

# THE CONCORDIENSIS.

VOL. XIV.

UNION COLLEGE, DECEMBER 19, 1890.

No. 6.



## LITERARY.

## MELVILLE D. LANDON.

**A**MONG our many noted alumni, not one has reached a higher standard of excellence in his own particular calling than has "Eli Perkins," that great American humorist. His picture appears in this number of THE CONCORDIENSIS and the following short sketch of his life will no doubt be interesting to all of the sons of Old Union.

Melville D. Landon (Eli Perkins), was born in Eden, N. Y., in 1840, studied through the Sophomore year at Madison University, graduated at Union College in 1861, and entered the army and gained the rank of major. He traveled abroad in 1867, was acting Secretary of Legation to Russia, under Cassius M. Clay, and published the history of the Franco-Prussian war in 1871. Mr. Landon first became noted as a humorist by letters from Saratoga, in the New York *Commercial Advertiser*, signed Eli Perkins, in 1872. After publishing several humorous books he entered the lecture field and contributed to the amusement of audiences all over the country. His humor, wit and satire is illustrated in his various books, "Saratoga in 1901" (1872), "Eli Perkins at large" (1875), his great work, "Wit and Humor of the Age," (1886), and "Kings of Platform and Pulpit," to be published soon by the Belford-Clarke Co., Chicago, advance proofs of which are now appearing in THE CONCORDIENSIS. He resides in New York City.

## ELI PERKINS ON AMERICAN HUMORISTS.

"JOSH BILLINGS."\*

**H**ENRY W. SHAW, the well-known wit and satirist, better known as "Josh Billings," was born at Lanesborough, Mass., in 1818, of a family of politicians, his father and grandfather having both been in Congress. He went early in life to the West, where for twenty-five years he was a farmer and auctioneer. He did not begin to write for publication till he was forty-five years old. He has been one of the most popular of popular lecturers. Mr. Shaw died at Monterey, Cal., October 14, 1885. He is the author of several books which have been collected into one large volume by Mr. Dillingham, successor to Geo. W. Carleton, and which is still having an immense sale. Mr. Shaw left an accomplished wife and a beautiful

\*From advance proofs of Melville D. Landon's "Kings of Platform and Pulpit," Belford Clark, Publisher, Chicago.

daughter to mourn his loss. He died wealthy, but his greatest legacy to his family was his literary reputation. His fame spread through England as well as America.

The last time I saw Josh Billings was on a Madison avenue street car in New York City. I think of him as I saw him then, sitting in the corner of the car, with his spectacles on his nose, and in a brown study. His mind was always on his work, and his work was to think out dry epigrams so full of truth and human nature that they set the whole world laughing. That morning, when the old man espied me, he was so busy with his thoughts that he did not even say good morning. He simply raised one hand, looked over his glasses and said, quickly, as if he had made a great discovery:

"I've got it, Eli!"

"Got what?"

"Got a good one—lem me read it," and then he read from a crumpled envelope this epigram that he had just jotted down:

"*When a man tries to make himself look beautiful, he steals—he steals a woman's patent right—how's that?*"

"Splendid," I said. "How long have you been at work on it?"

"Three hours," he said, "to get it just right."

Mr. Shaw always worked long and patiently over these little paragraphs, but every one contains a sermon. When he got five or six written, he stuck them into his hat and went down and read them to G. W. Carleton, his publisher and friend, who was an excellent judge of wit, and he and Josh would laugh over them.

One day I told Josh that I would love him forever and go and put flowers on his grave if he would give me some of his paragraphs in his own handwriting. He did it, and when he died I hung a wreath of *immortelles* on his tombstone at Poughkeepsie. These are the sparks from his splendid brain in his own hand writing just as he gave them to me:

ONET

The man who can wear a paper collar, a whole week, and keep it klean.— aint good for enny thing else.=

Less so. Josh Billings.

TWIST

There iz only one thing that can be sed in favour of tite Boots.— they make a man forgit all his other sorrows.= Josh Billings.

THREE TIMES

Mules are like summen, very corrupt at harte.— I hav known them to be good mules for 6 months, just to git a good chance to kik sumbuddy.= Josh Billings=

IV and last

There iz 2 things in this world for which we are never fully prepared, and that iz,— twins.=

Less so, Less so, Josh Billings

The next day after Josh gave me the above epigrams, he came and dined with me, and together we smoked and laughed and fixed the following interview:

"Mr. Billings, where were you educated?"

"Pordunk, Pennsylvania."

"How old are you?"

"I was born 150 years old—and have been growing young ever since."

"Are you married?"

"Once."

"How many children have you?"

"Doublets."

"What other vices have you?"

"None."

"Have you any virtues?"

"Several."

"What are they?"

"I left them up at Poughkeepsie."

"Do you gamble?"

"When I feel good."

"What is your profession?"

"Agriculture and alminaxing."

"How do you account for your deficient knowledge in spelling?"

"Bad spells during infancy, and poor memory."

"What things are you the most liable to forget?"

"Sermons and debts."

"What professions do you like best?"

"Auctioneering, base-ball and theology."

"Do you smoke?"

"Thank you, I'll take a Partaga."

"What is your worst habit?"

"The coat I got last in Poughkeepsie."

"What are your favorite books?"

"My alminack and Commodore Vanderbilt's pocketbook."

"What is your favorite piece of sculpture?"

"The mile stone nearest home."

"What is your favorite animal?"

"The mule."

"Why?"

"Because he never blunders with his heels."

"What was the best thing said by our old friend, Artemus Ward?"

"All the pretty girls in Utah marry *Young*."

"Do you believe in the final salvation of all men?"

"I do—let me pick the men!"

In the evening Josh and I reviewed the interview, and pronounced it faithfully rendered. He wished to add only that Mr. Carleton, who published his alminack, had the most *immense* intellect of this or any other age.

### JOSH BILLINGS' LECTURE.

WIT, PHILOSOPHY AND WISDOM.

This is Josh Billings' last Lecture Programme.

SYNOPSIS OF THE LECTURE BY JOSH.

- 1—Remarks on Lecturing—General. Overture.
- 2—The Best Thing on Milk.
- 3—The Summer Resort.
- 4—Josh on Marriage.
- 5—Josh on the Mule.
- 6—The Handsome Man, a Failure.
- 7—The Dude a Failure.
- 8—What I know about Hotels.
- 9—The Bumble-bee.
- 10—The Hornet
- 11—The Quire Singer.
- 12—Josh on Flirting.
- 13—Courtin'.

Josh Billings' lecture was unique. It was an hour of short paragraphs, every one worth its weight in gold. The great philosopher always wore long hair (to cover a wart on the back of his neck), and always sat down when he lectured. He delivered his quaint philosophy with his bright eyes looking over his glasses. His lecture was too deep to be popular. It was really the college professor or reflecting judge who fully appreciated him.



Think of such paragraphs as these tumbling out once in a minute :

*Ladies and Gentlemen :—*

I hope you are all well. [Looking over his glasses.]

Thare is lots ov folks who eat well and drink well, and yet are sick all the time. Theze are the folks who alwuz "enjoy poor health."

Then I kno lots ov people whose only reckomendashun iz, that they are helthy—so iz an onion. [Laughter.]

The subject of my lecture is Milk—plain M-i-l-k.

The best think I've ever seen on milk is cream. [Laughter.]

That's right [joining]. "People of good sense" are thoze whoze opinyuns agree with ours. [Laughter.]

People who agree with you never bore you. The shortest way to a women's harte iz to praze her baby and her bonnet, and to a man's harte to praze hiz watch, his horse and hiz lectur.

Eliar Perkins sez a man iz a bore when he talks so much about hissself that you kant talk about yourself. [Laughter.]

Still I shall go on talking.

Comik lecturing iz an unkommon pesky thing to do.

It iz more unsarting than the rat ketching bizzness az a means ov grace, or az a means ov livelyhood.

Most enny body thinks they kan do it, and this iz jist what makes it so bothersum tew do.

When it iz did jist enuff, it is a terifick success, but when it iz overdid, it is like a burnt slapjax, very impertinent,

Thare aint but phew good judges ov humor, and they all differ about it.

If a lekturer trys tew be phunny, he iz like a hoss trying to trot backwards pretty apt tew trod on himself. [Laughter.]

Humor must fall out ov a man's mouth, like

musik out ov a bobalink, or like a yung bird out ov its nest, when it is feathered enuff to fly.

Whenever a man haz made up hiz mind that he iz a wit, then he is mistaken without remedy, but whenever the publick haz made up their mind that he haz got the disease, then he has got it sure.

And so Josh Billings went on for an hour, always wise and always dropping food for thought.

ELI PERKINS.

#### THE NEW CATALOGUE.

THE annual catalogue of the college has appeared, and it is a volume worthy, in every way, of Union Collage, and its appearance and contents shows that a great deal of careful work has been put upon it by its compiler. The first thing which attracts the attention is the increase in size of this over former issues of the catalogue. This is made necessary, of course, by the increased number of students, and also by the addition of the several new courses which have been added to the college curriculum. These consist of three courses leading to the degree of Ph. B., a special course in Sanitary Engineering, and a graduate course in Sanitary Engineering leading to the degree of C. E. In the list of students, those taking post-graduate courses, and those in the elective courses, are classified separately from the students in the four regular classes. There have been several new studies added to the elective studies which may be chosen during the Junior and Senior years. The departments of the catalogue devoted to the Medical School, the Law School, and the College of Pharmacy, have also been somewhat enlarged. Another excellent innovation is the announcement of the Honorary degrees conferred at the last commencement of the college. On the first page of the book is an excellent reference calendar for 1891, showing all the days in which college is in session by printing such dates in large type. The book is withall a neat and most interesting volume, and its neat appearance is enhanced by the Union College seal on the cover, being printed in garnet ink, thus popularizing the idea of the college color.

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## EDITORIAL.

"CHRISTMAS is coming," so carols the child and the thought is re-echoed joyfully in the heart of everyone, young and old. Yes, Christmas is coming, that grandest and happiest of our holidays. Remember, ye students, that on that day of all others, you are to lay aside all your cares and sorrows and are to enjoy yourself to the utmost. Remember all your ten spot examinations, and forget all others. Recall with joy all of the victories Old Union has celebrated and blot out from your memory all of the defeats she has suffered. Keep in mind the fact that it is "more blessed to give than to receive," and therefore give freely and gladly on that day; but allow others a chance to be blessed also and receive then what is offered you. All through the civilized world on Christmas morning, will go sounding that happy greeting "Merry Christmas." Remember then that you belong to the civilized world and

help to swell the echo with your "Merry Christmas." The more often you repeat these well-wishing words, the better you will be for it. But amid all your rejoicings remember what this great natal day commemorates. You can all recall that hymn which you learned years ago, and which, if it seemed beautiful then, seems four-fold more beautiful now when you read it. You remember how it begins,

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
An angel of the Lord came down  
And glory shone around."

And the message which was thus brought to those shepherds thousands of years ago, is just as true and just such "glad tidings of great joy," to you now as it was to them, for most assuredly on Christmas morning, "is born to you, this day, a Savior which is Christ the Lord." Remember then, for all the blessings which you have received, to render thanks to Him to whom they are due. Be at peace with your fellow-men. Let all sins be forgiven and forgotten. You are happy, make others so. Finally we join our best wishes with those of all your many friends and hope, with all our hearts, that yours will indeed be a very Merry Christmas.

\* \* \*

IT SEEMS to be the general opinion among the students that, during next term, some sort of an entertainment must be given, the proceeds of which shall go towards defraying the expenses of maintaining our base ball and foot ball teams. It is a pretty well understood fact that there is no money at present in the base ball treasury, and that the expenses for foot ball this fall were much greater than the receipts; therefore in order to make up this foot ball deficit and give sound financial support to our base ball team, a considerable amount of money must be raised. There have been several plans suggested for raising this money, and perhaps it would be well to enumerate those that seem

the most feasible. One plan is to rent the opera house for one night and engage some first-class company to come here to Schenectady and play for the benefit of the college athletics. Another suggestion is that the students get up a minstrel organization, as was done three or four years ago, and give a benefit performance. There are objections of course, to both of these plans, as there are objections to most everything. The first way would be the least trouble, and if managed in the right way, would undoubtedly prove to be a profitable investment, still, the expenses would be rather large and the amount realized would probably not reach the amount desired. The second plan might be an excellent one but there are one or two grave objections to it. There is not now in college talent enough among the students with which to organize a first-class college minstrel troupe, or if there is this necessary talent it would take too much time to discover and properly classify it; but, granting that there is this talent, and that it is all ready to be utilized, the organization of a minstrel troupe with the necessary rehearsals and attendant study that would have to be put upon it, would necessitate our taking more time and work away from our regular collegiate duties, than we believe the college authorities would allow us to take. The best plan, in our estimation, which has been offered is the idea of having a Union College Fair. Five years ago a fair was held under the auspices of the students, for the benefit of college athletics, and over eight hundred dollars was made in this way. Part of this money was expended in laying out the running track which now encloses the college tennis courts, and the rest was handed over to the base ball management. The fair lasted three nights. There was a stage performance each evening, consisting of singing and athletic exhibitions and concluding with a short farce acted by the students. Each evening ladies representing the different

churches in the city, served supper and thus aided very materially in the success of the fair. If such a successful fair was given five years ago, certainly we should be able to give one now. We have at present a very creditable glee club. The gymnasium instructor has informed us that, by the time we are ready to give the fair, he will have a class of men so trained in the gymnasium, that they will be able to give a first-class exhibition of different athletic feats. We have men in college who can, with practice, produce some very good instrumental music, and there are men in college, who, we are sure, are capable of doing some excellent acting in any little comedy that we might wish to produce. Surely here are attractions enough for the best of entertainments. As for the other things which go to make up a successful fair, we feel confident that the people in town will, if asked, help us all they can, and with their help we can carry it on successfully. It will require work, and hard work to do this, but it is for a good cause and everyone will, undoubtedly, be willing to do his share. *We must, in some way, raise money for our athletics.* Why not have a Union College Fair?

\* \* \*

THE Freshmen have gotten through with their cremation of Algebra, and we are very glad of it. It is always a relief to chronicle the fact that cremation is over. Would that it were over for all time! Or rather we wish that it would be remodeled into a more civilized procedure. Everyone knows its evils and none can point out any good that is effected by the Union College Freshmen's form of cremation. If it only amounted to good-natured rivalry all would be well and good, but, under the present code of cremation ethics, this laudable rivalry degenerates into personal ill-feelings and petty animosities between the members of the two lower classes. Another somewhat uncomfortable

result of this heathenish ritual, is the fact that there are always a number of bandaged heads and bruised bodies to be taken care of—not the pleasantest work in the world. It is all wrong and we know it; why not stop it then? The class of '94 can, if they will, put an end to these evils by refusing to persecute the Freshmen next year, in the usual barbarous way, at cremation time. This will bring no discredit upon themselves, but rather it will be an honor to them and of great benefit to their college.

#### THE NEW YORK BANQUET.

**T**HURSDAY, Dec. 11, was the occasion of one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings of the sons of "Old Union" that has ever been known. The occasion was the third annual meeting and banquet of the Union College Alumni Association of New York, at Hotel Brunswick, New York City. At six o'clock in the evening, a business meeting was held and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Wm. H. McElroy, '60; Vice President, George Alexander, '66; Secretary, George F. Allison, '84; Treasurer, H. V. N. Philip, '84; Members of the Executive Committee, James C. Duane, Silas W. Burt, Silas B. Brownell, John Z. Lott, Frank Loomis, Edward Carry, Daniel W. Stimson, S. B. Rossiter and James B. Lockwood.

At seven o'clock the meeting adjourned to the elegant dining hall of the Hotel Brunswick, which, on this occasion, was made resplendent with everything significant of Old Union and her famous memories.

At one end of the hall, suspended across the immense plate mirror, was a large banner bearing the words, "Camp Union," while at the opposite end was a similar one with the inscription, "Union, Hikah!" The tables were beautifully arranged and splendidly decorated. The long elevated table running the full length of the room at one side, was

reserved for the prominent alumni and invited guests, while at right angles to this were shorter tables for the classes in order of graduation from '29 to '89. A tinge of garnet, the college color, was noticeable in everything, and the effect was most pleasing.

As the college glee club sang the "Song to Old Union," the members marched in, headed by President Webster and ex-President of the Association, Wm. H. H. Moore. Then followed the different classes in regular order from the oldest down. After several repetitions of the chorus of the Old Union song, in which the entire company heartily joined, the Divine blessing was asked by Rev. Dr. Wortman, after which the very tempting menu was served. During the supper the hall resounded with all of the Union College songs, which were sung by the college glee club, which was in attendance at the banquet. The members of the glee club received many compliments upon their singing abilities and proved themselves a credit to the college. The banquet proper having been finished, speeches were in order and it is with much regret that we are unable to print them all, for it was remarked that they were the best, most interesting, and most enthusiastic that have ever been given at a Union Alumni gathering. Mr. McElroy, the new president of the association, made the first speech, and then Dr. Webster, "Our President," followed with one of his interesting talks. He spoke of the new courses that had been recently established at Union and of the courses that he would like to have established, especially courses in mechanical and electrical engineering. Warner Miller followed with a most eloquent speech. He spoke of the great need that existed in the colleges, of having a department that would teach the ethics of politics. He believed that young men should thoroughly learn about the institutions of our country and about the duties of an office holder. Then followed



some good old enthusiastic Union speeches by Rev. Dr. Raymond, Charles Sprague, Rev. Dr. Charles Nott, Prof. Wm. Wells, who received an ovation as he arose, and, in his unique way, told of the memories of Old Union, and Rev. Dr. Rossiter, who in his speech eulogized Dr. Hickok, Taylor Lewis, and Jonathan Foster. One of the best speeches of the evening was made by Gen. Daniel Butterfield, who spoke of Union College in the army. Among other things General Butterfield offered to furnish one-fifth of the means necessary to establish such a chair in Union College as was suggested by Warner Miller. Finally the last speech was made and the last song sung and the annual banquet of the New York Alumni for 1890 was over.

#### OF INTEREST TO STUDENTS.

—College opens on Tuesday, Jan. 6.

—The Senior class have not yet held their class elections.

—Prof. Brown has gone out to Indianapolis to spend the Christmas vacation.

—Most of the Senior engineers have begun work upon their graduation theses.

—Sanders, a former member of Union, '92, has entered the University of South Carolina.

—Prof. Perkins has taken advantage of the vacation to make an extended southern trip.

—It is to be hoped that a large number of the students will take regular "gym" work next term.

—The last Junior Hop of the term was held on Friday, Dec. 12. It was, like its predecessors, a very enjoyable affair.

—At the last regular college meeting A. M. Banker, '92, was elected to the office of scorer and assistant base ball manager.

—The meeting of the foot ball league which was to have been held in Syracuse, Dec. 13, has been postponed until January, 1891.

—Prof. Maurice Perkins is President of the Technical Club of Schenectady, an association recently formed by the prominent scientific men of the city.

—There have been several rumors afloat about erecting a toboggan slide in the college grounds, but as yet no definite action has been taken in the matter.

—The hour of the Sunday afternoon religious meetings has been changed to five o'clock, and the meetings are now held in Professor Hoffman's recitation room instead of in the chapel.

—The double quartette which attended the alumni banquet in New York was made up as follows: 1st tenors, Weekes and Gillespie, 2d tenors, Trumbull and Robertson; 1st bass, Briggs and Fiske; 2d bass, Coons and Mosher.

—Professor Truax recently delivered an address on Washington Irving before the Oxford League of the State Street M. E. Church, and the Epworth League of the Albany Street M. E. Church. The daily papers spoke very highly of the address.

—The committee on the Sophomore soiree is composed of the following men: E. D. Lines, chairman; E. J. Webster, H. D. Cordovez, B. R. Babcock, D. N. Tallman, J. A. Shanahan, H. D. Merchant, E. Gillespie and R. H. Bellows. They are hard at work making arrangements for the dance and intend to make it a great success.

—The attractions at the theatres for the near future, are: At State Street opera house, Dec. 24, the author and actor, Duncan B. Harrison, and the world's champion, John L. Sullivan, in the great play, "Honest Hearts and Willing Hands."

At Centre Street opera house: Dec. 25-28, Pearl Melville; Jan. 1, Mugg's Landing; Jan. 3, Neil Burgess' County Fair.

#### PERSONALS.

'29. Prof. Hugh S. Banks of Newburg, N. Y., was the oldest of the Union College alumni, at the recent alumni banquet held in New York city.

'63. Gen. Amasa J. Parker of Albany, on December 6, handed in his resignation as Commander of the 3d Brigade of the National Guard. He has been in command of this brigade since 1886.

'84. Benjamin Guerard Chisholm, an alumnus of this college, died recently at his home in Birmingham, Ala. He was born at Charleston, S. C., graduated from Union College in the class of '84, and up to the time of his death was a member of an architectural firm at Birmingham. While in college, he was a member of the Sigma Phi society, was a society leader, and had many friends in this city, who will be pained to learn of his death.



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