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## Queen's University Journal,

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THE old year closes with a shadow of mourning resting upon our country, for in Sir John Thompson Canada has lost one of her noblest sons and foremost statesmen. It is inexpressibly sad to think of him being removed in the prime of life, with his powers ripe for serving his country more eminently than ever before. The voice of party strife is hushed in the face of such a public disaster, and friend and foe unite in paying tribute to the distinguished dead. His brilliant attainments, his personal integrity, and his unsullied political career have commanded the respect and admiration of all, no matter what their political or religious creed. He did not have the qualifications of a popular party leader, but as an administrator of justice had few equals in the British Empire. He had reached the summit of a colonial statesman's career, and the remembrance that this was achieved mainly by devotion to duty and by purity of character should leave a deep impression on his countrymen. While beloved by his friends, it can safely be said that he possessed in a degree unsurpassed by any other Canadian statesman the esteem of his political opponents, and we cannot do better than quote from the graceful tribute paid him by Hon. Wilfred Laurier: "Sir John Thompson was one of the ablest of Canada's sons, a man of profound conviction, of great valor, and of many brilliant parts. Eminently patriotic, his mind equalled his heart, and his mind was broad. . . . He cared nothing for the

approval of the populace; he felt only the satisfaction of duty accomplished. Could I do otherwise than admire such a man, the finest ornament of Canada, who was above all human consideration?"

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Few students in the university have any adequate idea of the rich contents of our library and fewer still profit by them as they might. The chief reason for this is the poor facilities the students have for ascertaining what the library contains. The JOURNAL may seem to be a chronic grumbler regarding the library, but, like the importunate widow who shewed common sense in a remarkable degree, we believe in stick-to-it-iveness when there is a real grievance. A great advance was made when a case of books was placed in the consulting room, and a still greater when honour students were granted admission to the alcoves. But even when there they are lost in a maze of books and are unable to make the most effective selections. The Professor of Political Science has removed this difficulty for his students by making out a list of "the best books" used in his department, which has proved of great service. If no other step can be taken at present to open up the library, the other Professors might at least follow this example and spend a few hours in preparing a list of the most suggestive books in their departments. By doing so they would not only confer a boon upon the students but would save themselves much time and trouble in answering numerous enquiries.

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Some time ago one of our Professors in the course of a conversation said that he had often wondered whether or not the passing away of singing out of our class-rooms was indicative of the real trend of our university life. Only a day or two ago we heard a student say that Queen's was a critical and philosophical but not a singing institution. Doubtless what he meant was that the dominant influences around us tend to make us think or speculate rather than create or sing.

That the genius of Queen's is critical rather than creative may be seen from the scarcity of original songs in common use among the students. From one point of view it is well that the dominating influence is critical, for the readers of the JOURNAL are thereby spared the unprofitable task of wading