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THE Acadia Athenæum.

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→* The Sanctum. *←

SO many kind words have come to us concerning the ATHENÆUM that we begin to feel like making some response. We are not by any means proud of everything that has appeared in these columns. Some mistakes have occurred that have made us wish we had never seen the ATHENÆUM or its ghost. Then what has been properly allowed a place on these pages could not receive that attention in composition which it ought to receive. The ATHENÆUM has received very few contributions—somewhere between one and three—so that nearly all the work has been done by the editors alone. They, like their busy fellow-students, have enough work to do without writing any for the press, and so the ATHENÆUM has to take what they can make for it at odd jobs. Yet we do not know what it is so far, to try to "fill up." Every issue has had some articles crowded out. With all our faults our subscribers seem to love us still. We thank them for their kind words and invite their friendly criticisms. We assure them that their cheers have done us no harm.

THE Theses are over, the seniors rejoice. They (not the Seniors) are the last milestone before reaching the culminating piece of literature in college—the graduating Essay. The Theses which were read this year certainly were an improvement upon our Freshman monthly Essays, brilliant and profound compositions as most of them undoubtedly were in that cosy stage of our career. We have done something if not everything. We have improved a little if we haven't attained perfection. The papers exhibited considerable thought and care. A little more time given to the art of delivery would not have detracted seriously from their merits or those of the speakers; indeed delivery is half of what we need in order to make public speaking or reading of any kind successful. It makes not the slightest difference how good your paper may be, how deep its thought, how brilliant its conception, how noble its purpose, how inspiring its sentiments; a drowsy, monotonous voice kills it for half the audience at least. A listlessness non-differentiation of thought puts a plaster upon the best paper which is only too liable to draw the life out of it. We don't affirm such faults of those who read this year, but we do say that they are quite apt to be the faults of far too many, and those not merely college youths. On the whole we have no objection to Theses, especially since they are over; they are an improvement on the Essay because they will have to undergo criticism—and we are all critical. It's a simple looking thing to get up and read a paper before a crowd of your own class-mates and college associates. Often, however, it hasn't so much of simplicity as would be suggested at first sight, particularly when you are the reader and author. No person cares to make himself ridiculous oftener than nature prescribes. In the presence of those who have been your instructors for four or five years and of the full representation of students this is certainly undesirable; so it becomes a student to write something which will relieve him of this possible prospect, and he usually does it. Encyclopædias, useful as they undoubtedly are on many occasions, are most carefully brought into requisition and independent thought resorted to—not a bad idea either for a change. We hope the Theses plan may continue. They won't hurt you gentlemen.