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THE VARSITY.

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Topics of the Hour.

In the last number of the *Edinburgh Review* there is an able criticism of Sir Henry Maine's recently published book on "Popular Government." The reviewer states in no measured terms the true meaning of government by party, and his language applies as well to Canada as to Great Britain—"Pure party feeling demands the prostration of the reason and the will. It is as dogmatical and the damnatory as the Athanasian creed. It has the narrowness of a sect and the exclusiveness of a caste. It requires that a man should defend and follow his party even when they are wrong, and that he must attack and resist the opposite opinions, even when they are right." The writer then quotes Sir Henry Maine as to the origin of this reprehensible factor in modern politics—"Party feeling is probably far more a survival of the primitive combativeness of

mankind than a consequence of conscious intellectual differences between man and man." The reviewer, commenting on this statement, says, "But if party feeling is a remnant or survival of barbarous passions and of ignorant ages, may we not hope that it may be mitigated and modified by the progress of education and enlightenment? It is at this moment strongest in the least civilized parts of the United Kingdom. It is weakest in the metropolis and in the great centres of British thought and industry. The consequence is that there exists in this country a large mass of independent opinion, sufficient to turn the scale at an election."

The letter which appeared in the *Mail* the other day, signed "Civis," has ear-marks which indicate its ownership. There have been several anonymous letters of this kind lately, and whether they were signed "Graduate," or "Liberal," or "Civis," their inspiration seems to come from the same source. If any one thinks he has any just ground for criticizing the action of Convocation, why does he not come out in a manly way and say so? Whatever Convocation or its representatives on the Senate have to say, they say it openly. but they have to fight against a policy of slyness and secrecy which is almost contemptible in those who follow it. The latest shady scheme is to belittle the recent movement for increase of graduate representation on the Senate of the University. "Civis" insinuates that Convocation is composed of young graduates, and he covertly sneers at its action accordingly. Then he refers by name to one of its members, with the evident intention of making it appear that the scheme emanated solely from him. The truth is that the last meeting of Convocation was made up of graduates of all ages, and the resolution recommending the increase was carried with enthusiastic unanimity. When writers take shelter under anonymity in a matter of this kind, which should have free and open discussion, we are at liberty to make what inferences we like regarding them. Our inference in this case is that the writers of these recent letters have certain schemes in hand which would probably be very seriously interfered with if the graduates secured a stronger representation on the Senate.

The Court of Appeal delivered judgment the other day in the Quaker case of *Dorland v. Jones*. This case and the judgment thereon is of more than ordinary interest to all lovers of liberty and progress. The tenure of all the property of the Society of Friends in Canada, including the college at Pickering, was in question. Of late years a large section of the Society has shown a tendency to break away from the dead formalism which prevailed among the other section. The conservative section declared the others to be heretics and no longer members of the Society. They further attempted to exclude the progressive section from the meeting houses and to take possession of all the property belonging to the Society. The case came up in the first instance before Mr. Justice Proudfoot, who gave judgment in favour of the conservative body. Both sides had secured the best counsel to be obtained in the