

Queen's University Journal.

Published by the Alma Mater Society of Queen's University in Twelve Fortnightly Numbers during the Academic Year.

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Subscriptions \$1.00 per year; single copies 15c.

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Editorials.

ELECTIONS.

SIR John A. Macdonald used to say that there were three things on which it was never safe to lay a wager,—a horse race, the verdict of a petit jury, and the result of an election. Experience in a number of Alma Mater campaigns would almost serve to convince one that in the last of his points; at least, he was not far astray. It seems impossible to predict what elements will enter into the campaign, and on what lines the affair will be fought out. At one time faculty is the watchword; at another time it is the respective merits of the candidates that tell; at another some issue comes in to complicate matters. This year the election was fought on no one of the old lines by itself, but rather on a combination of them joined to inter-faculty organization and canvass.

This latter factor showed up more this year than ever before, and is evidently bound to play a very important part in Alma Mater elections before many years. At one time it was use-

less. When the university constituency was small and every student knew every other student personally, canvass was unnecessary and could have but little weight. Now it is impossible to know everybody. With the increase in the number of students too, many have come in, and many more are bound to come in who take little real interest in the working of the Alma Mater Society. The vote of these can always be swayed by an energetic canvass. Organization on faculty lines has had its place in our elections for some years, but this fall showed the first systematic attempt at interfaculty organization, and the result came as a surprise to many. In every case where the organization was strong and the canvass thorough, the candidate was successful. In every case where the organization was weak or non-existent and the canvass half-hearted, the candidate failed.

It is unfortunate, in a way, that this factor is entering our elections. But after all it is only a symptom. The real cause of the disease lies away back in the careless uninterested students who allow their votes to be influenced; and it is not always the fault of these same students. In many cases they cannot help themselves. The freshmen, for instance, almost 25 per cent. of the whole constituency, have only been with us two months when they are called upon to exercise their franchise. They have never seen a university election before and know practically nothing about it. Naturally they take the advice of their seniors. There are others, of course, who can be influenced also, and these are the most difficult to reckon with. They are the habitually careless, the