

ings of the coming session of the Legislature very narrowly. That body is very apt to distribute its favors with little consideration for anything else than an increase of local popularity and an assurance of a second term. In such cases as the present, the interests of University College, and, indeed, of higher education generally, will stand small chance of being carefully considered in the scramble to pay back election pledges and to satisfy the claims of party wire-pullers.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

The Editors are not responsible for the opinions of correspondents.  
No notice will be taken of unsigned contributions.

## THE LIBRARY.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—The occasion of the conversazione has called to my mind very forcibly, as it has doubtless to the minds of others, the fact that we undergraduates are deprived of a very important privilege. I refer to the regulations which forbid us to enter the sacred enclosure of the Library.

If there is one place which delights the heart of the average undergraduate more than another on the night of a conversazione, that place is the Library. The reason for this is not far to seek. He looks to this occasion as a sort of anniversary. If he is alone, it is only his blameless courtesy which prevents him from occupying a place there to the exclusion of his guests. If he is in the company of his friends, he takes special pride in showing them the beautiful volumes which the librarian on this occasion is accustomed to draw from their dusty shelves for an annual outing. In their admiration of the external appearances, our guests will naturally picture to themselves the pleasure their entertainers enjoy, always surrounded by such delightful books. It would surprise them greatly to know that there is at least one creature of the dog species which enjoys a privilege denied to the whole undergraduate body!

For what reason we are denied the privilege of entering the Library, I am at a loss to know. I can only conjecture. It may have been that the thoughtless act of some student in the past in picking up a book from the wicket shelf and forgetting to return it, has confirmed the authorities in the present regulations. In all probability something like the above has occurred. For what other reason indeed, is it that the librarian now invariably shuts the window when he is obliged to turn his back? Or something like the following may have occurred—which affords a plausible argument in favor of closing the Library. In ages past, some wretched student, heart-broken, and almost demented by the despot restrictions imposed upon him, after many futile attempts, has at last succeeded (through the most reprehensible stupidity of an assistant in opposition to the most explicit commands) in obtaining an interesting edition of some author much in demand. Beside himself with joy at this unexpected good fortune, he disappeared, and has not been heard of to this day.

It is likely that undergraduates will never be allowed in the Library until several books which may have thus disappeared are replaced. I would, therefore, propose that a subscription list be passed round for funds to recoup the losses suffered. By doing this, we may gain the good will of the authorities, and so induce them to treat with us.

We might be allowed in the Library by the payment of a fee. In case the loss or destruction of a book cannot be placed, the cost might be levied on the fees of all. This fee, I am sure, would be more ungrudgingly paid than the one which is now exacted.

In asking for this privilege, I think I am not unreasonable in my demand. Osgoode Hall students enjoy the right of entering their Library. The Johns Hopkins University gives her students an almost unrestricted freedom in a Library far more valuable than our own. The same can be said of other American Colleges.

No one can doubt the advantages that may be derived from having the freedom of a large Library such as our own, while every one has experienced the many inconveniences and annoyances to which we are at present subjected.

STUDENT.

## THE "DR. WILSON MEDAL."

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—The first paragraph of Mr. Young's communication in last week's number would lead one to suppose that he is qualifying for the position of writer of leaders for some Texas or Colorado journal. With his present vocabulary, a belt and revolvers, and testimonials from those who have read that letter, which will be willingly given, his outfit for the position will be complete.

For the benefit of readers of THE VARSITY who are not conversant with the opinion of the undergraduates in Modern Languages, with regard to the system on which the medal is to be given, I may state, that so far as I have been able to find out after considerable enquiry, Mr. Young is the only one who favors it. He has, therefore, evidently adopted the Theory of Numbers formulated by that distinguished Englishman, who holds that the minority is more frequently in the right than the majority. But he, no doubt, goes further, and will be ready to maintain that the smaller the minority the greater the probability that it is correct; and when it is reduced to one, it becomes infallible—it being necessary, of course, that that one should be Mr. Young himself.

Let us examine, then, the proofs of his infallibility.

In the first place, he says as there is an option between Italian and Spanish, it would not be fair to take either of these into consideration in awarding the medal. I grant that this could not be done in the way in which it is to be given, and this just serves to show its fallacy and the validity of my contention, which was, that it should be given on the result of a competition on all the work which is made compulsory by the curriculum, if it is to be called by its present name.

If it were given in this way, the same value could be assigned to each of these two languages, and it would not matter which of them a candidate should choose. My objection was not that a candidate was not required to write Italian or Spanish prose, but that he was not required to have a knowledge of these along with English, French, German and Ethnology in their full extent, as taught in University College.

Mr. Young bewails the tendency in some of the American Colleges to emphasize the study of philology. He highly commends a College which tries to develop essay writing alone. I take neither of these extremes. I would develop both, and the University Senate requires a knowledge of both. The influence of the medal, therefore, is as much to be bewailed as that of the American Colleges.

He says, "The work for the medal lies along the line of the curriculum." So would it lie along the line of the curriculum if the subject of the theses were the Neanderthal skull. The difficulty is, that it only requires a knowledge of about one quarter of the work on the curriculum in these subjects, and permits, nay, encourages, entire ignorance of the other two, which are compulsory for students in Modern Languages.

He seems to have a poor opinion of those who won medals under the old system, and thinks the University examination a poor test.

Can he name one medallist in Modern Languages within the circle of his acquaintance, who, in the opinion of his fellows, was not superior to them, not only in the work specified for the examination, but in acquaintance with *belles-lettres* in general, and who won his first class honors by his "ignorance, his narrowness, and the dishonest and dishonorable means he employed"? He cannot; yet he presumes to assert that there are such.

I characterized the scheme as an injustice in my former letter. I still think that is the proper word. It is unjust, not only to the winners, but to those who lose. Two out of the three gentlemen who proposed it have admitted that the medal is not called by its right name,—that its name does not properly indicate that for which it will be won. This defrauds the losers, and allows the winner to arrogate to himself honor which he does not deserve. The medal is not given for proficiency in Modern Languages. Injustice, therefore, is a mild word.

He closes with a suggestion that the time for receiving theses be extended till September.

He admires a system which reduces the work required to so small an amount as to make it a farce; he also wants to remove competitors out of his way.

He himself lives in Toronto, and has the advantages of three large libraries. He expects time will hang heavy on his hands from May till September. He should remember that there are those among his fellows who live outside of Toronto, and have not the advantage of any library at all, and who, immediately after the examination, will be engaged in other work which will occupy their time to its full extent.

Would not one think that such a suggestion was whispered by Mephistopheles into the ears of babes and sucklings? Mr. Young suggests, in effect, that the medal be given to Mr. Young. Here is an opportunity for the philanthropy of Toronto to display itself by offering a medal to him for something in which he undoubtedly surpasses his fellows. I suggest that presumption be made the test.

Would not one swear with Mr. Dennis that this came from some "superannuated sinner," some wolf in sheep's attire, some one who would have the advantage of honor with very little of its pains, and not from my estimable friend, Mr. Young.

He should know that he has not the diplomatic skill of Satan; nor have his fellows and the members of the College Council the inexperience of Eve before her fall.

Let him rest assured that his suggestion will fall on the ears of the members of the Council like the seed of foul weeds upon an unreceptive soil.

T. LOGIE.