

THE VARSITY.

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TORONTO, OCTOBER 28th, 1903

OF TEN of late we have felt constrained to ask whether our Literary Societies are fulfilling the primary purposes of their existence. The chief purposes, we may assume, are, becoming thoroughly acquainted with the ordinary conduct of business, the cultivation of the art of public speaking, and the practical discussion of prominent issues in the University. Business is conducted according to Bourinot generally. How far the several societies fulfill the other aims is open to question. As a rule there is little free, spontaneous discussion. Aside from a few set speeches on chosen subjects in the Inter-year debating series, few speeches are seriously attempted. For the most part the others lack force and conviction. The reason, we believe, is largely owing to the fact that discussion is limited to subjects which are old, historical, stereotyped, or those in which we are not peculiarly interested.

Why should we not discuss up-to-date and vital issues? Would it not be more advantageous than constantly debating rules of order and matters of petty concern? Why not discuss Purity in Politics, Preferential Trade, Imperial Federation, the Boundary Question? These are but a few of many which might be suggested.

In the past we have been wont to say that such subjects, being more or less political, cannot be fairly debated. That depends entirely upon ourselves. It will be determined by, and will also determine, our size. The man who cannot discuss any question, however burning, solely upon its merits, certainly lacks that breadth of thought which one naturally considers incidental to a University training.

Again, the discussion of broader subjects should enlarge us—our ideas, our vision, our knowledge. Break down the barrier which prevents our freely discussing questions of vital importance, and it will surely add energy, spontaneity and aim to our addresses, increase the interest and enhance the benefit to be derived from the societies.

THE most prominent of our graduates during the past week has been Mr. A. B. Aylesworth. On the death of Chief Justice Armour and on short notice, he accepted a most responsible position in the Alaskan Boundary Commission. In this work he acquitted himself in such a manner as to win universal encomiums from the press. Then his firm refusal to sign an award which he deemed wholly unjust and unfair has made him famous indeed. Aside from the merits of the case as presented and the regret that we feel at the issue, we consider that Mr. Aylesworth has shown himself not only an able lawyer, but one who has firm convictions, and is willing to stand by them in the face of all precedents. He will be called upon to stand much adverse criticism, but the consciousness of duty done will amply reward him. We are glad to notice that the city authorities are considering the question of a civic reception to him. We hope that at the earliest opportunity the University of Toronto will fittingly honor this distinguished son.

WHATEVER doubt may have existed in the minds of our readers as to the comparative merits of the Varsity and Argonaut Rugby teams and the prospective possession of the cup this winter, was surely set aside on Saturday. Mr. Harold Beatty deserves great credit for his individual work and the good generalship he displayed in so successfully marshalling his men. With such a lead we have every reason to assume that we shall retain the cup.

EXCHANGES

THE JOYS OF FUSSING.

Last evening dark,
Down in the park,
Sat a man and co-ed—hist!
Just for a lark
He starts to spark
And soon the girl is kissed.
“Oh, no!” she cries,
With coy surprise,
“That isn’t nice, you know,
Especially here,
With others near,”
And then, “I think we’d better go”
(somewhere else where there aren’t so many confounded
rubber-necks.)—*Ex.*

BUSINESS-LIKE.

I took a trip to town the other day
To meet a friend I knew would soon arrive,
I met another while upon the way
Who asked me if I’d kindly lend him five.
“Lend five?” said I, “why, I have only two,
And if I gave you those where would I be?”
Then answered he: “The best thing you can do
Is give me what you have and owe me three.”
—*Notre Dame Scholasite.*