

# The Varsity

TORONTO, January 27th, 1897.

Published weekly by the Students of the University of Toronto.  
Annual subscription \$1. For Advertising Rates apply  
to the Business Manager. Address all communications for publication to the Editor-in-Chief, University College.

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## Varsity of Old.

**W**E WOULD direct attention to a new feature of our journal appearing in another column. It is the first of a series of articles dealing with the college reminiscences of some of our more prominent graduates. The idea, we feel sure, will meet with wide-spread approval; but we would caution our readers against expecting too much from it. On account of the short time which we have had to prepare for the undertaking, and the character of this, our weekly publication, we cannot promise anything like as comprehensive treatment of University history on its inner side as we would like. Such a work will still remain open to some future investigator, with the time and opportunities necessary for the task. All that we can pretend to do is to present, in what we know will be a highly interesting manner, a number of short sketches, which will give a fair idea of the way in which the undergraduate of twenty, thirty or forty years ago spent his academic life. We may thus, in a measure, be able to show the development of many well-known institutions now flourishing in our midst. We may, in general, see in what respects previous generations of University men have differed from those who now occupy their places, and how far the general characteristics of undergraduates have been carried over to our own time.

We believe that the undergraduate is quite thoroughly in touch with the historical spirit of the age. Time and again we have noticed the interest which he displays in everything concerning the past of the institution, to which he is bound by such lasting ties. We cannot but believe that the haunts of to-day would be made the dearer to him by knowing to whom they have been familiar in the past. What an added charm would come to every room in residence if we but knew its former occupants or could be

given some idea of the scenes which it witnessed when those who have long since gone out to assume the responsibilities of a wider field of existence were experiencing the same delights of college life that we are now! Would not the enjoyment of the privileges of the time-honored "Lit." be intensified by any information as to the men who were its shining lights, its constitutional lawyers, its aspirants for office, its eloquent debaters, in days gone by. If one should proceed systematically to gain such knowledge of our past as this, the construction of an inner University history of great merits, we believe, would be quite possible. Not only would it make as interesting a literary production as the University man could well wish, but we believe that it would do more to foster an *esprit de corps* among us than many college dinners, with their fervid after-dinner speeches, fine institutions though they be. It would do more than any forced revival of old customs, more than all the exhortations which this or any other paper might inflict on their long suffering readers. The enterprise is certainly worthy of consideration. That which we inaugurate to-day is an experiment, which, we hope, will at least show what a rich field for the college historian our past affords.

A perusal of the list of graduates in the early days of the University, brings home the fact that we are fast becoming quite a venerable institution. Of the classes from 1845 to 1855, less than one third of the members are now living. In some, one or two remain out of twelve or thirteen. Bearing these facts in mind, one can easily see that the task of gaining information about these years, is not one of the easiest. It was our intention to have had a member of the first graduating class, that of 1845, write the opening article of our series, but ill health and advancing years, has forced him to disappoint us. That which we publish to-day, is an interesting interview with one of the most distinguished of our *alumni*, the Hon. J. D. Armour, Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, a graduate of 1850, and, in his time, a gold medallist in classics. We regret that we are forced to give his reminiscences in the shape of an interview. An article, such as this, can never be of the same interest to the reader, as it would be if told in the words of the person who has passed through the experiences related, himself. But we trust that, in the future, we may be able to present the various numbers in the series, over the signatures of the graduates themselves.

However, if we are able to conduct the series throughout, in a successful manner at all, we think that a great deal will be done to keep alive the traditions of old Varsity.

## LETTERS.

*To the Editor of Varsity:*

DEAR SIR,—For some years past it has been a common wonder and complaint among the students of this University that there was no dramatic society in connection with our work here. All the other branches of instruction and amusement find a place in our midst. To those who are musically inclined, the Glee Club and the Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar Clubs give every opportunity to indulge their taste. For those who are endowed with a love of literature, the Literary Society and the different

We have been in business JUST FOUR MONTHS in Toronto, and it has come to this:—Ask any student where