

# THE VARSITY

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## Editorial Comments.



ALL the reports of Convocation have been very mild—no criticism of the action of the authorities—no sensational accounts of the behavior of the students; and though everybody was mortified by the humiliating farce that opened the college year, yet it is some satisfaction to find that the University has strong enough hold on the affections of the people to shield those connected with it, for a time at least, from the criticism they deserved.

But it is useless to dam back public censure—we must strive not to deserve it—we cannot escape punishment if we continue to be in the wrong, we cannot expect public approval unless we are consciously and conspicuously in the right.

In deciding where the blame belongs we have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the authorities were most seriously at fault. There were many reasons—sentimental, it is true, but nevertheless strong ones—why Convocation should be held in the New Building, if a suitable room could be found, but there was no reason strong enough to justify the authorities in attempting to exclude the students from a ceremony which they had always manifested a strong desire to attend. And in this instance, at any rate, though their conduct lacked that dignity and decorum which sits so well on all corporate action, yet the students were acting well within their rights—at any rate according to the received traditions of their rights.

For Convocation isn't held for the Faculty alone, nor the friends of the Faculty, nor for the prizemen, nor the distribution of prizes, nor for Latin Orations, no matter how pure their Latinity, but Convocation is the formal assembling of the members of the University at the beginning of a new term, and each student has a right of attendance as ancient and as well-established as the right of the Chancellor himself. Of course no individual student will insist on this right when asked to waive it for the convenience or comfort of another. But the right exists, and the whole body of students is not likely to acquiesce in even a temporary surrender of privileges unless the strongest reasons can be urged in favor of such a course—reasons which, in this case did not exist.

However, it is no new sight that we witnessed. It is an old spectacle now. Impotent wrath at one end, impudent irresponsibility at the other, and between them the tiers of an enduring public that sit and sit and wonder at the impudence and the impotence, and the wonder is that they wonder so long.

Numerous complaints reach us of the severity and unfairness of the papers set in May last. Some of these appear to be well founded, and we give them place here

that they may come to the notice of those who have it in their power to apply the proper remedy.

The unusual number plucked and starred in the first and second years is pointed to as proof that the standard has been raised unduly.

We have been asked why pass men are privileged to prepare two subjects for supplemental examination, while honor men are restricted to one, and we have replied that thus it has been ordained by reason of the greater ability of the former.

We have heard it declared, by men we could believe on oath, that the pass translation papers in Latin, French and German, were in many cases more difficult than the corresponding honor papers.

Some are convinced they failed because a certain examiner would insist on addressing the assembled candidates once in every seven minutes (We had the pleasure of hearing this examiner comment on a German paper, and we think that in justice to him the time should be reduced to five minutes.)

And then come in vague mysterious rumors of nervous individuals whose hearts failed them and whose pens refused to perform their wonted functions when they learned that previously written papers had been weighed in the balance and many of them found wanting.

Many were seriously discomposed by the less knowing or more speedy candidates passing out of the room while they were still laboring amidst difficulties.

This and much more have we heard, and our only wonder is that with so many untoward circumstances in conjunction against them, with classical and modern masters resolved to show each other that theirs is not a course which may be trifled with, and our vigilant "Yeoman Bedele" persistently spoiling answers by preventing the use of text books and thwarting that tendency towards co-operation which is so admirable a characteristic of our times; our only wonder, we repeat, is that any escaped to tell the tale.

It does seem a real grievance—that of allowing two subjects to be taken at supplemental by pass men, while those in honors are plucked if they fail in more than one. Many excellent students, who obtained high standing in their honor work, are obliged to take the year over.

With regard to interruptions by the presiding examiner, we consider them mischievous and unnecessary. Sufficient explanation should be given in notes by the examiner who prepares the paper and all further information refused.

The question of revealing results before the official publication will be dealt with in a future issue.

The examination hall in the medical building seats some two hundred candidates, and it often happened that before the first half-hour had run some unusually BRILLIANT student was prepared to leave the room, heading a procession which lasted for the remaining two hours, and which