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Editorial Topics.

AS OTHERS SEE US. It may seem egotistical to speak so frequently about our College and its reputation, yet it is pardonable when it is in self-defence. For some weeks past in the Church papers, our friends and others have been treated to a number of letters on Trinity and Trinity teaching, from persons, who wisely perhaps (for themselves) withhold their names. Where those gentlemen obtained their information it is difficult to say. In fact, we are almost forced to the conclusion that they drew largely on their imagination. At any rate it is not too much to say that they have not studied our system here sufficiently to pass an unerring judgment upon it. Our good Faculty will hardly thank us perhaps for taking up the cudgels in our own behalf and theirs; and no doubt it would be as well to let such criticisms pass unnoticed. Yet, as the student body, who may be expected to know as much of our inner life as any vague outsider, we may be pardoned for contradicting statements, which, though not reflecting very badly on us—or our Faculty—still give an erroneous impression of us, and might lead to no small injury. With no wish to enter into controversy, we may say we have failed to find anything here “new-fangled” or unorthodox. With all charity towards our friends, who no doubt make their statements conscientiously, we cannot refrain from saying that if they study our curriculum and our methods for a short time they will be convinced that their previous conceptions were hardly justifiable. Further, too, we may add that Trinity is, as regards her teaching, her student body, or, if we may say it, her Faculty, by no means partizan or exclusive.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH. The changes that are from time to time made by the Education Department in the different High School curricula, are always an interesting study. For the past several years the tendency has been to raise the standard in the different departments, and increase the efficiency of the system wherever possible. We cannot but approve of every change conducive to this end, however much we may congratulate ourselves on having passed that period of our course before such regulations came into force. But

while heartily agreeing in this with the learned heads of the Department, we cannot agree so heartily with the methods used. For one thing, a course that is now very general, and probably soon to be more so, possesses doubtful superiority over one that is less general, but more thorough along its special lines. One method, among others, of specializing to advantage would be to curtail the English on the curriculum. To say that we learn too much English would no doubt raise a protest, and a just one. Yet we are in a way “taught” too much of this subject, so much so that sometimes a naturally fluent and forcible writer is, during his school days, warped and cramped into a stilted artificial style, which loses of course along with its naturalness, all its redeeming qualities. Or on the other hand the student comes to look on the study of his mother tongue with as much dislike as on the other less interesting subjects of his course. It is after all doubtful whether good English style can be artificially developed where natural talent in that direction is defective. It is true at the same time that a naturally good style can be spoiled by injurious processes of development. English should not be taught as a separate and distinct subject, but as part and parcel of all the other branches. Good English depends very largely on our knowledge of other topics. The mind must be enlarged and broadened before we can hope to attain a thorough and practical use of our mother tongue. To this end we should strive, rather than to attempt to master the art of writing good English by methods which are largely mechanical. Of course we must have adequate instruction also: we must become acquainted with the fundamental rules of our language; we must read good writers, and practise our own powers of composition. But teaching beyond this should be rather guidance than anything else, guidance not only in subjects technically classified as “English” but in all the others as well. The boy at school or the student at university should never be made to think that “English” is a “subject” of instruction, in which he must become proficient, and that outside of his English subjects he may use any style whatever. The latter will very soon spoil whatever proficiency he might otherwise attain. Here, happily, we have this principle in practice. Whatever course he is taking, the student finds English inseparably connected with it. He finds it expedient to make his course a means of attaining thorough knowledge of his special subject together with a correct English style, whether in classical translation, philosophic argument, or scientific research. Knowledge of any sort is useless without means of expressing it, and whatever knowledge a man is seeking, he should acquire it in such a way that in practical use, he may reproduce it in pure and natural English style.

THE GOOD-NIGHT PIPE.

Faint clouds of smoke floated lazily from the second step of the stone flight leading up the terrace; the same fragrant mists, regardless of fines and with a buoyancy born of freedom from rules and regulations, sailed triumphantly over the tulip beds and toward the sacred precincts of the Dean's window.

Were it not for the exams how intensified would be the enjoyment of Trinity term! But that inevitable prospect hangs ever about us, with another equally distasteful and equally inevitable—the breaking up of another college year.

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