will before long be proved to have been a blessing in disguise.

The U. of M. musical clubs have started out ahead of us this year, giving concerts this week in Cherryfield, Machias and Ellsworth. Their clubs are reported to be in excellent condition. However, Colby will not be far behind them, and our reputation has never yet suffered by a comparison of our concerts with those of clubs preceding us in any of the cities we have visited.

Mitchell, ‘06, is gaining slowly.

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