

It was to be expected that the smallpox epidemic now exposing the incapacity of Montreal's sanitary officials, as well as the credulity of people in other parts of Canada in absorbing exaggerated accounts, would cause a diminution in the number of students at McGill this year. But the falling off is not large enough to be serious, and happily, it is a state of things easily remedied when the truth becomes known. The danger to students from the disease is not great, for the precautionary measures necessary are simple and effectual, and the care which has incidentally to be taken, does not come amiss. A proper regard for health is so easily forgotten, that any cause which compels regular habits of life amongst students is not an unmixed evil. The regulations of the college authorities are timely, and these in conjunction with the ordinary vigilance to be expected of each individual, should secure our students complete immunity from the disease.

SPORT appears to be looking up at McGill this year. The Football Club began morning practice early in the first week of college and has continued them vigorously in spite of sore arms. We have lost with the graduating class some of our best players but we have an exceptionally good stock of reserve material and see no reason to doubt having our usual success in the inter-collegiate. The Freshmen are paying up their subscriptions promptly and it would be well if, despite college etiquette, the senior years followed their example better. It is the duty of every undergraduate to support to the utmost extent of his abilities the enterprises and customs of his college and of these football is not the least at McGill.

In a few days our annual sports of 1886 will have become a thing of the past. The Fall Athletic Games of McGill have attained a continental celebrity, and with justice we think. It rests with you to sustain that reputation. Your committee is now preparing for them. Give them your usual support both in entries and funds that they may pass off with their customary success.

THERE promises to be a brisk rivalry during the coming year between the *Advocate*, the old-established literary bi-weekly, and the new magazine, the *Harvard Monthly*, which issues its first number, October 21st. The *Advocate* is first on the field, its first number appearing in enlarged form. It will offer in its editorial column a prize of \$10 for the best story handed in before January 1, 1886, and a prize of \$5 for the best essay on some subject interesting to *Advocate* readers.

## Contributions.

### A CLASSICAL COURSE A LIBERAL EDUCATION.

AFTER long battle, such as is ever waged before can be brought into question a venerable institution that has imposed its sway upon the minds of men for centuries and has its strength in the power of prejudice transmitted through such countless generations that it has come to be believed natural—after such battle, the highly artificial system of classical training, falsely called education, has finally been made to totter. Its devotees, whose minds have been so cramped by its influence that they are incapable of grasping the possibility of another system of training being effectual have rushed to its rescue. The daring iconoclasts who have attacked this last of mediæval institutions have appealed from the platform and through the press to the judgment of the people, and have triumphed. But still the defenders of classical training do not acknowledge their defeat. Abandoning fair argument they have taken refuge in mean insinuation. Professors in danger of losing their occupation, persons who having known no other training find it impossible to conceive that another can be effectual, dilettante intellects are uniting to cry out even before other systems have had a fair trial, that the results of these are not to be compared to the results produced by a classical training. Other systems, they say don't educate. This is their position, they have turned the tables upon their adversaries. Their assertions are loud, but backed by very questionable support. Professors whose own training has been purely classical state boldly that the minds of students trained in the sciences are not so fully developed as those of scholars exercised in the classics. But are such men fair judges? Should their declaration be received as valid? Is it not probable that their judgments, even if one suppose them conscientious, have received a bias from their training? Give the new system of education a fair trial. Time is necessary to show the advantages of the sciences, of the modern languages, of the optional system, as educators. Meanwhile there can be no objection to discussing the theoretical values of the different courses, provided that in doing so no unproven assertions be made and prejudice be left wholly aside.

Before an argument can be opened it is necessary that the points in common between the disputants should be clearly stated and the meaning of the terms used by both well understood. Just now the point at issue is the educational value of a classical as opposed to a scientific course of training. Which of these is best adapted to further the end of the student seeking a liberal education? A recent upholder of the classical system has defined what we understand by a liberal education. Let us adopt his definition. He says the aim of the college is to give the student a liberal education and goes on "the college provides that he shall get such a complete possession of himself—in all his powers: mind, body and that total of qualities known as character—as is essential to the