

The Acadia Athenæum.

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The Sanetum.

LAST month we referred to the importance of encouraging excellence in literary composition on the part of the students. By permitting greater latitude in the choice of subjects, and by affording opportunity by which distinction may be won in literary work, much could be done in this direction. But it is in the power of the students themselves to do not a little to invite a keener interest, and more diligent endeavor for excellence, in literary composition. The Athenæum, the Literary Society of the students, has never received the interest on the part of the members which its object deserves. As a school for educating its members in public speaking, debating, and transacting public business, it has been beneficial. As an organization for improvement in literary skill, it has failed. The reason is apparent. The students have not time to prepare elaborate papers together with the essays required in their regular work. When a paper is to be read before the Society, the natural inference is, that it is either an old essay prepared with the sole object of doing duty, or a class assignment and therefore not very inviting; or, if prepared expressly for the occasion, of necessity hastily written and therefore not displaying much literary excellence. The result is, when the reading of an original paper is announced on the evening's programme, little is expected; when little is expected, the tendency of human nature is to make little suffice. It is true that many excellent papers have been read in the Athenæum Society; but the tendency mentioned remains. How can it be obviated?

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WITH the power of choosing those subjects for essays or literary compositions in which each is especially interested, the student could