

THE 'VARSITY:

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Editorial Notes.

The Shakesperian recitals given in Convocation Hall by Mr. Samuel Brandram were a genuine treat. The recitation of the entire play of Hamlet was an almost unprecedented feat of memory; but the correct portrayal of each of the various characters in the play showed the unmistakable genius of the performer. Mr. Brandram, despite the great unsuitability of Convocation Hall, drew large and delighted audiences to hear him. There is no necessity to bespeak for him a large attendance at his recitals in Shaftesbury Hall next week; but we very cordially wish him a pleasant and profitable engagement.

It seems to be the rule now-a-days for papers and periodicals generally to exert themselves unusually about Christmas-tide. It would never do if a high-class journal such as THE 'VARSITY were to be behind its contemporaries in attractiveness during the holiday season. Therefore, by general consent, it has been thought desirable to issue a Christmas number on or about the 25th of December. The proposed issue will probably contain 12 pages of purely literary matter—prose and verse. We might state that it will bear no resemblance to its predecessor of 1883. All the articles will be signed, and will deal with a variety of topics, not necessarily dealing with winter or Christmas, but none the less suitable for the season. We have assurances of assistance from several of those who have laid the 'VARSITY under obligations in the past, and hope to be able to give a partial table of contents in our next issue. We appeal to undergraduates especially for support. Contributions are solicited from them, and we doubt not they will respond in a liberal manner. All MS. intended for insertion in the Christmas number must be sent in on or before the 18th of that month.

Several of the County Associations of Convocation have perfected their organization for this year, and held satisfactory initiatory meetings. The last heard from is the Middlesex Association, whose members, in addition to showing an unusual interest in University matters, announce the intention of introducing this year a new means of arousing and maintaining enthusiasm among themselves, and of affording an opportunity for co-operation with the graduates of some of the other western counties of the Province. This new feature,—a dinner, to be given in January by the Middlesex graduates,—cannot fail to be productive of valuable results. Not only will it doubtless attain the immediate object sought, which is avowedly local, but it is, as well, certain to be but the first of a series of local social gatherings throughout the Province; for the practical experience of the past four years has shown little difficulty in the stirring-up of our graduates to a proper and genuine enthusiasm, and to a due sense of their privileges and responsibilities as members of Convocation. Feeling this, we have confidence in predicting for the new departure of the Middlesex Association a marked success. If the unanimity which seems to have pervaded the meeting which decided on its adoption was genuine, that success is assured.

We are assured by Mr. J. F. Thomson that it was no part of his intention to show the slightest discourtesy to the students and professors of University College in connection with the recent entertainments in Convocation Hall. The whole difficulty appears to have been due to an unfortunate misapprehension on the part of Mr. Thomson and his ushers. They state that they supposed that professors and students when they attended meetings of any kind in Convocation Hall always appeared in academical costumes. We are informed, moreover, that those students who were known personally by Mr. Thomson's as such, and also those who wore gowns, were granted the freedom of the hall. It is, however, very much to be regretted that some other plan of distinguishing professors and students from the general public was not adopted. It would have been an easy matter to have stationed someone at the door who could have recognized them, and the exceedingly disagreeable experience to which some of them were subjected on account of this neglect would have been avoided. The supposition, too, that persons not wearing gowns and yet presenting professors and students' tickets were *prima facie* not students or professors, was unwarrantable.

In view of the extreme party spirit which is now, unfortunately, so rampant in the Literary Society, it is questionable whether its members should be entrusted with the serious duty of selecting those who are to represent the society at its public meetings. It is a debatable point whether or not the General Committee should be charged with the duty of selection. It is plain that some other way of appointing the Reader, Essayist, and Speakers must be substituted for the present mode of election by ballot. One point we wish to insist on most strongly, and it is this: It is not right to place the reputation and dignity of the Literary Society in the hands of those who have never given evidence of training or ability; or who have never even taken the opportunity of showing their ability as Readers, Essayists, or Speakers at the regular meetings of the society. Now, we do not say that gentlemen who have never thus come before the society are therefore lacking in elocutionary, literary, or forensic power. Far from it. But we cannot help thinking that it is highly presumptive evidence of a want of perception on the part of the General Committee, that the aforementioned members have never been asked to assist at ordinary meetings of the society. The general point we wish to emphasize is this: That it is not desirable to entrust the literary reputation of the society to untried men. There are too many influences at work undermining the usefulness and dignity of the society. Why add another probable one?

The impression seems to prevail in some quarters that THE 'VARSITY is not independent but the organ of a particular party. A statement to this effect was industriously circulated in print a short time ago by a certain interested individual. The precious publication which contained the implication may be seen by the curious in our sanctum, where we have hung it up *in terrorem* as the wily agriculturist is wont to do with the predacious crow, devourer of the furrowed corn. Meanwhile we assure our readers that there is no truth whatever in the report. THE 'VARSITY knows no party. It is the endeavor of its managers to make it