

misrepresentation of our feelings, and have appointed Mr. Grigg as our representative at your Conversat.
R. GRIGG."

It was also too late to change our editorial referring to the matter. However we are pleased to receive the message since it entirely frees the Society from lack of courtesy towards a sister institution. The presence of Mr. Grigg and his remarks showed us the real feelings of the students, so that we are glad that our article applies only to an individual and not to the Society as a whole. We regret that in some unaccountable way the matter has gained so much publicity.

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In his essay on "The Function of Criticism at the present time," written now many years ago, Matthew Arnold pointed out the need that there then was in Britain for sympathetic but independent criticism. Arnold's interest was mainly in literature, and it was the insular literary criticism of his time which he felt to be so inadequate. But while his main interest was in literature, he saw clearly that the bane of criticism in all the fractions of society, social, political and religious, was the absence of a serene and impartial point of view. Then, as to-day, there was no end to the organs of sects and parties, but "an organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*," Arnold declares, "having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing it may be said as an organ for a free play of the mind we have not."

The *Edinburgh Review*, the organ of the Whigs, the *Quarterly Review*, the organ of the Tories, live and flourish; but the *Home and Foreign Review* the moment it forgets party ends or practical considerations is doomed.

That great advances have been made during the last twenty years no one will deny. The social and religious problems especially have thrown themselves upon the public mind and conscience, but it is proof how very slowly we move forward that we are still to so large extent in bondage to custom and party, and that so few are ready to gather round a free standard. Even in Canada the heart of the people is not prepared to respond to the attitude of a free citizen. Let a Member of Parliament resent the party lash and see how much encouragement does he receive from the

people? The other party publishes his independence with loud huzzas and vulgar praise which prove only too well that the source of joy is the spectacle of party dissension. How many newspapers have we in Canada that dare not palter with truth? How many brave enough to denounce the sins of the party on which they depend for support? It is childish to talk about the freedom of the press under such circumstances. The press is not free unless it is free to speak out what is right. That a purely patriotic attitude is taken by one or two newspapers in the country may be conceded; that such a height is occasionally reached even by a few partizan papers is a fact; but it remains on the whole true that the mark of the beast is upon every party organ, and that it has just as much play of mind as suits its being an organ of the conservative party or of the reform party, or of a provincial or sectarian section of either.

Very much the same kind of criticism applies to the religious life of the present time. One would imagine that our day would welcome every effort to make known the best religious thought in the world. At a time, too, when united with a faith growing stronger every day, the critical scholarship of the church is busier than ever before, at such a time it is specially disappointing to be told that a religious journal, which is not the slave of a sect, cannot live. Such a journal may manifest a deeper insight into the truth than the average church organ; it may inspire its readers to more honest thinking and to fuller life, and in a spirit from which has dropped as far as possible all sectarian passion, it may attempt to lead the way to a new and better idea of the church than has existed in the past. A religious journal may enter with enthusiasm on this divine crusade, but it hardly reaches the battle-field before it is struck down. Good matter and high ideals cannot save such a journal from extinction. The *Independent*, the *Interior*, the *Presbyterian Review*, the *Halifax Witness* are very useful papers, and at any rate they are safe under the wings of orthodoxy, but *The Modern Church* started just a year and a half ago as a "medium for the expression of common inter-denominational religious life of Scotland" is forced to cease publication "for want of sup-