

## THE VARSITY.

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### MANITOBA UNIVERSITY.

We learn from a recent editorial in the *Manitoba Free Press* that there is an agitation in progress in the Prairie Province in favour of increased graduate representation on the senate of the University of Manitoba. The present state of affairs is thus briefly stated :

"The graduates at present have but three representatives, while the three denominational colleges and the medical college have seven each. That is, there are 28 representatives of the executives of the colleges against three representatives of the graduates. As a matter of fact the graduates cannot be said to have three representatives, for one of them is a professor in one of the colleges. The truth is, the graduate representation is almost entirely lost owing to the influence of the colleges. Convocation is practically unheard at the University Council Board."

The case of Manitoba University is analogous, as the writer of the editorial points out, to that of our own University six or seven years ago, when the Senate held Star-Chamber meetings, and controlled everything in secret, when graduates and students "knew nothing of the conduct of the University" and were "discouraged from taking any interest in it," and being on this account "utterly ignorant of the constitution of their University, of its history, of its objects, of its capabilities, of its financial position, of everything in connection with it."

The editorial refers to the revolution which was effected in the constitution of the University of Toronto, by the provision for the larger representation of convocation upon the senate; to the marvellous change for the better and the increased prosperity of the university in consequence of the wise change, and truthfully says that "the University prospers as never before," and that it "progressed more in five years than it had ever progressed formerly in thirty."

The University of Manitoba will do well to consider this question carefully in the light of the past experience of older and even more conservative institutions than herself. If she is wise she will deliberate most earnestly before she decides to reject the application of her graduates for increased representation upon the Council. The effect of a refusal to acknowledge and carry out this practical principle would be disastrous in the highest degree to the young University of Manitoba. It would tend to alienate those who should be, and who naturally would be, her warmest and most faithful allies. The result would be the same as in the case of the University of Toronto—the loss of a great source of strength and power. It would check the growth of that true university spirit, that *esprit de corps*, which only in a very small measure is as yet being re-awakened and developed amongst our graduates in this province, and for the lack of which we have suffered so much and so grievously in the past. The University of Manitoba cannot afford to try experiments which have yielded such unsatisfactory results elsewhere; she cannot afford to lose any possible element of strength, or convert, by want of prudence and foresight, a naturally loyal and enthusiastic body of supporters into a lukewarm and indifferent if not openly hostile party. She will do well also, if she draws to her side the alumni of other and older universities who are domiciled within reach of her immediate influence, whose experience and training naturally predispose them to join with her and keep alive their interest in university matters. The control of the affairs of any university may be safely, and, indeed, should

be principally left in the hands of the alumni. The undue predominance of any sort of exclusive control should be carefully guarded against, and especially in the endeavour to found, in a new and progressive province, a university that shall be truly national, unsectarian, and representative.

### HARVARD AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

For years past the characteristic policy of Harvard has been the elevation of university and secondary education in the United States. This feature always receives a great deal of attention in the annual reports of the President of Harvard College. The one before us, that for 1886-87, is no exception to the rule in this respect. The departments of study to which the exercise of this wise policy has been directed recently, are: English, Latin, Greek, and Physics. "For thirteen years," President Eliot tells us, "the College Faculty have been trying to promote the serious study of English in the secondary schools." The good example of Harvard has had, since 1879, the cordial and practical approval of the great majority of New England Colleges, whose "co-operative interest is now exerted in one common method in favor of the serious study of English in Schools." In addition to the requirement of 1882 concerning the correction of bad English, and the increase of the amount of prescribed reading, this was added: "The passages set for translation," (we presume in the different ancient and modern languages) "must be rendered into simple and idiomatic English. Teachers are requested to insist on the use of good English as an essential part of the candidate's training in translation." The President reports favourably upon the result of the endeavours of Harvard and the other New England Colleges in this direction, but adds, pathetically, "the history of the introduction and gradual development of this requirement in English since 1874 perfectly illustrates the slow and patient process by which even the most obvious improvements in education have to be brought about."

With regard to the improvements brought about in the mode of teaching Latin and Greek, the President says that the instruction now given at Harvard in Classics "has been directed to giving command over the languages, rather than to securing knowledge of certain pieces of Latin and Greek; and the ordinary examinations and the honour examinations have relied more and more on reading at sight." President Eliot, while admitting that many more years will be required before the full effect of the new system can be realized, states that "from ten to fifteen per cent. of the Freshmen who elect Latin can already read ordinary prose tolerably well; and the same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of those who elect Greek—a thing unheard of, and not even aimed at, twelve years ago." Also, the attainments of those who, in 1886-87, obtained honours in Classics at the end of their second year, were as high as the attainments of those who received honours at graduation ten years ago,—a fact which amply bears out the remark that "the whole grade of the College work in the Classics is therefore lifted."

A change has also been made in the scientific requirement for admission to Harvard. Heretofore, what we may best describe as "book-knowledge" of the rudiments of botany, physics, chemistry, etc., were all that was required. The authorities now permit, and indeed very strongly encourage practical and experimental work as an option, and are hopeful that this latter method may promote and "really introduce instruction in experimental science into some schools." The results of examinations in descriptive and experimental science respectively, are apparently such as warrant the authorities in regarding the prospect of the immediate popularity and ultimate supremacy of the latter system as most satisfactory and hopeful.

In reference to what we have termed Harvard's characteristic policy, the most pleasing fact is the cordial co-operation of most of the New England colleges in all matters relating to the curricula of secondary schools and the requirements for admission to college. As the report of last year told us, thirteen New England colleges united in the creation of a Commission on requirements for admission, "in the expectation that a regular medium of communication between the preparatory schools and the colleges would make the needs and desires of each set of institutions better known to each other." Very excellent results have issued from the work of this