

MEDALS AND SCHOLARSHIPS.

Our remarks in last issue on this subject have excited considerable interest in a matter until now partially forgotten. Inquiry has elicited the following explanation of the principles on which awards are made:—

1. Under the new arrangement by which, in the final examinations of the University, the candidates are ranked in three classes, all those in any one of the classes are assumed to be equal, and are accordingly placed in alphabetical order. Access to the percentages obtained by each student is refused for any specialization for prizes, etc

2. The Calendar discriminates between University and College prizes. Where a benefactor gives a medal or scholarship specially to the College Council, it is assumed to be for the students in attendance on lectures and not for all-comers. Affiliated colleges will retain their own prizes or scholarships, though certain University scholarships may be thrown open to all competitors.

3. It is a special object in the establishment of scholarships and college prizes to encourage attendance on lectures. Reading up from text-books at home is only regarded as an unavoidable substitute in the case of those exempted from attendance on lectures on account of disability of some satisfactory nature.

4. The system of examinations on text-books by examiners, and not by the teachers, is one that has been repeatedly denounced. Great modifications (including the transference of the whole examinations in the second and third years to the Faculties of the various colleges with co-examiners) have been introduced with a view to diminish this objectionable feature. But in the final examinations the retention of the old system has been found unavoidable.

5. The statement in the College Calendar is explicit as to the specified scholarships, prizes and medals, that they "are open for competition among the students in actual attendance in the College." The other federated colleges have similar limitations, and would not award one of their prizes to a University student not ranking among their own alumni.

6. As the professors and lecturers are now absolutely excluded from using the marks assigned by University examiners in the award of medals and prizes in the fourth year, it is a mistake to claim superiority for any candidate on such grounds. A student may read up and answer all questions based by an outside examiner on text-books, and yet fall far behind another in other tests based on the actual teaching in the lecture-rooms and laboratories.

In this connection we are pleased to insert the following communication from one who has the highest right to be heard:—

EDITOR THE VARSITY :

Dear Sir,—Will you kindly insert in your next issue the following statement of the facts regarding the award of the medal in Philosophy for last year:—

Mr. McCrimmon and Mr. Kerswell were both first-class honor men on the aggregate returns of the examinations in the three lists of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Logic, and Civil Polity. As this is the basis of the award, they were consequently equal in view of the recent regulation of the Senate forbidding us to go behind the divisions into class honors.

The question was then simply this: Mr. Kerswell has done his work in the College faithfully, observing the conditions under which the medals are awarded, including this from the College Calendar: "*The following medals (Classics, Modern Languages, Philosophy, etc.) will be awarded to undergraduates in actual attendance in the College.*" Mr. McCrimmon had absented himself during the fourth year, and had thus failed to comply with the conditions. Under these circumstances I have not the slightest hesitation in expressing the opinion that the

College Council was right in giving the medal to Mr. Kerswell.

I am glad to write you on the subject, for I have been editor of a university paper myself, and have always insisted upon the critical function of the students' organ in all matters of undergraduate interest.

Believe me, yours truly,

Oct. 8, 1890.

J. MARK BALDWIN.

With all due deference to Professor Baldwin we fail to see that the explanation offered is perfectly satisfactory. We do not quite understand what is meant by "going behind divisions into class honors," unless the other statement furnished us that "access to the percentages obtained by each student is refused for any specialization for prizes." From this we conclude that the class in which the student is placed and not the relative position within that class is what decides the question. If such be the case, to whom would the medal be given if half a dozen or more were fortunate enough to take first class honors all around? To be specific, who would have won, Mr. Kerswell or Mr. McCrimmon, with both in first class honors and all other things equal? Nothing but percentages could decide in such a case.

But "all those in any one of the classes are assumed to be equal." Then both the gentlemen in question were equal in two subjects—each taking first class honors in Logic and Civil Polity. Mr. McCrimmon was the *only one* in first class in Mental and Moral Philosophy, and consequently, taking the three together, was ahead of Mr. Kerswell. We are further told that they were "both first-class honor men on the aggregate:" How was that learned without resource to the percentages?

Our attention is drawn to the regulation in the calendar, requiring attendance at lectures. But, in 1888, Mr. Cross did not attend lectures in his fourth year and he was given the same medal denied to Mr. McCrimmon. *The same regulation as to attendance at lectures was in force then as now.* There was a precedent, with even more force than the two or three-line regulation, hidden away in the depths of the calendar and one upon which any reasonable person could rely. What reason was there for a change of action without due notice being given? While on this subject we should like to know what is really implied by "attendance at lectures." Is it registration and payment of fees, or does it include more than that and, if so, what more? In reality, compulsory attendance is not in vogue, as the roll is called in very few of the lectures and no certificates of attendance are given. How then is it known whether a man attends or not?

THE VARSITY does not attack the principle of compulsory attendance at lectures as a condition to winning medals. We agree entirely that it is the only principle that is right and the one from which the best results can be obtained. What we do complain of is the putting into force of such a regulation in one case and not in another. We sincerely hope that the ventilation this subject has received will result in some action tending towards a clear and definite statement on the subject in the calendar and towards uniformity in the enforcement thereof.

Lieut Badgerow requests that all who wish to join the Recruit Class will hand in their names as early as possible. The class meets for drill on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week, at 4 p.m.