

The College Times.

Vol. III.

STELLENBOSCH, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1886.

No. 22.

Writing impositions has since time immemorial been a form of punishment in our schools, and it is not now our intention to discuss the justice or injustice of imposing such tasks, but what we wish to draw attention to is the slovenly way in which the schoolboys perform these exercises.

A youngster who has neglected to do some work, or has misconducted himself in some way, receives as punishment the order to write out the lesson, or a prescribed phrase a certain number of times. The young offender very soon hands in his exercise, written in a miserable, almost illegible scrawl, which quite satisfies him, and alas! the teacher too. Anything, provided the full number of words or phrases have been written is accepted. No importance at all is attached to the orthography and penmanship.

This kind of thing has been going on for a long time, and can still daily be witnessed in our schools. A fly crawling out of an ink-bottle on to paper could not describe more illegible characters than those of the impositions presented by some of our young folks to their teacher.

If the object of inflicting the punishment be to teach a boy to be less careless it defeats its own purpose; for, no one after scribbling off a few hundred sentences

in a cramped scrawl, coming to an exercise where marks for neatness are scored, can do proper justice to it. By writing his tasks hurriedly he falls into a habit of scribbling carelessly, and will write a horrid scrawl all his days to the great annoyance of his friends and no small detriment to himself.

Now, we do not condemn the form of punishment but assert that the manner in which the impositions are written is very objectionable. Of what benefit can a punishment be, which eventually is injurious to an important part of a boy's training.

It is highly necessary that teachers see that the impositions be written out in the best handwriting at the command of the lad, in fact, that the punishment consist of a series of accurate copies of a fixed heading in the teacher's own handwriting.

This is the way the punishment is carried out in English schools, and we presume, at most Colonial schools where anything like careful training is aimed at, and it stands to reason that this is the only way the punishment will prove beneficial in curing a lad of carelessness, improving his handwriting, and leading to general attention to work.

The Entertainment on Friday Evening was supposed to have been "under the patronage of the College Council". But, strange to say, none of those dignified individuals deigned to acknowledge the compliment by showing themselves on that evening. Perhaps had they known the interesting nature of the performance they would have graced the Hall with their smiling faces.

We are very glad to see that the Gymnastic Poles are up at last. Of course, the delay in putting them up must be attributed to the usual tardiness of workmen at Stellenbosch. However they are up now, and it is only to be hoped that they will be paid for soon. The gentleman, who has the subscription list in his hands, will be glad if some of those who were so eager to "put down their names" would stump up.

We are glad to see that the Athletic Club has not considered it above its dignity to adopt some of the suggestions made, by us, in these columns, last week re amendments and improvements of the Rules of the Annual Sports. One new item this year will be a Menagerie Race. We can assure our readers that this will occasion any amount of fun. Of course, there will be a number of entries. Some we take for granted,

there are, de Beer, de Vos, de Kock, Rooi-haan, Sorilla, Vilgie (Filly), Muis, Hert, Zog, Stokvisch, de Leeuw (a young one) and the three Apies.

A good many people were humbugged the other day by a fellow who went ^{round} begging. The rascal said he was deaf and dumb, and appealed to the sympathy of the ever charitable Stellenbosch people by showing a bit of paper, on which he explained that he had suffered from sunstroke and brain fever, and wanted money to travel to Graham's Town, where he had a wife and some children. Of course, the fellow was an impostor, having afterwards been seen and heard to speak. One must be careful in bestowing charity in these hard times.

The Building Committee of the New College having succeeded in obtaining a further loan will probably now have the building completed soon. Why did not the 'old boys' take up the money sooner? We want the College as soon as possible; posterity could always settle accounts. Hurrah!!! we'll beat Cologne bathed yet; that building too 500 years to finish.

The proceeds of the Entertainment given on Friday Evening by the S.C.D. Society, amounted to about £13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Serjeant Bailey has lately shown us an example of shortsighted presumption. He has acted as though the Corps owes everything to him, and as if his leaving it would ensure its speedy downfall. So sure was he of his importance that he threatened the Captain with quitting the Corps should that bumpkin squad not be allowed to fire at our already battered targets; and, now that he has been refused, I suppose we must expect that the Corps will go to the dogs. Wouldn't he just like it! The first thing he said at drill, the time before last was, "Look here, you must not think I have come at your captain's command, I come at his request." He rather amused us Cadets, and at the same time lowered himself in our eyes by the way in which he tried that afternoon to put on as much 'side' as he could, and to show that he really was doing us a favour. He only, however, succeeded in losing many of his friends in the Corps, and in signally exposing his inefficiency as a drill instructor. For to what else does the fact that our officers (excepting Captain Marchand) could not drill us without his frequent corrections bear witness? He has not given them the chance to practise, and it really seems as though he has been striving to render the Corps as dependant on

him as possible. Let him however consider that "Pride will have a fall", although it is only said by

A VOICE FROM THE RANKS.

[From a number of letters on the above subject we have selected the above, which we consider the mildest; the least stinging. It is consideration for the feelings of Sgt. Bailey that prompts us to this kind action. Editor Coll. Times.]

How it would pain the Correspondent of the Zuid Afrikaan, who argued that dancing was a sin, to see to what an extent, in this village, of all places, that pernicious practice is indulged in by — Bloemhofs on their balcony, Cadets during drill, Gymnasium boys when they receive something they don't like from the headmaster, and the African young ladies when they near Mr. Marais' vineyard of an afternoon.

Notices to Correspondents.

"H". We would like nothing better than having another journal in the field. Why don't you urge upon a chum divine, the necessity of a "Theological Argus". The big daily will love the namesake, it always was chummy with 'predikanten'. Don't you know? A.I. (ay), of course you do.

"I". Shame on you. We'll die rather than blackguard the Intermediate class. Good boys, um, very good, and so on.

The S.C.D. Society Entertainment.

A large audience assembled in the College Hall on Friday Evening to witness the Entertainment given there by some members of the College Debating Society. Before the opening of the programme Mr. Marchand, the President, explained that the proceeds of the Entertainment would go towards completing the sum required for the chandeliers bought by the Society for the College Hall.

The first part of the programme consisted of an Harmonium Solo, a Recitation, a Comic Song and a Dutch Play, which was marked on the Programme as "A Tragedy; Baron Kolbielsky, of de Samen-zwering tegen Napoleon I."

This last, which took up a lot of time, is the only thing we have to find fault with. It was not by any means a good selection, being very unsuitable for representation on a rude stage by amateurs. The play was quite 'above' the actors, it would require a beautiful stage, appropriate scenery and professional skill to put a play like that successfully on the boards, and here we had a few fellows who were young to do the thing slick off with ^{but} one or two proper rehearsals.

The Comic Song went down, and served to show what kind of entertainment the majority appreciate. Tastes differ in this world, but why

should the Debating Society not humour a Stellenbosch audience. Some laughter-provoking farces (there are thousands of English ones) would be capital substitutes for those Dutch Plays with those tiring harangues.

Part II consisted of an English Scene a Chorus, a Farce and Instrumental music. The English Play "Henry Dunbar" like the Dutch one, was also very unsuitable. Of course, the actors know their parts, but that is not so essential to success as some particulars like, ease on the stage, proper 'get ups', and distinct utterance.

On the whole the Entertainment was not anything like those of previous years, and, but for a few redeeming items, it would have been our painful duty to pronounce the Entertainment of Friday last a failure.

The Chandeliers presented to the College authorities by the College Debating Society, and hung in the lower Hall of the New College, are as fine an addition to the already exquisite fittings as the most exact could desire. They are not too ornamental, have beautiful shades, and are in every way adapted for the room. We wish the lamps a long life, and that the supply of oil may never decrease.

Subscriptions to the "College Times" must please be paid this week. The Publisher.