

Trinity University Review

A Journal of Literature, University Thought, and Events.

VOL. IX.

TRINITY UNIVERSITY, TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1896.

No. 12.

Trinity University Review.

Published in twelve monthly issues by Convocation and the Undergraduates in Arts and Medicine of Trinity University.

Subscription: One Dollar per annum, payable in advance. Single numbers, fifteen cents. Copies may be obtained from Messrs. Rowsell & Hutchison, 76 King St. East, and Messrs. Vannevar & Co., 440 Yonge St.

Rates for advertising can be obtained on application to the Manager. All subscriptions, remittances and business communications to be addressed to

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Literary contributions or items of personal interest are solicited from the students, alumni, and friends of the University. The names of the writers must be appended to their communications, but not necessarily for publication.

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Editorial Topics.

TERMS.

A proposal to shorten Trinity Term, with the lengthening of the Michaelmas Term by beginning lectures earlier in October as an understood condition, is now under consideration by the proper authorities. The undergraduate body has not been consulted in the matter or they would have been able to propose a change much superior to the one proposed. The change under consideration is by no means an original idea and has several possibilities in it, chiefly in connection with football. The opening of College earlier would place us on an equal footing with the other colleges in the struggle for the football supremacy, but would leave us at a disadvantage in our struggle with the Christmas examinations. At present they are a sufficient blight on the Christmas vacation and hover like a dark, forbidding spirit about the glory of the Christmas and New Year festivities. To lengthen the time for lectures is to prolong the agony and increase the number of the lost souls which descend into the depths of intellectual despondency when the plowers have ploughed and made long furrows." Now, a much better scheme would be to begin the year at Easter, set the shorter examination in the hot weather, and leave the long annual harrow until just before the Easter vacation, when all the world is gray and gloomy, with a nice, sticky, dirty coating of slimy mud that offers few inducements to outdoor peregrinations and but little distraction of any kind. Who wants a hard grind in June when the day is a bright, attractive blue and the Humber looks anything but natural unless one is afloat on it with a well-stocked hamper stowed snugly aboard, and two or three merry fellows to enjoy it and the fresh, crisp air? But of what avail are ideal theories to a Corporation, since it has no soul; or to a University which is scarcely corporate? If we must have summer grinds let us have them in the shade by all means.

Senator Cameron's resolution for the recognition of the independence of the so-called Republic of Cuba will come before the Senate of the United States after the Christmas holidays. If our newspaper despatches can be credited, the resolution is one of sentiment rather than of policy,

and seems likely to be considered in that light by the Executive. However strongly the resolution may be supported in both Houses, even if carried unanimously, it will merely represent the opinion of the people of the American Republic and cannot, except at the pleasure of the President, become operative. Secretary Olney is reported to have said: "The resolution, if passed by the Senate, can probably be regarded only as an expression of opinion by the eminent gentlemen who vote for it in the Senate, and if passed by the House of Representatives only can be regarded as another expression of opinion by the eminent gentlemen who vote for it in the House. The power to recognize the so-called Republic of Cuba as an independent State rests exclusively with the Executive." It is on occasions like this that the marked contrasts between the British Constitution and that of the American Republic are brought out. A bill, resolved that the independence of any power be recognized, passed by both the Commons and the House of Lords by a large majority, as this resolution seems likely to be, would not be hastily vetoed by Her Majesty, and the suggestion through an official source, that even if passed, the measure should not receive the official sanction would be received with astonishment and incredulity. Indeed, such a resolution passed by both Houses would express the will and sentiment of the people and, as such, would almost of necessity become operative; while in this instance it is freely stated that a great many of the Senators and Representatives will vote for the resolution against their better judgment for the purpose of currying favour with their constituents, since they know that the chances are very small that the advice so tendered the Executive will be accepted under the present aspect of the situation. It is, perhaps, in such paradoxical situations to which the Constitution of the American Republic gives rise, that the reason may be found for much of the bombast and extravagance, much of the courageous, belligerent blustering in which American Senators and Congressmen are wont so freely to indulge. Senator Lodge and Senator Mills are, of course, to the fore in supporting this resolution which is at present affecting the New York stock exchange and American credit abroad much more materially than it affects either the Cubans or the Spaniards.

REMINISCENCES.

The great Carlyle has told us—with even excessive reiteration—that there are two kinds of men who are honourable, although in different degrees; the first is the hero, the second is the hero-worshipper, "Without are dogs." Every one who is not the one or the other is of the canaille. Carlyle was not always right, but he was generally right; and he is right here. "No man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*—to his flunky," is the reply. Yes, answers the sage, but that is because the latter is a flunky; it is not because there are no heroes.

Hence it is that among the most valuable contributions to literature are the reminiscences of the great ones of the earth, recorded by the lesser ones, who have had at least the power of recognizing the great. It is for this reason that we must regard Carlyle's estimate of Boswell, the biographer of Johnson, as not merely more generous, but more just than that of Macaulay. Boswell was by no means a contemptible sort of person; he had in him the power of recognizing the greatness of another man, and accordingly he has given us the best biography ever written;