

Contributions.

THE FORTNIGHTLY.

(A discussion and a suggestion.)

"What do you think of the FORTNIGHTLY?" is a question which put in any department of McGill would elicit one answer. The expression of that answer might differ, but the same meaning would be conveyed. The FORTNIGHTLY is a wretched paper. It is useless. It is not dignified. It is bosh, etc., etc.

Now, there is much ignorance concerning an essential point that is apparent in these remarks from grave professor down to jaunty freshman. The essential point is this:—does the FORTNIGHTLY proceed satisfactorily along the lines on which it is based? and not—does it compare favorably with one's own pet paper, whether that be the *Star* or the *Nineteenth Century*?

The lines on which the FORTNIGHTLY is to be worked are indicated in the first number of its first volume, bearing date 1892-1893. Here the writer of the Editorial begins by saying that the *University Gazette*, discontinued during the previous two years, had filled in a creditable manner the mirroring of the intellectual and literary progress of the University, that the paper was run by a company which was to have been composed of the undergraduates themselves, and shares had been issued at a moderate price. But that differences had arisen, interest had flagged, complaints of various nature had come in, and finally the Directors of the paper had ceased its publication. Thus for two years the students were without a College journal and to an appreciable extent the different interests of the University had suffered.

Then the writer speaks of the infant FORTNIGHTLY. The new journal has been established on a firmer basis. Committees have considered difficulties, and the promoters come before the students with a paper properly constituted, having a strong business directorate and an editorial board. Each Faculty elects a business manager and an editor. Class reporters are elected by the various years of the different Faculties, whose duties are to canvass for, collect and hand

in to the Faculty editors all matters intended for publication, and also to aid the editors in the matter of contributions.

The concluding number of the same volume states that the aim has been to make of the paper a students' organ, founded by students, subscribed to by the men of McGill, and contributed to by the undergraduates of the various Faculties and affiliated branches of the University.

This constitution and aim are those in existence to-day. From each of the Four Years (or Three Years, as the case may be), of Arts, Medicine, Comparative Medicine, Science, Law, come -- or are expected to come—every fortnight some items of information.

Further, every society in the University seems to have its elected reporter, who also contributes his minutes to the FORTNIGHTLY. At its best then the College paper must be, with this constitution, to a large extent a hotch-potch.

When all these ingredients have been allotted their space and the editorial notices written, which do try to treat of subjects that students are concerned with, there is little of the FORTNIGHTLY's sixteen or twenty pages left for the insertion of matter of a purely literary character. The FORTNIGHTLY may be even credited with a fine instinct here. It sees, if some learned people do not, the incongruity of printing on one page—say: Reflections on the Metaphysical Views of the Fourteenth Century, and on the opposite page the remark that as Mr. Tom Smith was proceeding to class he tumbled down the last two steps of the staircase, but received no injury.

The FORTNIGHTLY then, as it is constructed, is rather a chronicle than a paper capable of assuming any decided literary tone.

Its strength is that it is a common meeting-place for all the Faculties, and further that each year of each Faculty may voice itself there, however feebly; they are under the protective system, as it were.

Its weakness is, that having its matter thus graded out, an amount of it must often be the poorest padding. A Year will expect their elected reporter to represent their worth in the Uni-