

# THE 'VARSITY:

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## THE 'VARSITY.

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## Editorial Notes.

OWING to lack of space, there was omitted a part of our report of the *Conversazione* in our issue of last week. We desire to rectify that omission, and to give Mr. M. S. Mercer, the President of the Glee Club and convener of the Music Committee, the credit which our report should have given him for the able manner in which his duties were performed. Those who know the facts well know to how great an extent the success of the cantata and concert was due to his efficient management, and at what expenditure of time and trouble that efficiency was attained.

IT is stated by the public press that the famous English *litterateur*, Edmund Gosse, who is now lecturing in the United States, did not have the advantage of a college education in his special subject. Perhaps it was just as well for him, as things go, that he escaped this so-called advantage. He appears to have had naturally an unusual fondness for literary study, which he was thus able to gratify. But we fancy that if he had taken a college course of Craik, Bain and the rest, he would have "got over all that." He might have survived the process, in which case he would probably have come out a newspaper critic or a magazine hack, but it is probable that long before the course was over the literary life would have been quite crushed out of him.

A Pleasant memento of the regard for his Alma Mater has recently been received by President Wilson from an old student. Mr. John Wilkie, who proceeded to the degree of B.A. in the university examinations of 1875, is now a missionary in India. In the course of his labours there he resided for a time in one of the districts on the southern slope of the Himalayas, and now forwards as an addition to the College herbarium an interesting collection of Himalayan ferns. Mr. Wilkie's own field of missionary labour is in Central India, but the collection now referred to was made during a visit to the mountain district of Sikkim. This lower range of the hill-country is characterized by a rich temperate flora, and the fifty species of fern and lycopode collected by Mr. Wilkie, both from British and Independent Sikkim, are valuable illustrations of an interesting

branch of the native flora. We welcome this pleasant remembrancer of a student of former years. The men of his year will be specially gratified thus to hear of his good works, both as a Christian missionary in the far East and as one who can there turn to practical account the fruits of the scientific training received from his Alma Mater. The President, as we learn, has also in prospect the contribution to his own special collection of a box of skulls of the Blackfeet and Blood Indians, forwarded from Fort McLeod, in the North-West Territory, by a well-known member of the last graduating class, Mr. W. P. McKenzie. We commend the example thus set by Mr. Wilkie and Mr. McKenzie to the graduates at home and abroad.

AS the season of election excitement and party bitterness will soon be again upon our University public, a very appropriate suggestion was made the other day by an old member of the Literary Society. Party spirit, he said, must no longer be allowed to dominate over reason, and a determined effort should be made by all the members of the Society, who have its best interests at heart, to secure the election of persons who can show a much better claim to office than that they are the puppets of a party. If any indication of a party feeling manifests itself in the coming elections, a few active members holding the above opinions should at once organize themselves into an Independence party, the members of which should simply pledge themselves to oppose corruption and to give both their votes and their influence to the best man for the office, entirely independent of party considerations. Of course it would be understood that every individual should exercise his own judgment as to who was the best man, otherwise the evil would only be increased by the formation of a third party. In short, the basis of the new party should be the substitution of honest individual judgment for party dictation. And if, as sometimes has happened, neither of the parties at present existing should make a suitable nomination for an office, then the Independents should immediately put a new candidate into the field and exert themselves in every honorable way to secure his election.

A Protest was recently made in our hearing by a distinguished graduate against the requisition by the University Senate of attendance at some affiliated college as the condition of granting a degree. The gentleman stated that if the candidate passed the prescribed examinations it surely made no difference to the Senate whether he had attended lectures on the subjects or not. But it appears to us that our friend does not fully comprehend the situation. The Senate, in conferring the degree, stamp the recipient as a university man—as one who has in their opinion received to a greater or less extent a liberal education. But the members of the Senate are well aware that the mere ability to pass examinations is by no means a guarantee that the condition has been attained in the case of the examinee. Nor is there any other means by which this matter can be accurately tested where the number of candidates is at all large. The Senate rightly consider, however, that the contact of mind with mind, which three or four years of college life implies, is the means best adapted to produce the desired mental condition, and we think they do right to take the only available method of providing that this contact is actually effected. We do not in this connection attach the chief importance merely to the few hours of mental