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Editorial Comments.



IN THE VARSITY of Nov. 24, 1891, there appeared a lengthy editorial on the subject of University Extension, which, though not intended to do so, might conceivably, and in some cases did actually, leave the impression that the writer was opposed to the movement. In the following issue there appeared a letter over the well-known signature of Wm. Houston, Esq., calculated to justify the motives and methods of the promoters of the "Canadian Association for the Extension of University Teaching." That our readers may have the question in hand without turning up the numbers mentioned, we will give the barest résumé of the two articles. The former said that we are prone to follow English or American example too precipitately; that there is a wide difference in the spheres of university influence in England and Canada; that practically all in the latter country who desire university training may have it; that the laboring classes had not been benefited by the movement; we have no supply of unoccupied graduates, and no funds; that what we need is not more organizations, but a better use of what we have; that we could do most good by strengthening ourselves as a university. Then the important paragraphs came last, which urged that by lending a university name we were endangering our own status. In short, the writer of the article favored any plan that would impart something of what is known as higher education to people who have not been able to attend a university; but seemed to question the suitability of the name and methods of "The Canadian Association for the Extension of University Teaching." Mr. Houston seemed to think the editorial was not in entire sympathy with the ends of the Association, and replied to it. He argued that the name had been employed in the present sense for twenty years; that the movement had benefited the laboring classes in England as well as other classes; that there is a large mass of the community who would like to enjoy the higher culture, but cannot go to a university for the purpose; that if teachers are required they will be supplied; that the existing organizations, such as mechanics' institutes, etc., could profitably be used as "local centres."

In looking at the two articles two months after their first appearance we are not struck by any divergence of the two writers as regards an earnest desire for the promotion of culture in its broadest sense over the widest area. We are struck, however, with the fact that the one seems to doubt the success of the movement, while the other is hopefully confident—or, rather, confidently hopeful. On the whole, probably, the latter is the better position. It is beyond question that the movement under discussion has had a beneficent influence in England, and the only question is, will it have the same in Canada? In

the limited range of our vision we at present cannot answer. We can, however, safely say that, despite the difference of the two peoples, there are grounds for hope. The movement has about it all the prestige of victories won, and it is surely not claiming too much to say that where the scheme as hitherto promulgated needs modification, that modification will be made with such unflinching and democratic spirit as will ensure its future success.

In our belief, then, the attitude of the students of Toronto University to this new movement is one of kindly support. No student who has imbibed any true spirit of education—no man, in fact, who is not so narrow as to believe with some in the despicable doctrine that all men have not equal rights to any goods this world or its learning can bestow—will be found in opposition to its aims. If unselfishness on our part, either now or in days to come, may subserve the ends it really has, we hope that all students who leave our halls will vie with one another in their application of that truly university virtue.

LUCRETIIUS, LIB. I. 1-40.

Æneadum genetrix, hominum divumque voluptas.

OPENING INVOCATION TO VENUS.

Goddess from whom descends the race of Rome,
Venus, of gods and men supreme delight,
Hail thou that all beneath the starry dome—
Lands rich with grain and seas with navies white—
Blessest and cherishest! Where thou dost come
Enamelled earth decks her with posies bright
To meet thy advent. Clouds and tempests flee
And joyous light smiles over land and sea.

Often as comes again the vernal hour
And balmy gales of spring begin to blow,
Birds of the air first feel thy sovereign power
And, stirred at heart, its genial influence show.
Next the wild herds the grassy champagne scour
Drawn by thy charm and stem the river's flow.
In mountain, wood, field, sea, all by the grace
Of Venus' love, and love preserves their race.

Mother of life and beauty that dost bring
All things in order forth, thy aid I claim
When to our Memmius I essay to sing
Of nature and the universal frame—
Memmius, whom thy own hand has crowned the king
Of all that charms or wins the meed of fame.
Grace thou my verse and while I sing bid cease
Fell war and let the weary earth have peace.

This thou alone canst do, since thou alone
Mars, battle's master, by thy spells canst bind;
Oft does the God of War love's cravings own
Unquenchable, and on thy lap reclined,
His shapely neck back in his rapture thrown,
His soul with thine through burning looks entwined
Feed on thy beauty. Clasp him to thy breast,
Fill him with thy sweet self, and give us rest.

—From "Bay Leaves," by Goldwin Smith, D.C.L.