

THE VARSITY.

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SENATOR MACDONALD'S LIBERALITY.

The charitable and educational institutions of his native city are already under many obligations to the Honourable John Macdonald for a whole-hearted and generous liberality that does infinite credit to his head and heart. The munificent gift of \$40,000 which Senator Macdonald has just made towards the cause of hospital extension in this city increases this sense of obligation, and intensifies the feeling of genuine respect and admiration with which all classes of Toronto's citizens regard him. Mr. Macdonald could not have chosen a more worthy object for the exercise of his generosity than the Toronto Hospital System, and by connecting his gift with the Provincial University has given another indication of the enlightened interest which he has always manifested in that institution. The new hospital will be part of the General Hospital system, and will be specially adapted for the furtherance of medical education and practical instruction in clinics. We understand that it is to be erected upon the University grounds, and that its management will devolve upon a committee of citizens assisted by the University authorities. It will be in fact, a University Hospital in connection with the Medical Faculty of the University of Toronto. The carrying out of the scheme will involve an outlay of \$150,000, of which Mr. Macdonald's gift forms a handsome nucleus. We do not anticipate that any difficulty will be experienced in securing the full amount of the endowment requisite to equip the new hospital and, as Mr. Macdonald says "make it worthy of its location, worthy of the city, to make it, in one word, equal in all respects to the best institutions on the continent." The securing of a University Clinical Hospital ensures the permanency and success of the new Medical Faculty, and at one bound places that department of the University abreast of the foremost of the kind in America, and will greatly strengthen the whole institution in the confidence and good will of the people of the Province of Ontario.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY AND POLITICS.

We are sure that those who heard, and those who may have since read, the admirable Inaugural Address of the President of the Literary Society, must have agreed heartily with his outspoken utterances in reference to the restriction of the scope of the discussions in that venerable Society. As is well known, questions of a political, or quasi-political character, are not allowed to be debated, and the average subject chosen for that purpose, of a literary or social character, interesting though it be, is of a kind more suited to Church debating societies or amateur clubs of that class. They do not awaken any sort of enthusiasm, and half the time those selected to carry on the debate either come ill-prepared, or else are "scratched" before Friday evening arrives. The consequence is that the principal part of the evening's programme is most inefficiently performed and is devoid of interest to the majority of the audience.

Those who are fortunate enough to retain recollections of participation in the sessions of the old "Forum," or "Mock Parliament," of 1883-4-5, or are familiar with its traditions, will remember the keen relish with which its weekly meetings were looked forward to, the active interest displayed by every Member in the proceedings of the House, the animation, wit, and good order which characterized its debates, the practical knowledge of current affairs which its discussions demanded, and also the intimate acquaintance

with the rules and amenities of debate which those who belonged to it readily and easily acquired. All these most desirable effects were produced in a short while by this Society which, too early in its career, was prorogued *sine die*. Let any one contrast the "Forum" in its palmy days with the Literary Society at present, and while we have no wish unduly to disparage the work which the latter is doing, nevertheless, we must confess that the comparison would not be to its advantage.

A sense of listlessness seems to have come over the Literary Society, and its charms are largely exercised upon the susceptible minds of the class of '91. Nor can we wonder at this. When the average member glances at the Bulletin Board and sees most of the names of the performers "scratched," and reads further down that some four or six amiable and long-suffering gentlemen are to wrestle in debate over the exciting question as to whether "Long-Cesar was a greater poet than Tennyson," or whether "Julius Caesar was a better general than Napoleon," his interest is not likely to be greatly excited. Such themes, it must be confessed, are somewhat exceptional in their occurrence, but in the main the subjects for debate are of a more or less similarly artificial, unreal, and uninteresting character. But let it be announced that the Government of the day intend to bring in a Bill dealing with current political matters, say Commercial Union, or the Fisheries Dispute, or a National Currency, or any live topic of this kind, and we venture to say that Moss Hall would be crowded every Friday evening to the doors. The Opposition would be acute and on the alert to succeed, and the Government as anxious and keen to retain their hold upon the Treasury Benches. And what harm would result from such discussions? The issues of life and death or a general election do not depend upon the *dicta* of a College [Literary Society], and the debates and divisions would have no injurious effect upon the personal feelings or friendly relations of the Members towards one another. Indeed, the opposite would be the case, and mutual toleration and respect would be increased. And further, the discussions partaking of a practical and real character, would enhance the interest displayed therein by members; they would encourage an intelligent study and develop an appreciation of questions of great moment to every patriotic citizen, anxious to be well-informed and well-instructed. And lastly, seeing that the Franchise has been so very widely extended of late years, a goodly proportion of our University students—or, at least, the younger graduates—have a vote and will be canvassed for their support sooner or later by the agents of the political parties. If they have, during their University career, familiarized themselves with the political questions of the day, have adopted certain principles for the guidance of their action as electors, and have formed certain definite ideas and independent views of their own upon such matters, the value of their support on any question of Federal or Provincial legislation will be all the more valuable to themselves and to the country, because given intelligently and honestly. And the value of their views and opinions will be enhanced also, to the benefit of themselves more particularly, because the result of independent thought and individual research.

The topic is interesting, and the question one of very vital importance to the Literary Society, especially in its present condition. We have no hesitation in supporting Mr. Creelman in this matter, fully and freely; we believe that he has the support and countenance of the members of the Society in this matter; and we most sincerely hope that the authorities, to quote Mr. Creelman's words, will "come to look upon our wishes in this direction rather as a rational demand than as a sort of standing annual joke directed against themselves."

AN ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION.

Now that the season for out-door athletics has ended, and the lawn is deserted save by some few enthusiasts, it may be well to gather together in the old gymnasium building—soon to be given over to the frog-killing biologists, if the chronicler of *The World* is reliable—and discuss an oft-mooted question, none other indeed, than that of an Athletic Association. THE VARSITY, in dealing with this subject, would specially invite the footballers and the college sporting fraternity generally, to take a seat, figuratively, at the Council Board, and engage in the discussion as points of inter-