

# THE VARSITY

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## Editorial Comments.



WE of us realize that in our very midst a new and rival university has been established. But such is the case. The much-talked of McMaster University, comprising an Arts College, Toronto Baptist College, Moulton Ladies' College, and Woodstock College, is now an accomplished fact. Lectures are now being given in McMaster Hall to some sixteen students of the First Year of the Arts department.

Some are inclined to sneer at the efforts of the Baptist denomination to establish a university in opposition to the provincial institution. We are not of that number. We should be sorry to confess that our *alma mater* had failed to give us that broad liberality which should teach us not to view honest efforts for what is good after such a small-minded fashion. We do not anticipate that McMaster University will ever equal the University of Toronto in the extent of its courses, the number of its students or the excellence of its staff. Yet in a smaller sphere McMaster may, and doubtless will, do substantial and faithful work perchance in some lines in a better manner than Toronto. Of one thing we are sure, and that is that the establishment of McMaster cannot but exert a stimulating and beneficial effect on our university. Problems in education that we can not solve, or rather have not, may be cleared up by thoughtful men who perhaps look at them in a different light from us. Our methods of instruction and our curriculum are not necessarily perfect. Every day we see deficiencies therein and if others can not only see them but also suggest and avail themselves of remedies Toronto will accept and be grateful.

To us who are students of a provincial and therefore an undenominational university, such universities as McMaster, Queens and Victoria, appear to be at a disadvantage. But there are advantages which institutions not under the management of the State have been shown to possess. Generally speaking they are the recipients of greater and more frequent gifts of money than are the State universities. How much in the way of endowment has Toronto received from private individuals? While McMaster begins its career with the magnificent gift of \$800,000 from its generous founder, our university, in what might be termed a maimed and crippled condition, is denied a much smaller sum from a city that reaps the greatest benefit from the location of the State university within its limits. In comparison with McMaster our university is rich, but will it continue to be so? The experience of the great American colleges tends to show the contrary.

McMaster has already paid its tribute to our *alma mater* in the selection of professors. Professors McKay,

Trotter, Campbell, Clarke and McKenzie are the graduates of Toronto on the staff of Toronto. While loyal to the work they are undertaking, we have no fear that their loyalty to the school where they received that which makes them worthy of their present position will ever flag. In the councils of McMaster they will prove themselves worthy sons of Toronto.

Mr. Chant's letter in another column brings to our notice a phase of the medal question to which our attention had been called, but to which we have hitherto been unable to refer. From that letter and from other information that we have on the subject we are constrained to conclude that it will be difficult to show that in this case full justice has been done. In our article of two weeks ago we pointed out the difficulty of just such a contingency as the one of which Mr. Chant has given us a practical illustration. Then we implied the inconsistency of the attempt to present medals with the system of alphabetical ranking in vogue; now we see plainly that the two are entirely incompatible with each other. In fact the more light this matter receives the more thoroughly are we convinced that the whole system is imperfect—we had almost used a stronger epithet—and the more fully do we feel justified in having given it the attention that we have. As to the case in point there is no doubt but that an explanation of what, from our present knowledge appears to be an injustice, is due not only to those more directly interested, but also to the whole student body. The columns of THE VARSITY are open to anyone who can and who cares to give the desired information. It is to be hoped that those whose duty it is may investigate the whole subject, in which event we doubt not but that a more perfect and consequently more satisfactory system than the present one will be established.

We will gladly welcome contributions from any of the students and will publish those of sufficient merit to find a place in the columns of THE VARSITY. The fact must be impressed that the editors are appointed not to write, but to edit the paper. Doubtless the greater portion of the news and editorial matter in each issue will be written by them, but they have the right to expect the literary department to be filled by the contributions of those not in direct connection with the paper. Much of the diffidence shown in this regard is often due to the necessity of giving one's name even to the editor, and to overcome this the announcement is made of our willingness to publish approved anonymous contributions. This does not include letters to the editor. The simple journalistic rule in the matter of communications must always be followed by those who wish to express their opinion in print. Names must, in this case, always be given, not of necessity to be published, but as a guarantee of good faith.