

VARSITY

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THE VARSITY.

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Topics of the Hour.

A great deal of attention is being paid at present in educational journals and in our high and public schools, to the criticism and "correction" of English sentences, either quoted from authors or manufactured for the purpose. The purists and the pedants affirm that this a very important branch of education, and one to which much time should be devoted. And so our schools are flooded with books on "Errors in English," and "Exercises in False Syntax," just as if our forms of expression had been absolutely settled for all time by the rules of grammarians, or the usages of any or all writers. It is not so. For a language is a living thing—an organism, and, like other organisms, it lives and grows, and can only

live and grow by changing. A single entire generation of purists (from which may every country be preserved!) would kill any language. What a miserable substitute for genuine language study is this petty quibbling criticism! If our schools, aye, and colleges too, could only succeed in arousing our youth to an enthusiastic interest in good literature, these and other trivial matters might be very profitably given over to the purists.

We have protested more than once against the too common tendency of Canadians to refuse recognition of native art talent, and to rush off to Buffalo or Boston or New York for artistes in our musical entertainments. And now the news comes to us from Edinburgh that a young Torontonion has carried the city by storm with her wonderful powers as a vocalist. But while Miss Arthurs and Albani and Miss Thompson are good enough for Milan and Paris and Edinburgh, we venture to say they would not have been good enough for Toronto without their foreign reputation. This should not be. Let us assert ourselves. How much longer are we to go in the leading strings of Europe and the United States? Since we have the ability to walk alone we should also have the courage. This neglect and this belittling of ourselves is weak and foolish. It is our estimate of ourselves that keeps us in insignificance among the nations of the earth. Like Dogberry, we write ourselves down asses and all the world takes us at our own valuation. The name "colonial" is odious to us, but we deserve it. And we shall continue to deserve it until we develop more individuality and independence of judgment than we have hitherto shown.

The ninth Monday Popular Concert took place in the Pavilion on the evening of the 22nd instant. The audience was large and appreciative. The solo vocalist was Miss Juliette Corden, Col. Henry Mapleson's *prima donna* for the forthcoming London season. Miss Corden is possessed of natural gifts which ensure for her a bright future. She has a pretty face and figure, an excellently trained and powerful, though very sweet voice. She sang "Ernani, involami" (Verdi), two ballads by Bischoff—"Marguerite," and "Supposing,"—besides encores after each number. Miss Corden is one of the best singers who have appeared at these concerts, and we hope to hear her again in Toronto. The Quartette Club played their numbers in excellent style. Their selections included—Mozart's Quartette in C Major, No. 6; and two movements from Haydn's Quartette in C Major, No. 3. Herr Jacobsen contributed two violin solos—Rode's "Air in G," and the "Minuetto and Trio," from Mozart's "Divertimento," No. 1. Herr Jacobsen played with his usual taste and skill. The directors announce that at their concert on the 28th of March the following artists will appear: Lilli Lehmann, soprano; Ovide Musin, violinist, and Franz Rummei, pianist. They very justly claim that the attraction thus offered is one of the strongest that has been announced in Toronto for many a year. All three artists stand among the first in their profession.