

THE ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT.

There can be no doubt that if a University exists for the advancement of higher education and culture, every branch of learning which tends in that direction, should as far as possible, have a place in its curriculum. The recognition of different graduating departments by the governing body of a University implies that each department represents in the main the same degree of scholarship, and seeks to provide the same amount of academic culture. Discussions as to the relative merits of different departments, while they may be interesting and instructive, are prone to be conducted on wrong lines. Enthusiasts for this and that department of polite learning appear to forget, in their zeal to score points in favour of their own special course, that education and the acquirement of culture do not inhere in any one study or series of studies, but in the manner in which the study is carried on. Education does not consist in the amount of information which one possesses upon any one subject, but in the mode of its acquirement. Moreover, it is not an end, but a continual development and progression, if one may so term it. And it matters comparatively little upon what lines this development and progression take place, so long as it is healthy, natural, and regular. Granting this, no exception upon these grounds can be taken against the establishment of a graduating department in Oriental Languages in the University of Toronto. Few will be so prejudiced as to deny that the study of the Oriental Languages can be placed under the head of liberal studies; or to object to their being placed upon a par with the Classics or the Modern Languages. Every additional facility and encouragement that can be given to the study of any useful branch of learning, marks an advance which all will welcome. But at the same time we cannot but acknowledge that the new department will benefit but a very small percentage of University students; and that this small percentage will be made up almost entirely of theological students attending the affiliated colleges. Now, this fact of itself would not necessarily be an argument against the establishment of the Oriental department. But attendant circumstances must be taken into account. In the first place University College is called upon to do work that lies within the province of the Theological Colleges. If there were a University Professoriate there would not be such ground of objection. But as we have not such a staff at present it is unfair to saddle University College with the expense of this department. Again, the Senate was repeatedly urged, and had indeed pledged itself to establish a Lectureship in Political Economy as soon as funds could be spared for that purpose. The study of Political Economy, every candid reader must admit, will attract and benefit a hundred students where Oriental Languages will gain one. And while we are very far from wishing to apply Mill's utilitarian axiom in matters of education, we cannot but feel that with inadequate resources, and with pressing wants, University College should, for the present at least, take great care to study in the establishment of new courses the greatest good of the greatest number. In the instance before us such has not been the case. There is no necessity to go into the reasons for this, but we can only urge upon the Senate most strongly, that since they have established a new department which will benefit but few, they will feel their responsibility even greater than before to create a Lectureship in Political Economy, which will be of incalculable benefit to hundreds of students who have to rely upon their own private reading for their knowledge of one of the greatest and most practical sciences of the day. We will not discuss the relative merits of Oriental Languages and Political Economy farther than to say that, in the present condition of affairs, the Senate of the University would have done greater service to the majority of students if it had established a chair in the latter subject. Of course a very obvious difficulty in the way of establishing a Lectureship in Political Economy is in finding a suitable man to fill it. There is no one in Canada whom we could name at present, whose attainments in this branch of science would entitle him to consideration. Doubtless there are such, but we are not aware of their names. But if the department were to be established, we doubt not that the Senate would find a suitable man to take charge of it. In the meantime we briefly sum up our position as follows: We do not object to the department on any ground but that of present utility and serviceability to the majority of students. We regard the science of Political Economy to be of more general interest and usefulness to the average student. We cordially wish the new department every measure of success, but very earnestly press upon the Senate the importance of making provision for official instruction in the science of Political Economy at the earliest date.

COMMUNICATIONS.

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

A STREET WANTED.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—The authorities should obtain a right of way somewhere between St. George street and the University grounds before it is too late. Vacant lots are being bought up for building purposes, and unless this is done Knox students and others living in the west end will be seriously inconvenienced at no distant date.

NOX.

THE UNDERGRADUATE DINNER.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—It seems that with the gradually sharpening coolness of autumn comes the appetite for this festival's good cheer. Or rather, that the hungry yearning for good fellowship is thus satisfied by a square meal. O, custom truly Britannic! To load, with offerings to the guardian gods of friendship, the groaning altar of your paunch.

But, after all, cannot the students do better? The two dollars apiece expended last year for one night's sociability would have gone far towards hiring rooms in the city, where friends might enjoy one another's company all year round.

SOPHOMORE.

SUBJECTS FOR DEBATE.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—I have been struck by the singular way in which the committee of the Literary Society—for I imagine, they are the guilty parties—have contrived to word all the subjects for debate which have been selected thus far. They have put the subjects in the affirmative-negative form—such, for instance, as that of the recent public debate, viz.: "That the awarding of scholarships is *not* beneficial." Now this renders the task of the affirmative a rather difficult one, since they have to bring forward arguments of a distinctly negative kind; and makes it the duty of the negative—instead of what it should properly be, one of criticism—partake of a positive and affirmative character, the only answer to which can properly be introduced in the counter-reply of the leader of the affirmative. If the Committee would take care to put the subjects for debate into a positive-affirmative form, much inconvenience would be avoided.

F. B. HODGINS.

AN OUTSIDE OPINION.

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—I was an interested spectator of the well contested match played last Saturday on the fine lawn before your university, between an undergraduate team of University College and a visiting team from one of the collegiate institutions of Ottawa. Ontario has reason to be proud that her youth, while not contemning studious pursuits, enter with emulation into the mimic warfare of the campus; for if it is imperative on the one hand that the mind be duly trained in scholastic exercises, it is not the less an absolute necessity that the body, on the other hand, be schooled in the curriculum of the gymnasium and the lawn.

That to which it was my intention to animadvert in penning this communication, was the fact that a compact—I had almost said integral—body of young men stationed itself now here and now there about the field in accordance with the progress of the game, and with a continuity of concerted vociferations made under the direction of a leader, loudly encouraged the visiting team in its strenuous efforts. I was pleased at this enthusiastic display of the sentiment of fellowship; for to a stranger like myself it seemed obvious that they were students of the Ottawa institution, urging their fellows to renewed efforts. When I gathered from the desultory conversation of several bystanders, and from the answers made to my inquiries by a courteous undergraduate, that the group which was making itself prominent by its noisy applause, was composed of the students of St. Michael's College in this city, my surprise was unbounded. This institution, I learn, is in affiliation with your University; and it seems anomalous that the disposition of its students toward the undergraduate readers of your valuable journal should be such as I conjecture them to be from what I saw last Saturday. I did not think it proper to leave your beautiful city before giving expression to my sense of the bad taste which was evinced on the occasion to which I refer, by the students of the affiliated institution.

GEORGE TEMPLE STANHOPE.

Balham, Surrey, England.