

hold meetings of the "pink tea" order, or to make the affair so solemn and decorous that nothing can happen. It would be still safer not to hold meetings at all. As well expressed in an old proverb, "Where no oxen are there the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox." The fact is, a peace-loving man and good listener is not an efficient member of the Literary Society.

THEN AND NOW.

In the days, which to many of you will seem prehistoric, of Sir Daniel Wilson the students had many unsatisfied yearnings to discuss such matters as appeared to be engrossing the attention of their fellow-countrymen. The venerable President was quite willing that they should discuss Protection or Reciprocity or Commercial Union, or similar political issues then extant, but he insisted that they should do so with reference to the Italian Republics. He looked imprisonment on bread and water at any one that spoke of discussing such things for Canada. It seemed to be a maxim in those days that applied learning is explosive, and experiments in it should not be conducted on College premises.

But now there is a growing opinion that the University is the place where a man should put himself in active training to live his life not only as a private individual but as a citizen, a voter, a defender and (if he feels the call) a leader of his own country. The reason the graduates of this University do not wholly control the affairs of this province is that they were carefully sterilized in the college dairy. The man of University culture who postpones his knowledge and practise of public affairs until he is entered upon the pursuit of his profession and has no leisure to learn, is overmatched by the side-line champion and lodge orator, who though lame in syntax is nimble in utterance, and who knowing a little of parliamentary usage, a little of stock argument and half a dozen of Old Abe's stories, can evoke rounds of applause and wield influence, because, in addition, he knows what his audience are thinking, what they have heard before and just how much will go down, and what will stick. It is useless to train men in political science or in the masterpieces of classic oratory or in the rules of rhetoric, unless you insist on their making frequent practical application of what they are studying. It is safer to make this application in our ancient Literary Society, where men congregate from many townships and with many opinions—mostly erroneous—than to make the application on the stump, when even in this county of York they show little consideration for their opponents.

Of course there will be crudity of thought and expression. But there is nothing more suspicious in an unknown man than finish and polish. It makes us search his title to the idea or to the phrase in the hope of finding he has only an equity of redemption. It is better that a student should be of the hammer-and-tongs type, and it is part of his training to learn to what extent it is profitable to assail his opponents and with what phraseology it is safest to contradict the chair.

THE VALUE OF PARLIAMENTARY FORMS.

The Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celtic races are governed and even their business managed under the cover of parliamentary forms, which are observed whether the meeting is one of a House of Commons, a Legislature, a municipal council, a church assembly, a fraternal convention, or the shareholders of a corporation. Wherever a dozen British subjects or American citizens meet together, the assembly is either subject to parliamentary procedure or to the Riot

Act. It is therefore the duty of every citizen to obtain at least a rough-and-ready acquaintance with parliamentary usages, unless he means to take up a location on the further shores of what Mr. McLean calls the Canadian Sea. Now it is a lamentable fact that most graduates of Toronto University are new in the use of parliamentary weapons, in the use of the motion, the point of order, and that dangerous "left hook," the previous question, children in the hands of the labor delegate or the lodge joiner.

I propose, therefore, as far as the powers of the President of this Society extend, to allow the greatest possible latitude in the selection of subjects and the methods of treating them. The student that speaks oftenest and gives most trouble will be the most welcome.

Of course there are dangers, not to Toronto University which is too solid to be disturbed by the rumblings and detonations of a students' debate; the dangers rather concern the display of good taste or bad taste in subjects, arguments and diction.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS.

If a general rule could be laid down in such matters I should say that it is a waste of time to hold discussions, the matter of which and the arguments and even the phrases of which can not be turned into use some five or six years later. Thus it may be profitable to discuss "whether a treaty-making power in Canada would be compatible with the existence of the Empire," because sooner or later all of us may have the subject as a living question. But it might not be profitable or in good taste at this moment to re-adjust the Alaska Boundary or to analyse the Alverstonian personal equation; because in the words of the song "You can't help it." It may be profitable to discuss the promotion of judges and their employment on the directorate of Companies or on Royal Commissions. But it might not be wise for you to re-investigate the Gamey case. In the first place because it might be in bad taste. In the second place because you might be stunned with the bewildering simplicity of sworn truth.

THE GIFT OF ENTHUSIASM.

Now, I do not promise that if you come to our meetings you will wear diamonds. All I ask is that you come if you feel like it, and that, coming, you bring what you have. There is one thing which you students have, the most valuable of all gifts and the most irreplaceable, but which being Canadians you will rapidly and shamelessly live down and discard, and that is the divine gift of enthusiasm. Other nations appreciate its value, as France, which inextinguishably effervesces with it, like that fabulous beverage which she grows in Champagne and does not export to America. Our American neighbors, wiser than ourselves and deficient in natural enthusiasm, flog themselves into a patriotic excitement over their heroes, their victories, their wives' ancestors, their declaration of independence and their traditions of an expectation of honest government until really they have the next best thing to a well founded national self-respect—they have an hysterical love for old glory.

But among our own people in Canada, and most particularly in this ancient land of snake-fences and silly old party feuds, Upper Canada, it is rare indeed that you find enthusiasm in any man over 45, and this being a young country, a man has to be 50 before they listen to him. The standard of this Province may be emblazoned with the resplendent maple leaves but they are pinned on a pretty wet blanket. I think one of the chief reasons why people are so willing to hear Premier Ross when he is