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EDITORIAL COMMENTS.

THE FOUNDER'S FESTIVAL.

Some time last year there appeared in the FORTNIGHTLY an interesting article on the history of music in McGill, in which reference was made to a festival that used to be held annually by the graduates and undergraduates, in commemoration of the birth of the illustrious founder of the University, Hon. James McGill, and which accordingly had been known as the "Founder's Festival." It is not at all surprising that, to most of the students at present attending lectures in the University, this festival is quite unknown even in name, for, though the Founder's Festival used at one time to be the great social event of the college year, the custom of holding it was abandoned several years ago, and so we of the present college generation know little or nothing of the pleasure and profit this event afforded.

The Founder's Festival was instituted, as far as we can learn, about the year 1860. For several years following the date of its institution the festival was celebrated annually, and during this time became a very important function in (McGill) college life. After the year 1872, interest in the festival flagged, and it was not held again until 1880, when a determined effort was

made to revive the custom. Though in that year a very successful celebration was held, the example, unfortunately, was not followed in succeeding years, and thus the festival came to be forgotten.

For a better understanding of the nature of the Founder's Festival, a brief account of the arrangements and programme is necessary.

All the arrangements were in the hands of a committee composed of graduates and undergraduates, who usually spared neither pains nor expense in their endeavors to make the festival a grand success. And they always succeeded. Preparations began weeks before the date of the celebration. The decorations were a very important feature, and cost a great deal of time and trouble. The Molson Hall, the corridors, and the class-rooms were adorned with festoons of flowers and evergreens, pots and vases of flowers, large shields emblazoned with the coats-of-arms of sister universities, flags, etc.; while frequently the whole avenue and the front of the college building was illuminated with Chinese lanterns. Sometimes a powerful lime-light placed above the main entrance threw its radiant beams far down the avenue. We are now so accustomed to the electric light that we would hardly appreciate this means of illumination as it, doubtless, was then appreciated.

The same care was taken to have the music of the best quality possible. The students were carefully drilled in singing, so that their ever-charming songs were rendered with even more skill and grace, it is said, than that which characterizes the singing of the boys in '93. The committee must have been very hard to please, for they were not satisfied with the soul-stirring strains of the students' songs, but secured the services of some of the best musicians of the city for these occasions. During this period, regiments of regulars were stationed in the city, and the soldiers rendered the committee great assistance in the music as well as in the decorating. The string-bands and the brass-bands belonging to their regiments, notably those of the 78th Highlanders and of the 25th regiment, were excellent indeed, and these discoursed sweet music throughout the evening.

The festival partook somewhat of the nature of a *conversazione*. A limited number of tickets of admission were issued at one dollar each. These were bought by graduates and students, who also had the privilege of purchasing tickets for their friends and friends of the University. The *élite* of the city, the Professors, and