

UNIVERSITY SERVICES.

UNIVERSITY PREACHERS for the next few weeks: Jan. 31, the Vice-Principal; Feb. 7, the Principal; Feb. 14, the Rev. W. T. Herridge, B.D., Ottawa; Feb. 21, the Rev. D. McTavish, D.Sc., Lindsay; Feb. 28, the Rev. Dr. McNish, Cornwall.

The University services are a feature peculiar to Queen's, so far at least as Canadian universities are concerned. They were originated, at the earnest request of the students, when the new building gave a sufficiently large convocation hall for the purpose, and they have been continued every session since. The appreciation of them by the educated public and the students and staff is very marked, but why should *any student* absent himself? When distinguished men come long distances to give us of their best it is a poor compliment to them and a poor return to the Principal who, we understand, takes the whole trouble of providing the supply upon himself, when a student allows a snow storm or a little wind or rain to keep him away. One gentleman who has attended regularly declares that he has never heard from the platform a discourse that was not worth a much longer walk than any of us has to take, while some of the discourses ought to live for ever in the memories and minds of all who heard them. Nothing is said at any time that would grate on the ears of any 'ist. Already this session we have had preachers of the Episcopal Church (Mr. Haslam and Mr. Wendling), of the Congregational (Dr. Lyman Abbott), of the Presbyterian (Mr. Jordan and Mr. Torrance,) and Professor Burwash of Victoria College, a distinguished preacher of the Methodist Church, is expected in March. The choir deserves a word. The ladies declare that the singing is the feature in Convocation Hall services, and as they are admittedly more religious than men, their word on the matter must be final.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Queen's College Journal:

WHEN I first heard from a friend a few words of the attack on me which appeared in the COLLEGE JOURNAL, I said, (boys will be boys the world over.) Caught young enough, you can make them believe anything, and having once discovered their "mare's nest," they can rattle away with the confidence of youth about their wonderful find. Indeed, the effect of early training is wholly marvelous—so marvelous that geographical bounds determine the beliefs of the nations. The Mohammedan world is Mohammedan. Why? Caught young, the doctrine has been well drilled into the yet tender mind. The many millions of the old Greek orthodox church stand firm as a rock in their undoubting faith. Why? Because it, too, has been driven home while the mind is yet soft and receptive, by the teachers they look up to. The Catholic is a firm believer in the creeds of his church, and regards the Mohammedan and Græco-Russian as gone

astray. Why? Because, "as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." The Buddhist, the dominant faith of the world, alone equalling in numbers the whole Mohammedan, Greek and Roman churches, is opposed to all three. And why? Because, caught young, that creed has been so imbedded in his mental constitution that he is incapacitated from accepting any other view. And if the students of Queen's can believe that, in our earth, and the whole solar system, and the countless suns that stud the firmament, there is not one single ounce of matter, we can account for their belief, too, on the same simple ground that there is nothing, however fantastic, which you cannot get believed, if you commence early enough and keep at it enough perseveringly.

Besides which, what a grand thing to hold a belief which we share not with the common world—that we can look down from our elevation on the vulgar herd of mankind, and, arraying ourselves in "the cast-off clothes of German metaphysics," strut about like the jackdaws in borrowed plumes, and believe ourselves something wonderful; when, all the while we and our philosophy, except to the initiated, look simply ridiculous. I am quite aware that men can be brought to believe that they are ghosts "walking on the bosom of nothing;" and that when they sit down to breakfast they sit on no solid chair; that when they cut their bread and steak, there is no real bread and steak to cut and no real knife to cut it with, but that it is all done in dumb show—a mere make-believe breakfast conditioned by the "forms of the mind," which impose on us the necessity, and enforce on us the etiquette; on the observance of which the effects follow.

It seems a very strange belief, that what we see, we see not; that what we handle, we handle not. Of course, I know the whole chain of specious argument, link by link, by which is reached the wonderful result, that "the thing in itself" is non-existent. I know, too, such a thing as explaining away, which is what most of the explanation comes to. But are those young men aware that idealism confessedly admits of *no verification*; and that, at best, it can only speculate and imagine, and fasten on something in realism that presents a difficulty, as the parasite does on the body of the creature on which it preys. It can criticise and theorise, but cannot prove itself.

But we, old fogies, know nothing! Of course not. And yet, experience and wide reading ought to count for something. Do those young men know that Kant himself could never keep himself straight, but, spite of every effort to the contrary, was forever relapsing into the vulgar belief—nature and his common sense being too strong for his philosophy—and that they themselves, like others before them, may—when, in the breezy world of real life, robust common sense displaces the close air of the school-room, and nature and reason have had their way—regard the whole thing as so much foolery—a system that begins by instilling doubts respecting men's primary intuitions, and ends in making them sceptics; as Hume says of Berkeley: "that all his arguments * *