

Seventy-Five Years Ago

1847 in a Student's Life. The Fourth Installment of Excerpts from the Diary of George Beck, '7

Tuesday, 5th.

..... Our recitations commenced today. I think the studies of the present term are going to be very interesting. They are French, Rhetoric, Experimental Physics & Guizol's History of Civilization in Europe. The comet now visible presents a most splendid appearance. Its train is very bright & spreading extending over about 30° of the firmament in length. It appears in the N. W. for more than two hours after sunset in the evening and in the N. E. some hours before sunrise in the morning. It is a matter of much surprise to many how it can set after the sun and rise before the sun.

Saturday, Nov. 6th.

..... Our class this morning took into consideration the subject of Junior Exhibition. We decided to have two as there were more who wished to speak than could be accommodated in one evening. It was decided to have 30 speakers and they were chosen by lot. I happened to be one of those upon whom the lot fell. Last evening I moved a question for discussion in the Alpha Nu. It comes on in 3 weeks. It is Resolved—that the English Revolution of 1688 was justifiable. I must try and find time to prepare to speak upon it.

Friday, 19th.

The first lecture of the season was delivered before the Students Lecture Association on Wed eve By Dr John Tom, Subject "Dante—the revival of poetry." It was the first of a course of six which he is to deliver on "The Great Historical lights of the modern civilization." Lieut. M. F. Maury of the National Observatory at Washington delivered a lecture this evening upon the Atlantic Telegraph.

Friday, Dec. 3rd.

..... During the present week a trial of much interest has been going on in court. Somewhat more than a year ago a citizen of this place returning from Detroit late one night was shot just before reaching his house. He only lived after he was found long enough to make a statement that the deed was done by two men who robbed him of \$500 which he had about him. Last spring a house kept by an old woman and two boys one of them her son, 17 & 18 years of age in and about the house was found a great amount of property of almost every description a large portion of which was identified as belonging to persons in this city & neighborhood. The parties have since been in jail except the old woman who escaped last summer and has lately been retaken. She was found guilty on two indictments for larceny & for receiving stolen goods and to day was sentenced to solitary confinement at hard labor for 5 years for each offense. During this time circumstances have been developed which led to the indictment of the two boys for the murder of Holden and their trial is just concluded and today they were sentenced to solitary confinement at hard labor for life at the State Prison at Jackson.

Saturday, 4th.

Dr. Tappan sometimes gets off some very rich notes and says some very fine things. I have thought that it would be very pleasing to take note of some of them as they drop from his lips and preserve them. On Saturday mornings the Junior & Senior classes have rhetorical exercises before him and he will frequently talk for half an hour upon some subject suggested by the occasion. This morning one of the students spoke upon tobacco upon which the Dr took occasion to give us his views upon the subject. He asked for an expression by raising the hand as to how many of those present used it in any form and how many did not. It was remarked that some of the tobacco users held up both hands. He replied that was to signify that they both chewed & smoked. He remarked that he thought chewing was the worst form in which it was used and that smoking was the most harmless. He gave us some of his experience and said that up to about a dozen years ago he does not think he smoked a box of cigars in his life. About that time he had an affliction in his throat and was on that account advised to smoke by several celebrated physicians and now he smokes one & sometimes two cigars daily and if he is with a friend perhaps three. He says that it is constant spitting which is so injurious to American smokers. He has rode whole days with most inveterate French & German smokers and does not recollect ever to have seen them spit. He advised all to abstain from it except from good cause and then use as little as possible.

Tuesday, Dec. 14th.

..... With my class I stand almost in opposition to the majority. In some little matters I have felt it my duty to throw my influence in a direction contrary to many of the others and they have come to regard it as a permanent arrangement. Well, I can stand it. Our class has just commenced the study of astronomy. We are under Dr. Brinnow a celebrated German astronomer & Director of the Observatory at this place. His English is very poor otherwise he would be much more interesting.

Thursday, 16th.

..... One of my chums is confined to his room with rheumatism. He is scarcely able to move. We all three of us thought we would indulge in a slight spree this evening so we each contributed three cents and bought some peanuts and had a jovial time eating them but if they gave the other boys such a pain in the stomach as they have me they will not try it again very soon.

Tuesday, 28th.

..... I have read some in "Prescott's Conquest of Mexico" which I find very interesting indeed. I also read over my next recitation in Astronomy and translated a few pages of Madame De Stael's work, "L'Allemagne." I also read a part of two stories now publishing in the "Atlantic Monthly Magazine."

Ann Arbor Club Elects Officers

NATHAN S. POTTER, '98, was elected President of the University of Michigan Club of Ann Arbor at the organization meeting of the new Board of Governors held January 8 in Alumni Memorial Hall. Mr. Potter succeeds Oscar Eberbach, '06, in the presidency. Dr. Dean W. Myers, '99*h*, was chosen Vice President and Paul C. Wagner, '16*e*, was selected as Secretary-Treasurer.

A committee, consisting of the new officers and the retiring president, Mr. Eberbach, was named to work

on the Burton Memorial Campanile project. The annual banquet of the club will be held in February or March. Dr. Myers has been named as general chairman.

The governors of the Ann Arbor organization, as a result of the election, are: Nathan S. Potter, '98, Dr. Dean W. Myers, '99*h*, Paul C. Wagner, '16*e*, Paul A. Leidy, '09, '24*l*, Oscar Eberbach, '06, Walter P. Staebler, '13, Louis Ayres, '08*e*, Horatio Abbott, '99-'00, and Charles Sink, '04.