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MCGILL UNIVERSITY GAZETTE.

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PRIERE.

(Song. Translated from the French.)

Ah, if you knew how I deplore
My solitude continually,
Sometimes before my cottage door
You would pass by.

If you but knew the joy I took
In meeting but your fleeting glance,
Up to my window you would look
As 'twere by chance.

If you but knew what comfort sweet
My heart has known when near you stood,
You could not hesitate to meet—
No sister would.

If you but knew what I could tell—
My love, and if you knew the how,
I almost think perhaps—that—well—
You'd enter now.

GOWAN LEA.

Editorials.

It is not often that we refer in these columns to matters of a political nature, since such must as a rule be considered to be without our province. Still it cannot be supposed that a large body of intelligent men such as a University draws together are entirely without fixed opinions upon questions of public interest, only we must be ever cautious to avoid discussing in a paper like this distinct party questions, since such discussions are apt to arouse an *odium politicum* almost as intense as the bitterest *odium theologicum*. And yet there are subjects of a general nature pertaining to political science which are as important to be known as many of the facts the teaching of which is received with general approbation. Many of these are at the same time abstract and highly practical, and especially necessary to be understood in a democratic country like this. No University ought, in our opinion, to be without a chair of Political Science, and we look forward anxiously to the day when our own College will be in a position to add a course in this subject to the curriculum. The ignorance, which very generally prevails in this department of science, may largely be traced to the idea that a knowledge of politics comes intuitively, without study and without effort. No more mistaken notion was ever entertained. Of course, by a perusal of the daily press ordinary political events may be understood and intelligently judged by most people with the aid of a little common sense, but when any question arises

depending largely for its solution upon general principles the great majority find themselves completely adrift. Now, who can be expected to understand the great political questions of the day if not those who come from our Universities, where they are supposed to have been afforded the highest education which the country has the means of bestowing? And yet we have heard the opinion expressed that men while at a University should altogether refrain from meddling in political matters. Such is certainly not the opinion entertained in England, nor does it seem to us a very sensible one. It is rather absurd to suppose that men, who, during their college life, refrained altogether from enquiring into political matters, can, upon emerging into everyday life, suddenly acquire a sound knowledge of the subject such as they will undoubtedly be expected to possess. To put off commencing to study politics until that time of life at which most men think of relaxing their studies is certainly an unjustifiable infraction of the old command not to put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day. In our University, education in this department is almost entirely left to be given by our literary societies, and if it were for no other reason they ought on this account to be strenuously supported.

The subject upon which we more especially wish to dwell at present is the duty which every citizen owes to himself and to his country to take a fair interest in political and public affairs generally. In this Province no public duty, perhaps, has been more glaringly neglected, and the consequences are becoming more and more apparent every day. We see men going into public life who ought more properly to be going to prison, we see good men indifferent or disgusted, and we see the Government a sink of corruption. This state of affairs is largely due to the indifference long manifested by men of high character and intelligence to affairs of public interest. It is often annoying to us when we hear of indignant protests against those who wish to restrict the franchise in a slight degree to think of the thousands and thousands who possess the right to vote and will not make use of it. They clamour and hurl denunciations at those who oppose them, and at last, when they get what they want, are tired of their possession. This is one of the great causes of the failure of democratic government in the United States. The fact is that the people require an immense deal of educating in this matter, and perhaps those require it most of all who go by the name of the respectable classes. In College we meet with many men who will not take the trouble to interest themselves in anything, but who tolerate everything. These men who merely tolerate are unmitigated nuisances. So in general life, there are respectable men and educated men who won't deign to interest themselves in the election of an alderman or a member of parliament. They don't want to mix themselves up in these kind of things, or perhaps it would cost their lackadaisical majesties too great an expenditure of energy. Others again are too busy, the mammon of unrighteousness occupies all their spare thoughts and moments. Such people forget, or perhaps they never comprehended, that a public responsibility lies upon them and that it is their duty to take part in public life. Of