

committees it disburses about three thousand dollars annually, we no longer wonder that so much of the time is given up to business. Further, the amount of business to be transacted, may be expected to steadily increase as Queen's advances, but as yet there is ample time in the meetings for short general entertainments, debates, and other things of a similar character, all of which have been tried in the past, and proved very successful. In this way recreation and permanent intellectual and social benefit can be combined more completely than in the past. If, however, the Alma Mater, as it is at present situated, went still further and attempted to discuss the weightier problems of philosophy, theology, political economy and science, such a course would prove suicidal to the best interests of the society.

But it does not follow that these subjects must lie untouched, simply because they cannot be conveniently discussed in the A. M. S. The independent study and free discussion of living questions would be of incalculable benefit to the more advanced men, and it is a standing reproach to Queen's that such a practice has not been carried on in the past. But now that our graduates are coming back in large numbers to pursue post-graduate courses it would be doubly injudicious to postpone the work. As soon as possible, therefore, a literary and scientific society should be formed, having as its object the discussion of all the great problems of the day. It should have meetings at regular intervals, and at each session a paper could be read on some subject previously agreed upon, after which the question would be open for discussion, and each member would have a chance to give his ideas on the subject or ask for any information.

We might further suggest that the society be made exclusive to the extent of admitting as members only men who are sufficiently far advanced to profit by such discussions, and who are willing to take their share of the work. There is a broad field for the action of this society, and if it is only given a fair start we have no hesitation in predicting for it a useful and prosperous future.

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This idea of a high grade literary club suggests an inquiry into the obstacles in the way of its organization, and we wish to emphasize particularly what we conceive to be one of the chief of these, the lack of general reading. Queen's, more than any other institution we know, encourages and insists upon independent thought on the part of the students, and the man who makes himself simply a receptacle for lectures and who does not think for himself, has not caught the true spirit of the university. Too often, however, this thinking is confined entirely to the special work of the class room, and is not carried

into the general sphere of literary and scientific culture. Prof. Cappon has repeatedly emphasized the necessity of his honour students familiarizing themselves as much as possible with the whole range of English literature, and yet the average honour man in English is sadly deficient in knowledge of the best poetry, fiction, biography and criticism, outside of the books mentioned in the calendar. The average honour classical man can translate the books required with some degree of accuracy, but if you ask him for a comparison of the ideas underlying Greek or Roman culture with those of modern culture he is beyond his depth. The average honour man in mathematics and science, with vision narrowed by too close application to rules and formulas is in constant danger of losing sight of the deeper social and theological problems of the day. The poorer philosophy student, while familiar with philosophical theories, ancient and modern, and while having a fairly adequate conception of existence and duty, is frequently set in a harsh mould because his finer feelings have been unstirred by literary and aesthetic studies. These are serious defects in the equipment of any man, and that they exist is only too obvious. They can be remedied and one-sidedness avoided by a rigid and systematic course of general reading. This would be greatly stimulated by the formation of the society suggested, but if we are not mistaken, the amount of general reading on the part of the students must be greatly increased before such a society could be placed on a solid footing.

We do not wish to detract attention from the special work that brings the student to college, but to point out that one of the highest functions of a college course is to develop broad-minded and cultured men. That coward's cry of "no time" has no point here, because every student in laying out his work should calculate on so much time for general reading, the nature of that reading being largely determined by the special course he is pursuing. The social, musical and physical culture of the students is receiving a moderate share of attention, but the deeper problems that are stirring the world in science, literature, economics, theology and philosophy are practically untouched by the student except in so far as he devotes himself to one of these departments in his special course.

In view of the vast fields of thought open to us to-day and the innumerable contributions to them every year, we must strike one note of warning. Do not imagine that this object can be effected by a superficial perusal of a number of books. Infinitely better is it to digest thoroughly the ideas in one book and think out for ourselves the problems discussed therein, than to carry away a mere smattering and a feeble impression of the contents of fifty books. The selection of reading material from the