Optimism versus Pessimism

By Miss Marie E. Brown, College '06.

The man who looks on the bright side of life even when standing under shadow of a bitter experience is called an optimist.

The man who always sees the cloud, but never its silver lining, who predicts that there will be lightning and floods and plagues to morrow, in spite of the sunshine which floods the earth to day, is called a pessimist.

I have noticed often that a dog when free to do as he pleases is sure to choose a sunny spot to lie down in. He stretches himself at full length and in his own peculiar way expresses the pleasure he takes in his good fortune. His very yawn and look of reposefulness constitute a language that we all understand, and it tells of the happiness which he enjoys.

I respect the dog for the sensible view of life which he takes, and would fain follow his example. In this one regard he knows a great deal more than some men and makes a better use of his opportunity.

Of all people in the world, the most irreligious is he who looks at the evils of life so persistently that he cannot recognize any good in it, and of all hurtful habits which characterize mankind the most injurious is the habit of keeping one's eyes open to catch a glimpse of the disagreeable and keeping them shut whenever a moment of good cheer is approaching. Such a habit is demoralizing and spiritually weakening. It seems to be continually assuring us that God's Providence has fallen into a sound sleep from which there is no waking.

I am a thorough optimist and I take great delight in the fact.

This optimism is not the result of temperament, but of conviction. With the dog who lies in the sunshine it is instinct, but with mankind it is the product of a careful use of the reasoning faculties. The instinct of the dog and the brain of the man lead to the same conclusion, namely, that whenever there is sunshine it is to be appropriated.

It is just as much a duty to put the hard experiences of life away and to keep in mind its possible enjoyments as it is to be pure hearted or charitable. Never dwell on your misfortunes, tho they be many, for it will embitter the soul and render it unfit for the future. Brush aside unpleasant memories, so far as lies in your power, and even try to forget them. There is no use in living over again and again the scenes thru which you have passed whether they refer to the evil you have done to others, the evil that others have done to you, or the unavoidable sufferings which you have borne. God has said that so far as He is related to your mistakes they shall be "buried in the depths of the sea", and if He can forget them forgetfulness is one of the virtues which ought to be practised on our part. It is not what you have been in days gone by, nor what you have done which is most important, but what you are to do and to do in the future.

We find much that is beautiful in nature and in life, if we will but look for it. The world is to the thoughtful mind a never ending panorama, with its stars, its ocean, its hills and valleys, its crops and clouds, its flowers and fruits. It is an awe inspiring mystery, a realm of wonders that must needs rouse the dullest soul to worship. The change of a seed into a sapling; the transmutation of a blossom into an apple or cherry; the chemistry by which from the rugged soil, color and perfume are extracted—these are miracles which lead a thoughtful mind along a narrow path whose terminus is the throne of God Himself.

And a human life is full of beauty and mystery, too. The tears shed and the reason for shedding them; the laughter that fills the air and the causes which produce it; the slow development of the child into a man; the gradual sunrise of ideas in his soul until the whole being is flooded; the love that draws him to his mate; the home which the two will make when they have found each other; the sorrow that breaks the heart when the old parent or the young child is taken away; the grave, which is as much a part of the home as the rocking chair or the cradle—who can fail to worship the unseen but all seeing God as he contemplates these things?

And add to this the thought, the certainty that there is no death, only departure and temporary separation; that unknown and unseen influences are about each of us; that what we call heaven is just on the farther side of the churchyard. You may call that optimism, but it would be better to call it truth, for truth it is. It brings the cheerfulness of resignation; it stirs the deeper ambitions of the spirit; it takes the various experiences of life, just as the composer takes the various notes of music, and sets them in such relation with each other that euphony is the result.

It is true that there are wearisome days and sad hours. The glorious Christ went thru many of them,

(Continued on 4th page.)
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WASHINGTON, D. C., FEBRUARY 1, 1907

Education in Switzerland

For children between the ages of six and fourteen education in Switzerland is compulsory. The young must be taught in the primary branches either in the public schools or at home; and when parents prefer to keep their children at home, they must present to the authorities satisfactory evidence that the home instruction is equal to that provided by the state. But the public schools are so thorough and efficient that very few private establishments exist, except perhaps in the cities of Geneva and Lausanne.

When the child becomes twelve years old he may enter either the secondary school or the gymnasmum, which is the classical department of the cantonal school. If he does not choose to enter either of these, he must spend two years more in the primary school. At the end of the primary school education, the pupil either learns a trade, or pursues his studies further. Various high, technical, commercial and agricultural schools exist for secondary education.

Of the cantonal school there are three departments: first the gymnasium, which prepares for the university; second, the technical schools, which prepare for the federal technical; and, third, the commercial, which prepares for business. The university is maintained by the canton and the polytechnic school by the Confederation.

Girls may enter the Hoehere Toechterschule after finishing their primary and secondary courses. In this latter school they are trained either technically, professionally— in law or medicine,—or for teaching.

In the city of Zurich there is a number of public schools maintained by the municipal corporation, among them, the school of trades and handicrafts, the school of music, and a mechanics' institution. These are most complete and well equipped. The Swiss school buildings are fine and commodious. Unlike the buildings in many other places the space is greater than is at present needed for the school population.

The free, liberty-loving Swiss people make abundant preparation for the education of their children. Educated people cannot be reduced for any considerable time to humiliation and subjection. Their knowledge, which to them is proper, acts as the lever by which they remove the burdens of importance and superstition.

Day of Prayer

The Day of Prayer for Colleges was observed at Howard yesterday afternoon. Rev. Dr. Moore, pastor of the Foundry M. E. Church, this city, delivered an impressive discourse from II Samuel 23: 11 12. To his appeal to take a stand for Christianity a goodly number responded. An after service of large benefit was held in the Assembly Room.

The Sermon

The Vesper service last Sunday evening was conducted by Pres. Thirkield, who preached from the words in I John 5:4, "Whosoever is begotten of God overcometh the world." He said in substance: The whole epistle is based upon the antagonism of the world and believers. The word "world" is used in John no less than a score of times, and means the enemy of our souls. Christ prayed that his followers might be delivered from "the evil" of the world. John warns against "the evil of the world." The baptismal covenant contains the kindred trio—"the world, the flesh and the devil." Paul lamented that Demos had "loved the present world." God made the world and made it pure. Instead of using it we abuse it. Esau is called a profane and worldly man who gave himself over to the world. He was a hunter. He loved the smell of food. For a mess of pottage sold his birthright and found no place for repentance tho he sought it with tears.

The world is represented as the seat of Satan's warnings and conquests. Milton in poetic vision saw him thrust out of heaven and sink to hell. Not satisfied he turned to the world. He is called god of the world. He thinks he owns it for he tempted Christ with a gift of the world. He comes also to us. And this is no sham battle. We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. In the world God has placed you and me. What does it mean? I will not attempt a theodicy. I can't account for sin. But this I know, that God has placed us here for a definite purpose. He has a great plan for our lives. We are only developed in battle, in struggle, in temptation. And he hath not left us alone. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." God hath given us thru the atonement of Jesus Christ an overcoming principle.

What does it mean to be born of
God? It means that we should have a regenerate life. It means that we should live in the image of God. It means that the life of God in Jesus Christ should be in us. We may overcome by the nature of this change. When we are redeemed and filled with the life of Christ we are brought into correlation to our higher spiritual nature. We are given also a power that is not of this world. If we met Satan on his own ground he might defeat us, but by the power of God we are given weapons that are mighty to the pulling down of the stronghold of Satan. First, we have the sword of the spirit, Christ, tempted, used it. This sword of the spirit is God's word. Would that we could use it to overcome. We have also the weapon of prayer. What a power is this! Queen Mary feared the prayers of John Knox more than an army 10,000 strong. With prayer a little child can move the arm of God. We have the promises of God. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Men from the slums of New York rescued by the City Mission gathered in a fashionable Fifth Avenue church to tell what the power of God had done for them. As they did so, they brought tears to the eyes of those who heard. It is in the power of Christ to take these broken lives of ours and renew them so they shall become in the likeness of God.

The Alpha Phi Debate

On next Friday evening, 8th inst, a notable forensic contest will occur under the auspices of the Alpha Phi Literary Society. Six speakers selected with care in view of their powers of thought and expression will contend as individuals for a gold medal of first quality provided by the society. These speakers are Messrs. H. W. Dade '07, J. F. Dagler '09, M. S. Walton '09, S. D. McCree '07, C. C. Sanford '09 and F. D. Whitby '08.

Mr. Dade of the senior college class is known as an accurate and careful thinker, one well able to present an array of practically irrefutable facts. He bears an excellent scholastic record throughout his preparatory and college courses.

Mr. McCree of the senior class of the Teachers' College is very favorably known for the thoughtful and well delivered argument he presented last year when he engaged in a similar contest. He, also, has a record as a good student.

Mr. Whitby of the junior college class has been heard on several occasions in all of which he most favorably impressed his hearers as having something to say and saying it. He is an earnest, faithful worker and secures results.

Mr. Sanford of the sophomore college class has a reputation as a brilliant debater. Twice before has he engaged in public debates and each time his competitors had reasons to keep their eyes on him. He has already borne the first laurels of a former contest.

Mr. Walton of the sophomore class of the Teachers' College is a speaker of ability. He has a clear resonant voice and is at home on the rostrum. He will be a dreaded rival in this race.

Mr. Dagler of the freshman college class is well known. His oration, well composed and well presented on the occasion of his graduation from the Preparatory Department last year won for him many compliments. Mr. Dagler is a brave champion of what he believes is right and his fellow disputants are reckoning on him.

Messrs. Dade, Dagler and Walton will present the affirmative and Messrs. McCree, Sanford and Whitby the negative of the question, Resolved, That strikes are productive of more harm than good to the working classes.

Among the musical numbers will be solos by the favorite singers, Misses Mamie Chase and Pearl Barnes.

One of the most surprising things about this high class entertainment is that it is entirely free, costing nothing to the public either to enter or to leave. The Alpha Phi Society has pleasure in entertaining its friends on this occasion.

The Masquerade

Duke '08

The masquerade entertainment given by the Christian Endeavor Society last Friday evening in Miner Hall was quite an enjoyable affair and well attended. Those who were not masked spent the time trying to guess whose faces were hidden behind the different masks.

Miss Hitchings and Miss Perry proved a puzzle for quite a while to the inquisitive ones. Dressed as summer girls they almost baffled detection.

Serenely calm and untroubled, Miss Alice West, dressed in the garb of a nun, slowly walked around the room, unknown except to a few close friends.

Miss Gilbert and Miss Hargrave were masked as Japanese girls. Their pretty costumes and large Japanese parasol added much to the effect of the evening.

Miss Bogg, as Little Bo Peep, was quite a striking figure.

Miss Vassar, who was Red Riding Hood, with her little basket of flowers, was darting around, trying to avoid the wolves who were trying to guess her.

Miss Houston, Queen of Hearts, and Miss Lee, Queen of Diamonds, and Miss Smith, Queen of the Fairies, furnished the royalty to the party.

Miss Harden, masked as a Port Rican flower girl, and Miss Brooks as a ghost, completed the list of young ladies.

The young men represented the more humorous side of the affair.

Lawyer Derricks and "Dad" White with Jim Swingers and white pants were very effectively masked as dudes.

(Continued on 5th page.)
Dr. W. H. Brooks, pastor of St. Marks' Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City, is one of the most successful of the Howard Alumni. During his pastorate he has received nearly 1,500 people into the church, and has built up one of the strongest religious organizations in that great city.

**Pin' Awdinary Man**

By Miss Bessie McKinney.

Jus' an' awdinary man
Has de mostes fun I can,
Does de worx I has to do
An' de best o' restiu too.

Some folks makin' money quick
Worries till dey done took sick,
In a hoss'less carriage race.

Kings a-talkin' 'bout de fight
Some a-dodgin' dynamite.
I'se glad I'se built on dishere plan
Jus' an' awdinary man.

Our next number will be devoted to the Medical College.

The President received a cordial letter from the Secretary of the Howard Club, organized last June at Montgomery, Ala., assuring him of their loyal support in forwarding the work of the institution.

Next Sunday at vespers the sermon will be preached by the Rev. Dr. Francis J. Grimke, pastor of the Fifteenth St. Presbyterian Church.

**Pestalozzi Froebel**

Last Friday afternoon, the Pestalozzi-Froebel Literary Society held its weekly meeting. The subject of the program was Nathaniel Hawthorn. The program follows:

- **Song**: . . . Society Quotations . . . . Society Life of Hawthorne . . . Miss Graves Vocal solo . . . Miss Woodson
- **A Comparative Study of the Salaries of the American Teacher**: Mr. Thomas Current Events . . Mr. Williams Recitation . . . Miss Thomas Instrumental solo . . . Miss Perry Oration . . . Mr. Overton Vocal solo . . . Mr. Walton

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**Optimism vs Pessimism**

(Continued from 1st page.)

and we, therefore, could hardly expect to avoid them. They are as necessary to the soul as food is to the body. But if we meet them bravely and with undimmed faith we shall go thru them unscathed. The angels will keep you company and see that you fail not and fall not. Keep the heart fresh and your confidence in God unshaken. Then will you be welcomed some day on the other shore by those whom you have loved on this earth.

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The Masquerade

(Continued from 3d page)

Kiddum Smalls, a little fat Dutchman, rolled around the room speaking German (not yet.) “Sipi!” Scott sat around as a country swain—quite a natural part for “Scotty.”

George Kyle, with Palmer House feet and big tray, gave us a representation of a waiter at Broadway Central Hotel, New York, in the good old summer time.

McKinney, Bill Gilbert and Woods furnished amusement as three ladies, they received many compliments on their extreme beauty and graceful figures.

Francis Miller, one of the discharged Twenty fifth, marched around with a musket and kept order as well as his tight-fitting uniform would allow.

Baltimore Scott was fearfully and tragically masked as a ghost. He was not discovered until some one tried a big hat on his head. It would not go on so the only conclusion was that it must be Scott. Rather a mean advantage to take of the junior.

Alphonso Cook, in his own inimitable way, played the clown. York was a semi-comedian—great big tie and short pants.

Dade told fortunes in broken English.

While Cook wasn’t exactly Santa Claus, he came near to it. Jones, athlete and summer boy—sweater and white pants.

But it remained for Dave Francis to cap the climax. Towering about six feet in the air it may be imagined what a figure he made when he came in masked to represent an old maid. Red stockings and all the others accessories of ladies’ dressing he had adorned himself with, and last of all a big ugly falseface. The judges awarded him the decision for being the best masked of the evening.

After refreshments, which were served by the committee, the jolly masqueraders slowly dispersed.

Warning—The Shearing of a Sheep

“The Ghost, ’08”

Ouch! Ouch! Ouch! in distressful fearful tones. What is wrong? Is some one being killed? Then the noise increases, the “Ouch” comes nearer. It seems as if a whole cavalcade is approaching. Your wonderment grows. Surely something is radically wrong so to disturb our peaceful quiet (?) place of abode. Lo! the crowd appears, a wailing sheep in its many arms, to be sheared of the accretions of Father Time, unhindered in his course by the application of either scissors or knife.

Every door is thrown open wide to view the passage of a long tall boy carried aloft much to his evident disgust by all too willing arms. In this door a dignified senior stands appalled by the din, in another the “Duke” with his chum—“A Pioneer Sport of Howard”—fittingly begarbed a la Japanese for the night, and in another an embryo dentist. Meanwhile the procession passes on taking along with it the dignity of three juniors, who by the time they reach the senior, are all seized by a common impulse to run for the center of action. But lo! Something has happened.

The procession has reached the hall, and is on its way to the shearing room. A cry of “Professor” is heard; the bleating sheep is let go. He runs back up stairs, making a valiant attempt to reach his room, which had been thoughtfully locked by his roommate. To add to his consternation the lights went out. The Preps’ blood is up. The shearing room is illuminated, the prospect of so much water seized him with no little fear. Then again he was afraid that the prospective shearers would not be any way gentle with him. At the same time began the scramble for seats.

The partition afforded fine perches for the spectators. One enterprising College man got a box 2 x 3 which accommodated in a miraculous manner the feet of half dozen men. Two other points of vantage, high up to the ceiling, were occupied respectively by one of the shortest men in college, and a soldier Prep. All saw that the shearing was done properly by the sheep itself, and the crowd even suggested a shower, but the Pride of Clark Hall and the Pioneer objected, thinking the water too cold. They tested the showers; the Pride of Clark Hall raised our hopes by crying, “Bring forth the sheep,” only to throw cold water on them. The water was below the temperature suitable for such purposes.

We went to bed feeling that not only had we served a warning, but had begun our Sabbath with an act that had brought one soul nearer to Godliness.

However a College man, one of great strength and athletic ability herein termed as Pioneer, came to the front. He cried out in Stentorian tones, “That’s all right boys, go in the room. I’ll see that you’ll be dealt kindly with.” At such reassurance the trembling sheep went in, and began making ready. On every side shearing tools—“oluro shears,” and “sapolbrushes” and “talcigloves,” appeared; the act is on.

The Preps by dire threats had impressed upon the sheep the necessity of a shearing. He had got down as far as the door of our handsome shearing room, but the alarming prospect of so much water seized him with no little fear. Then again he was afraid that the prospective shearers would not be any way gentle with him. At the same time began the scramble for seats.

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Last Sunday the Y. M. C. A. was addressed by Dean F. W. Fairfield of the College of arts and Sciences; Mr. VanLoo will address the association this coming Sunday.
HOWARD UNIVERSITY

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Secretary and Treasurer.

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