

aware that it was so late or that we were breaking any rules.

Our clock had stopped at just five minutes to seven—a most convenient occurrence. The Dr.'s face was at once wreathed in smiles, with the reply, "Oh! Well, gentlemen, I see you did not intend any wrong. All I would suggest is, that you make less noise or buy a new clock. Good evening."

We have been grateful to him ever since that he let us off so easy, and in doing so, by his tact, changed the event from one of unpleasant to one of grateful remembrance.

H—DEN, '69.

NAPA. CAL., April 10, 1884.

Folio.

"*The Reading Room is neglected for the Library*" complains a reformer in another New England college, and possibly it is not untrue to say of Wesleyan, that there is a tendency among the *habitués* of our library to disregard the daily newspapers almost wholly. Both extremes are, of course, to be avoided, but if a preference is to be made would it not rightly fall to the man who does all his reading from the current newspapers, over the one who never departs from the lines of library classics? It is a saying our self satisfaction makes us proud to repeat, that Americans are above all things a reading people. Foreigners remark it and wonder; publishers see it and rejoice. And such an assortment of literature is on the side board that every taste can find its favorite brand. But there is danger that some shall become confirmed toppers in one variety of reading, while choice brands from other vineyards are untasted. So the tippler, with his Irving and Thackeray, is supremely content and only wishes like the Epicure for a "long, long throat," that the tasting may be a more lasting pleasure, but the story of the day's doings in the world, if he would believe it, is a fresh new growth, to trim and give a relish to the feast. But I can hear the extreme devotee of the library saying "Look here, I'm not going to make an intellectual sieve of my-

self, and run through all the chaff of a newspaper to find the kernels that are already stored up in the library granery." So he reposes in tradition like a child in a nurse's arms. That man is fast becoming a pedant. He is the kind of man Horace Greeley compared with a hedge-hog in pleasantness of approach. *Less Goethe and more reading room* then, and the thin blooded collegian whom Horace Greeley despised, will lose some of his pedantry. There is room for more fellows about the *Tribune* and *Herald*, as they come every morning, damp from the press and full of what was done yesterday all over the world.

The tidings of Charles Reade's death seem to have aroused anew our discerning literary detectives to arraign him at the bar of public criticism on a charge of plagiarism, and they certainly have a strong case.

It is told of Dickens that he studied the faces in a London crowd, and his imagination supplied characters and incidents in keeping with the comical or strange features he saw. But Charles Reade was lacking in this creative power, as every reader can discover. When ever, therefore, anything strange or startling came to him in the daily press, it was immediately put in one of his scrap books, a pile of which he had accumulated, and which he called his "brains." He had the way of appropriating anything that seemed adapted to the story or drama in hand, and the charge of plagiarism in some cases was easier made against him than disproved. Yet, lacking in pure creative genius, he did have all the resources of humor, pathos and dramatic artifice, and more than all, the passionate earnestness that marks his defense of poor prisoners, victimized authors, the slaves of trade unions, and rights of mad-house inmates. Conventional ways of writing were utterly disregarded by him. A half-dozen exclamation points could hardly satisfy his intense vitality. Yet no one can read those nervous vivid passages without tingling with awakened feeling. So, with all the mannerisms and faults that critics show are unmistakable, it is conceded generally that one who could write as powerful a novel