

## Letters to the Editor.

## EDUCATIONAL APPOINTMENTS.

SIR,—Your article of last week on educational appointments must have been pleasing to large numbers of friends of the University of Toronto. It is pleasant to see University affairs discussed in such an intelligent, courteous, and dignified spirit. Hence, it is not for the purpose of controversy that I venture to call attention to one or two points where a hasty reader might draw inferences unfavourable to the University, which I am sure was not your intention.

In the latter part of your article undue secrecy amounting to mystery is urged against the Government. If you will allow me to say so, I do not think the instances you have given are very well chosen. Professor Chapman's resignation, as you say, is only quite recent. You will hardly hold the Government bound invariably and immediately to advertise every position left vacant by resignation or otherwise. If the resources of the University were unlimited, which you admit they are not, such a case as this one would present no difficulty. But under the circumstances, would it not be fair to give the Government the benefit of a little latitude, at least in view of the financial embarrassment which must, no doubt, have suddenly arisen from the necessity of a retiring allowance suitable to a professor of Dr. Chapman's standing and length of service? Would this not be better than to assume without very strong grounds that it is intended to deal with the position otherwise than with the Latin chair which has just been so satisfactorily filled by the Government after open competition?

The mystery you find in the instructorship in Italian and Spanish, which you couple with that of the professorship of mineralogy and geology to form a basis of apprehension, is only such to those who have not followed the course of University events minutely. As a matter of fact and publicity it is now sometime since the Senate decided on the abolition of fellowships (including of course that in Italian and Spanish) and the substitution therefor of instructorships, subject only to the condition of the funds. To say then that the first that was heard of this instructorship was the fact that Mr. Davidson had resigned it, would certainly convey a wrong impression to those who had not the facts clearly in mind. To believe that such positions as instructorships which in any case are invariably and properly filled on the nomination of the professor of the department, should be given only after what might be termed under such circumstances the farce of advertising, would indicate more faith in the public tender for supplies system than I think most people possess. In fact the whole question of advertising faculty positions is a debatable one. Some, at least, of the great universities of the United States do not resort to it at all. It is at best only an apparent guarantee of good faith well fitted, of course, to soothe the public mind, but of absolutely no value if there is not honesty behind it. For example, it is well known that it is by no means an uncommon practice for school boards to decide on the teacher to be appointed, and, having done this, to insert an advertisement in the newspaper for their own protection and for the comfort of the public.

After these few lines explaining my point of view, I think that you and I remain practically at one regarding the inadvisability of secrecy. To be perfectly fair, however, I must ask you to agree with me that it would be impossible for the Government to take the public into its confidence on all details of University administration, any more than such a course would be possible in Government business in general. We cannot expect to have access to the minutes of the Cabinet Council. Yet, I for one, have long felt that it would be a very desirable thing to have some means of recording the facts of University administration. A University gazette or chronicle would be very useful for this purpose, would not cost the Government much, and would, I am sure, avoid many suspicions of mystery in cases in which no mystery exists other than the want of knowledge which arises from absence of any definite system of informing the public as to what actually does take place.

Toronto, 9th Sept., 1895.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

## MARIE CORELLI.

SIR,—In the review which you kindly published in July of "Ardath"—one of Marie Corelli's great novels—I said in beginning that I believed that her real name was Miss McKay. I have since discovered, on the highest authority

that this was a mistake. Miss Corelli is the adopted daughter of Dr. McKay, of London, but no blood relationship exists, and her real name is Marie Corelli.

I said I had discovered this "on the highest authority." I may as well mention that since the review of "Ardath" appeared in THE WEEK I have had the pleasure of personally meeting Miss Corelli at her London home and enjoying a very pleasant interview with her. She had seen THE WEEK and was exceedingly appreciative of the article.

In literary circles in London Miss Corelli is far from popular, and most of the members of the Author's Club, the Vagabonds, and the "Odd Volumes" Club seem to take special delight in decrying her work and belittling her fame. The most searching inquiries on my part failed to elicit any pretense of reason for this, and I am consequently compelled to conclude that her greatest crime, in their eyes, is success. Her books are having a wonderful sale wherever the English language is spoken, and each one seems to surpass the former. Her latest, "Barabbas," deserves, and is destined to enjoy a high place in literature, and its sale has been phenomenal.

I may be entirely wrong, but the impression produced on my mind by Marie Corelli is that she is an able woman, earnestly seeking to enlighten and uplift the world. That she has genius no one can deny, and my firm conviction is that, spite of all opposition, she is bound to occupy a foremost place among the literary lights of the age. She is still young, and most agreeable in person and manner.

Halifax, Sept. 2nd, 1895.

J. W. LONGLEY.

## A MISPLACED LAMENT.

SIR,—An anonymous article entitled "Outraging One's Friends," which appeared in your journal of July 26th, refers among other things to a well-known writer as "our Canadian," and states that, by writing a novel of a certain popular kind, he, "to put it mildly, has gone and made an ass of himself." The truth of the statement I do not intend to question; but to any one who knows the facts, the expression "our Canadian," with its implication, is extremely amusing. Mr. Grant Allen is "our Canadian" only by the accident of birth. He was educated at Oxford, and has never been in Canada, I have been told by a near relative of his, since he was four years old. To all intents and purposes he is an Englishman, possibly just a little more English than the English, and would repudiate with energy the colonial status your contributor would like to force upon him. The latter's "liking" for "the boy" and his "pride" in "his trifles of science" are as much misplaced as his vicarious shame in Mr. Allen's latest literary aberration. I can imagine the fine scorn which would curl the lip of the decadent novelist, should he read in THE WEEK this wonderful statement: "We liked the boy. . . . Accordingly (italics mine) he got it into his head that he could tell his readers what he liked, etc." And possibly your contributor might be induced to explain his innuendo that Mr. Allen is "no Adonis certainly," and how the fact of Mr. Allen's being an Adonis, as well as a "miscrascopist" would qualify him to "teach" or "amuse sane men and decent women."

These tears over Mr. Allen should not have been shed, and I should not have called attention to them, if similar laments had not appeared from time to time, till the notion has got abroad that Canada has a special interest in Mr. Allen, and in some way or other has treated him very shabbily.

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

Dalhousie College, Halifax, Sept. 2nd, 1895.

## RECENT ACTION OF THE TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL.

SIR,—The action of the Trades and Labour Council at its late meeting is so exactly in line with a suggestion made in an article by the present writer, written some time previous to that meeting, though published only after it had taken place, that the writer feels it needful to refer to it as one of those happy coincidences which sometimes happen. This is, perhaps, the more fitting since reference was made in that article to a newspaper report of criticisms previously made by that body on the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Woman's Council last May. The decision of the Trades and Labour Council to co-operate with local branches of the Woman's National Council in supplying them with information and aid in securing shorter hours for female operatives, is so exactly what is needed in the circumstances that it will be noted with pleasure by all interested in the great cause of industrial reform. It is to be hoped the decision will be followed up by sustained action.

FIDELIS.