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FRIENDSHIP.

When friend to friend hath spoken the farewell,
And trembled at the thought that ne'er again
Perchance they two shall meet,—the magic spell
Of sacred friendship, is it rent in twain ?

From shore to shore the waves of ocean roll,
From East to West the lonely breezes blow,
And shall not human soul commune with soul—
Is there no spiritual ebb and flow ?

GOWAN LEA.

Editorials.

Last year was the first under the new regulations touching the course of study of the two final years in Arts. It is too early yet fully to estimate the advantages derived from the change; but short as has been the trial of the new rules, it has been long enough to prove their wisdom. Now that the senior student is allowed to follow the bent of his inclination with regard to the line of study which he is to pursue, he takes a greater interest in his work and enters into it with a keener zest than when he was restricted and hampered in every direction, forced to spend the time he would gladly have devoted to congenial research in toilsome efforts to master the rudiments of a subject in every way distasteful to him. Now, instead of dividing his time and labour between a large number of subjects, gaining as a reward of his diligence only a smattering of each, he may, if an honour student, concentrate his energies upon the mastery of one branch of knowledge. But it is not our purpose to laud the new regulations; rather to plead for their extension in a more or less modified form to the first and second years. In order that at the same time the B. A. degree may not lose any of its value, the Matriculation Examination should be made a true test of a fair general education. In the first and second years the work that is done is more that of a Grammar school than of a University. This is admitted even by the upholders of the present curriculum; but they justify their position on the ground that this work is not done in the schools, and would be left untouched, were it not for the general course given in the years we speak of. On examining this argument, the question at once suggests itself: if the schools are not doing the work they should, is it the part of the Universities to step down from their plane to remedy the insufficiencies of the schools? If the educational state of the country is weak in one part, must the strength of another part be diminished in order

that the whole may be uniform, or should the weak part be strengthened? Let us, however, see if the schools are in such a bad position as they are sometimes represented to be. To begin with our own city, it is only seven years ago since the High-School course had to be shortened by one year, because the pupils of its highest class were actually doing the same work as the second year students of McGill. Even now, the pupils in the highest class do very much the same work as the first year men, and any student from that school is prepared to enter the second year, and wastes his time if he does not. Unfortunately this is not generally known; we say unfortunately, because to the well prepared student, whether he comes from the Montreal High School or any other, the first year, and in some cases the second also, affords him so much leisure that, in almost every instance, he falls into pernicious habits of careless study, or desultory reading, or both, which afterwards he finds great difficulty in ridding himself of, if he ever succeeds in doing so at all. To return, it is evident from what has been said, that the objection to the schools does not apply to this one; and, as competing city schools must keep their standard equal to that of the High School, it is clear that the Montreal schools, at any rate, are or can easily be placed in a position to prepare students for a purely University course, and it must be borne in mind that twenty-five per cent. of the students in the Arts faculty come from Montreal schools. Twenty-five per cent. more come from the Province of Ontario, and it will certainly not be urged that the higher grade schools of that province are not in a position to sufficiently prepare students for a University course. But let us take an example. The Hamilton Collegiate Institute presents every year a number of candidates to compete in the Associate in Arts examination of this University, an examination which is much more than equivalent to the matriculation, and yet these candidates are not from the highest, but from the second class of that Institute. Again, eight per cent. of the students come from the Maritime Provinces, and we would be wronging them, did we not acknowledge that these students are perhaps better prepared than any who come to this college. They frequently enter the second year, and almost invariably take a high place. It appears, then, from the above showing, that fifty-eight per cent. of the students either come to McGill prepared to begin at once a University course, or have within their reach the means of so preparing themselves. We now come to the stand-by argument of the upholders of the present course of study. Forty-two per cent. of the students come from the rural districts of this province, and it is alleged that the schools in these districts are in no condition, and there appears no immediate probability of their being raised to a condition, to fully prepare students for a University course. Now, while taking exception to the sweeping nature of this charge, we are not prepared to deny, nor does our argument require it, that the present condition of some of our country schools is not such as it ought to be, or such as we could wish it to be. But we question whether it is not possible to remedy this state of affairs