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*The Voice
of the
Phi Sigma
Edited by
F. D. Moulton.
Assisted by
G. H. Beard.*

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Editorials

We greet the Phi Sigma for the first time as Editor and take his chair feeling our inability to act as such but will do our best.

We know that in regard to bashfulness in speaking we have improved but we notice our command of words seems to be limited.

We are going to throw stones, though living in a glass house, which is a dangerous thing.

The meetings are improving even if they do labor under difficulty.

We feel pleased and encouraged at the hearty manner in which Mr. Dean inaugurated his first meeting as a member having signed the constitution three weeks ago to-night.

We were glad to see the result of Mr. Whitman's remarks on extemporaneous speaking.

The sign for 'and' and 'at' used in business is considered correct but not so in an essay or letter which is criticised for its appearance. My only authority is good usage demands that they be written in full.

The Editor in the previous Voice in an editorial said that a paper was lost to the class because the Assistant Editor failed to hand in the required article on time. I want to know if that Editor is not more to blame than the Assistant but if not, then the rule passed sometime ago must read, that, because of the Assistant's failure to have the article; moral; We, "the Editor", think that a good excuse to withhold our paper and the class uphold him and censure the Assistant.

By the rule just passed we think the Editor's reading should be improved as he now has time enough to master thoroughly the contents of the paper.

Chicago. Feb. 10th '81

Letter

Editor of The Voice.

Dear Sir: - Your predecessor in the editorial chair has seen fit to refer to my humble opinions in regard to the prerogatives of the Vice-Chairman, - as recently expressed in The Voice.

As I have before said, I regard the subject as full of importance to the class; - and since the worthy gentleman has politely requested an answer to certain interrogations, it would seem that I could not do less than comply.

However, on careful perusal of the Editorial referred to, I find but two questions raised, - and, therefore, shall be able to accommodate your readers by exercising the virtue of brevity. ---

Referring to any opinion "that the Vice-Chairman might appoint some gentleman to write on a certain subject, for which he is totally unfitted, and therefore said officer should not have the power to dictate what should be written," - the gentleman states himself to be of "exactly the same mind." Having thus taken his place by my side, and started with me, he immediately sets about raising stumbling-blocks in our way, over which, however, I suppose that it will only be necessary for him to fall, - since he has thought best to go a step or two further than I had deemed safe or expedient to venture. The 'step further' is in reference to debates, for he says of the appointing, "If one is bad, the other is equally so."

- I think not. A debate is different in many respects, to an essay or article. In the former, the duty of the debater is to acquaint himself fully with certain facts and to adduce therefrom as good an argument as possible. Certainly it is true that if he believes in, and takes an interest in, his side of the question, there will be a better debate, (so much so, indeed, that we would always favor the Vice-Chairman's showing deference, whenever practicable, to the wishes of the participants) but it does not require, to the same extent, that thorough oneness of the author with his subject, which is necessary, - or, at least, most advisable, - for an original article.

Theretoo, I suppose that we practice for what will be practically useful, and it is much more probable that in after-life we shall be called upon to debate questions to which we are unused, than it is that we shall be obliged to write on subjects totally unsuited to our capacities.

But waiving all this, - and assuming for a moment, that the practice of dictating subjects is "equally bad" in one case as the other; - we still have to face the fact that, as regards essays, it is an evil to be averted; - while, in reference to debates, it is, virtually, an unalterable necessity, - for I shall be surprised indeed, if there is a Phi Sigmite who would favor a custom which would confer on every two debaters the privilege of deciding ("peaceably, if they could; - forcibly, if they must") what should be the subject for their discussion.

With something exceedingly doubtful in his tone, the honorable Editor "supposes, for the sake of argument", that the class is willing to give heed to

"requests" and "suggestions" in reference to debates in the paper. And yet, with an apparent blindness to the answer just adopted as the true one, - he reiterates the question, "How is it to be done?" Then, returning to "appointment" again, he recites the inability of the Vice-Chairman in that direction, because of "fear of alighting on some person who is not fitted for it."

But, with 'requests' and 'suggestions' we are still inclined to think that there will be few times when our Vice-Chairman cannot find two members out of our nine, who will be both able and willing to so carry out his wishes, and that his prediction that "the plan falls to the ground", will consequently seldom come true.

Very Truly Yours,

Gerald H. Beard

Items for Meditation.

Time, the measure of all things, is itself immeasurable, and, though the discloser of everything, remains undisclosed.

He who cheerfully takes advice may be greater than he who gives it.

God does not pay off every Saturday night, but he is sure to "settle in full" some day.

He who can only be serious, and he who can only be merry, is but half a man. Both halves must be developed to form a real specimen.

Rigid economy in distress, when silently and cheerfully practised, has something sublime in it.

The whole animal kingdom consists of hundreds of thousands of different kinds of beings constructed on only four different plans, each one of which is expressed in thousands of different ways.

Anonymous.

The Great Canal

Ever and anon the various papers of our time contain paragraphs, of more or less importance, giving information in regard, either to the Panama (de Lessep's) canal, - or the Nicaragua (Grant's) canal, - and of both it is said that they will finally be an established fact. Not long since, Count de Lesseps wrote a short article in the North American Review, in reference to his undertaking; and with the Feb. number of the same magazine, is published General Grant's statement of the - so-called - American scheme. We suppose that it is generally conceded that only one of these plans can succeed. The question of interest, then, is, which shall it be?

We have no intention, just now, of entering into any protracted analysis of these plans and their probable results, - but propose to notice one or two of what would seem to be the indications in reference thereto.

The articles mentioned, combined with other information we have been able to gather, present, we think, a very fair view of both projects, - and from these, we do not hesitate to say we have formed the opinion that if either is successful, - the Panama scheme will be the one.

In the first place, there is, at the head of that enterprise, a man who may well defy rivalry. The man in whom all the intellect and power is concentrated, necessary to the planning, and carrying to successful completion, such a gigantic enterprise as the Suez Canal, is not the one to be easily matched. And we are certain that this is a

consideration so weighty, - that we who know almost nothing of the proportions of such a work, cannot, in consequence, begin to realize its importance.

Well: remembering, then, the character of the man, - we have his decided conviction, - most decidedly expressed, - that but one successful water-passage through the American Isthmus is a practical possibility.

Undoubtedly many people somewhat too quickly reach conclusions that they believe to be just, having been led to such by the power of prejudice, - when truth gives no warrant for anything of the kind.

But it is a serious matter, to prefer a charge of this kind against a man of such ability as Mons. de Lesseps. The very light of his eminence forbids his doing such hasty injustice to a rival, even did expediency dictate such a course.

Now let us enquire what are the principal reasons which are given for the wisdom of the project he has planned.----- {But, Mr. Editor, the time has come for the contributed portion of your paper to go to press (so to speak) and therefore necessity compels me to give to this article, what of itself it does not deserve, - viz. a continuation in our next.}

Gerald H. Beard

How and Where I Spent My Vacation

Tuesday morning Dec. 28-1880, ten degrees below zero. After a late breakfast I selected a good book and lay down on the lounge to read and in a short time I was asleep, and, woke up just in time for dinner. I found it had been snowing some and the wind was still quite strong but notwithstanding that I proposed taking a sleigh ride and my friend consented and we wrapped up so much, that our faces were just visible, and we set out then for a long ride but it proved too cold. The horses were not used on Monday and therefore felt good, and in nice shape to go and we let them have their own way. Once in turning out to go into the ditch beside the road where it was better sleighing the sleigh nearly tipped over, with that exception and the cold wind the one hour's ride was enjoyed.

In the evening just after lunch one of the neighbors with her son came in to see my friend and after a short but pleasant chat they departed.

I learned this afterwards, that my friend had put over some sirup to make some candy of and have a candy pull.

Out of politeness to her visitors she could not leave the room to see if it was burning and you may well imagine how uncomfortable one would be and it was so in this case.

The sirup was found to be boiled to the right point.

We had more fun pulling it at least I did as that was my first candy pull. We came near letting the whole thing drop on the floor and my heart sank

when I saw it going but no, it was not to be and now my mouth waters for some of that candy.

The next day Wednesday the 29th the thermometer stood twenty degrees below. I felt good and did nothing all day but eat candy, read and sit close to a fire and go to bed early.

Thursday the 30th ten degrees above. I did not feel good this morning for the night before, not thinking it so near time to retire I ate some nuts and for that pleasure; had the nightmare all night.

About noon the young man who called the other evening came over and took me sleigh-riding. It was a very pleasant ride as he took me all through the town of G. - and started for another one but turned back on account of the cold.

After dinner my friend and I took a short sleigh ride. In the evening we had some visitors and at nine thirty retired.

Friday the 31st I did a little work and about noon we took a sleigh ride to the town of B. - four miles away.

The last time we were out the horses came back with some frozen sweat on them and her father spoke about it and I made up my mind that it would not occur again and therefore I let them walk this time and my friend kept exclaiming "do let them trot!", "do make them trot!" "for I shall certainly freeze". It was quite amusing to me.

We had another candy pull in the evening in which her uncle participated.

I was careful not to eat too much before retiring from my past experience.

Saturday, Jan. 1st 1881. Did nothing in the morning except to get ready to depart which we did on the Denver express, and arrived in Chicago at 3 P.M.

The conclusion I arrive at, is that I would not object to another Winter vacation of a week spent in the country.

Yours Respectfully,

F. D. Moulton