

THE tone of Mr. Duncan's letter in another column makes it quite evident that he entirely misapprehends the functions of the editors of the VARSITY, and their attitude towards the University public. The fault is not ours. We stated our position with sufficient clearness in our first issue. Yet to prevent similar misapprehension in the future, we will again briefly outline the policy of the VARSITY. This journal is maintained simply as an organ for the free expression of University thought and opinion. The editors do not claim infallibility. They make no pretensions to oracular utterances. They invite discussion and criticism. Editorials no less than contributions or communications must stand or fall on their own merits. We do not wish to force upon any one our opinions on scholarships or on any other question. We simply state our views as simply and forcibly as we may, and they must then go for what they are worth. If any one has different opinions we ask him to state them, and we throw open our columns to him for that purpose. By this means truth may be reached. At all events the public is in a position to judge between different views of important questions. Since Mr. Duncan differs from us concerning scholarships, we willingly give him the opportunity of stating his reasons for doing so. If he has thrown more light on the question we should be grateful; if he has not we cannot help it. On this point and on others we are content to let his letter speak for itself.

THE authorities of King's College, Windsor, N.S., have done themselves credit by the appointment of Charles G. D. Roberts M.A., to the chair of English Literature in that institution. We hasten, therefore, to extend our hearty congratulations to King's College on its good fortune, and to Professor Roberts, on his appointment to the honorable position for which he is eminently qualified. What especially pleases us is the fact that the authorities of this Canadian College have appointed a Canadian to fill one of the most important positions on their professorial staff. Charles George Douglas Roberts was born in January, 1860, and is consequently but 25 years old. After a preparatory course at Fredericton Collegiate School he entered the University of New Brunswick, and after a most successful course graduated with high honors. After filling various positions in the educational institutions of his own Province, Mr. Roberts was selected, in 1883, to fill the responsible position of editor of *The Week*, of this city. After six months' experience Mr. Roberts resigned, owing, it is said, to political and other differences with Mr. Goldwin Smith. Mr. Roberts has been a contributor to the *Century*, *Manhattan*, *Current*, *Longman's Outing*, *The Week*, and other English and American periodicals. In 1879 he published a volume of poetry, "Orion and Other Poems," which has been most favorably commented on by the press, and elicited, we are told, a most complimentary remark from Matthew Arnold. In Boston literary circles Mr. Roberts has been spoken of as the "American Keats," and his position is well assured amongst the younger poets of America. Mr. Roberts' tastes incline to the classics and classical subjects, and one of his latest poems is entitled "Out of Pompeii," published a week or two ago in *Man*. We regret that space will not permit of a review of Mr. Roberts' writings, but we may refer to them again at greater length. In the meantime we rejoice to know that King's College, in honoring a Canadian, has reflected nothing but honor upon herself, and that in the Maritime Provinces they have given an emphatic denial to the statement "that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country."

### Leading Article.

#### UNIVERSITY MEN AND POLITICS.

IT has been well said that the two things which, above all others, are worthy of a man's serious consideration are religion and poli-

tics. For the end of politics, in the true and comprehensive meaning of the term, is nothing less than the welfare of the members of the State—protection of life and person, material prosperity, mental and moral well-being. "Man," Aristotle says, "is born to be a citizen of the State." As a member of the State he is under an obligation to co-operate in securing its highest good. He who strives to discharge his duties faithfully, and to advance the best interests of the State, is a good citizen; he who performs his part amiss, or who neglects to perform his part at all, is a useless citizen and an injury to the State.

No citizen, then, can be justified in leaving politics alone. And yet there is at the present time a large class of persons who seem to regard it as an especial virtue in themselves that they are ignorant of public affairs and take no interest whatsoever in them. It is to be regretted that in this class many University men are to be found. This is not as it should be. A University training should fit a man not merely for the professional life, but for "the life beyond the profession, the citizen life." Our University men should be the best citizens and the leaders of political thought. They, above all others, may well be expected to have wide scope of vision, to be above prejudice, to have the faculty of discriminating between good and evil, to be independent in thought and action, and progressive. It was Plato who taught that "until kings are ill." And by philosophers he meant those who can apprehend ideas—the intellectual.

Why is it, then, that so large a number of our leading graduates hold aloof from politics? Is it that they are wholly indifferent to the affairs of their country? Is not the reason to be found rather in the existence of our present system of party government?

It is not wise, perhaps, to condemn party in a wholesale manner. An organization may be most necessary and useful to secure a political end, to carry principles into effect. From this point of view Burke, in his philosophic manner, defended party:—

"Party is a body united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle on which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive that any one believes in his own policies or thinks them to be of any weight who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. . . . Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things, and by no means for private considerations to accept any offices of power in which the whole body is not included, nor to suffer themselves to be led or to be controlled, or to be overbalanced in office or in council by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connection must stand."

But when men are held together by prejudice and interest alone, having nothing more noble in view than the securing of the spoils, we have not a legitimate use of party, but that faction warfare which is the curse of the present day. In England, perhaps, the great political parties are divided on certain important questions, such as the abolition of the House of Lords and Disestablishment. But in Canada the appellations Reform and Conservative as applied to our parties have no meaning. The two parties, divided by tradition and interest and not by principles, opposed to each other on no question of importance, are struggling, the one to hold, the other to obtain office. The chief end of the party is to secure the spoils. The caucus rules and the individual is merged in the party. If there are good men in both the political parties the truth in regard to them is that they are good in spite of party. It is not surprising, therefore, that men of principle and independence, unable conscientiously to attach themselves to either party, are tempted to leave politics alone and to allow unscrupulous partisans and wire-pullers to have their own sweet will in the management of our public affairs.

But the independent citizen cannot find in this unwholesome state of things any justification for his neglect of politics. It is his plain duty to be regardful of the interests of his country and to protest