



VOL. VI. No. 7.

TERMS: \$1.00 Per Annum, in Advance.

McGILL COLLEGE, MONTREAL, MAY 1st, 1888.

McGill University Gazette.

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THE UNIVERSITY GAZETTE is published on the first of every month during the College Session.

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Editorials.

The Session just concluded has been more than usually eventful. We are not thinking of the re-appearance of the *McGill University Gazette* as something remarkable and worthy of being chronicled—not but that the *Gazette* claims to be an item of importance to all connected with the College, flattering itself that it is historic in its little mode and justly entitled to the notice of the future annalist. But we are referring to important changes in the organization of our University, some already completed, others in process of development. The first of these is the alteration of the curriculum in Arts, of which this year's Graduating class is the first fruits. We believe that the best educational tendency of the present day is, in its broader aspects, sound and invigorating. The peculiarities of different minds, whether due to earliest instruction or existing prior to it, deserve recognition and sympathy from those who teach. Up to a certain point the same training may be advantageous for all alike, but, after the general principles of various branches of knowledge have been clearly apprehended by the mass of students, differentiation is not only salutary, but even necessary in order to display in their full strength those mental peculiarities which are strictly individual and which are in varying measure different in all men.

The task of educating may seem to be rendered easier by acknowledging these peculiarities and by giving them scope for exercise, but our eyes should not thereby be blind to the importance of general instruction. Universities in Canada do in sober fact take up the work of the more advanced schools. They must take it up, and continue so to do, until the teaching in those schools has reached a far higher level than it has yet attained: for the accuracy and thoroughness of educational beginnings are well-nigh destroyed by an insatiate desire to impart a little of everything in a hasty and an imperfect way. We are not finding fault with the teachers, but condemning the idea which they do their best to carry into act. Scraps of classical knowledge, of modern literature, of history, of political economy, of philosophy, of mathematics in all its primary branches, of science, or rather of half a dozen sciences, are imposing only in sound but not in substance. We could wish that the range of studies were more limited and framed with a view of bringing forth the best and strongest results from minds that are in their very nature tender and highly plastic; minds often definitely and lastingly moulded by their first contact with knowledge. We could wish also that the examinatorial spirit to which such instruction panders could be kept in its due and legitimate place and could be regarded simply as a means and not as an end. But narrow school-teaching as we may, it must in contradistinction to the higher parts of University training be general, and advanced University training should be attempted only when some degree of thoroughness in the elements of a liberal education have been ensured; accordingly the work of the first two years in McGill compels the student to devote his energies to acquiring a substratum of general fact. What departments of special study will be most attractive to the larger body of Undergraduates it would be as yet premature to augur; but the principle lately adopted and now in active working is at one with the views of those best qualified to divine the true method of University education, as related to the rapid advance of discovery in almost every branch of knowledge.

We observe, also, that new regulations for the higher degrees in Arts are under consideration. This is as timely as it is wise. Many graduates who own a B.A. degree are loath to proceed further in their course because they feel that the M.A. means little or nothing. This is due to the various methods in which such degree can be obtained. In some Universities, the Scotch for instance, the course in Arts leads to the Master's degree and to nothing else. In the older Universities of England the M.A. is obtained, after an appointed interval, simply by the payment of a fee. In the University of London, specialization of work is the basis on which the Bachelor of Arts attains to higher University distinction, and searching examination is a necessity. But to require a Thesis, and that only, is little better than to confer the degree on the ground of seniority, unless regulations demanding research and elegance of composition are strictly enforced. What shape the deliberations of the Faculty will finally take we do not know, but they