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THE VARSITY.

THE VARSITY is published in the University of Toronto every Saturday during the Academic Year, October to May inclusive.
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Topics of the Hour.

FOLLOWING the praiseworthy traditions of the past, we shall issue in due time a special holiday number of the VARSITY. We owe a debt of gratitude to several of the best writers in the Province, who have kindly promised us their assistance in this project. Many graduates and undergraduates will also contribute, and there is every indication that in variety and excellence of literary matter the coming Christmas number of the VARSITY will not be surpassed by any Canadian journal. Among the writers who will contribute to this number are T. Arnold Haultain, G. Mercer Adam, R. W. Phipps, Agnes E. Wetherald, F. H. Sykes, E. J. McIntyre, William Houston, D. R. Keys, Arch. MacMechan, J. H. Burnham, Samuel Woods and R. Balmer.

CLERICAL exemptions from taxation are among the last relics of a state church system, and it is high time that these also were

quite done away with. When Church and State were one the amount of exemption was, of course, allowed as part of their salary to clerical officials of the State. But we in Canada have changed all that, and it is to be regretted that our clergymen and theological professors have not fully recognized this fact. Nothing is calculated to bring a much greater scandal on the cause of religion than the spectacle which certain well-salaried city clericals presented at the Toronto Court of Revision the other day. These gentlemen share in all the advantages of the State, and it is marvellous that they should virtually beg to receive these advantages for nothing. They can claim exemption on no just grounds, and it is decidedly undignified, if not worse, for them to set up such a claim. Even in the cases where a legal right still survives, the moral right has lapsed. The mendicant friars of the middle ages are not good models for our clergy to follow, if they hope to retain the respect of the world at large. It is pleasant to be able to say that many ministers now pay their taxes like other men and also that the present generation of theological students have their minds made up in the same direction.

In a recent number of the *Week*, Mr. Gladstone is taken to task for "gambolling and capering on his hobby horse" at the present critical juncture,—that is to say, for writing in the *Nineteenth Century* on the "Dawn of Creation and Worship." Mr. Gladstone, we may presume, does not read the *Week*. He will not have the happiness of seeing his name in such well-balanced sentences of sarcasm as these: "Chamberlain and Churchill hotly contend with social problems; Mr. Gladstone descants on the Mosaic cosmogony. Parnell inflames Ireland, and dictates to England; Mr. Gladstone discusses different readings of the Septuagint. Prelates and laymen wax wroth at the severance of Church and State; Mr. Gladstone shows that 'instead of Ixion loving the wife of Zeus, it was Zeus who loved the wife of Ixion.' England may perish; the 'grand old man' must prove" —, and so forth, in good set terms. He will miss, too, the pleasure of seeing himself compared to "Nero fiddling over burning Rome." It would be so new to him and so startling. Mr. Gladstone—though he does not read the *Week*, it is to be feared, with as great regularity as the Bible—has lived the intellectual life as few men have lived it. But that he is more than a mere theorist, he has shown by his solution, while holding the highest post of trust in the nation, of practical questions of almost infinite importance to the British empire. He has been spoken of as the ablest and most honest man, as well as the ripest scholar, within the three kingdoms. This is a sweeping assertion; but, if there is one man of whom it is true, that man is Mr. Gladstone.

THE proposed appointment of a tutor in Oriental languages as an assistant to Mr. Hirschfelder, is a matter that will bear looking into. In the language of a neighboring republic we may say that it is pretty certain that there is an African or two