

Perhaps the Reading Room is more neglected than the Literary Society. But we cannot concede that it should not receive a proportionate share of attention. The benefit of the newspapers, like the advantages derived from steam inventions, can best be estimated by comparing the present with a time when they had but little influence upon society. The educated man cannot afford to ignore their value by neglecting their columns. The stranger whom we come in contact with in the railway car, or elsewhere, and whose conversation with us naturally turns upon the passing events of the day, will generally form an estimation of our mental life, and the degree of interest we take in the pulsations, progressions, and changes, incident to humanity, by the scope of our knowledge and the ability we manifest in discussing those events. For practical life our education in these directions is in little danger of being over-estimated, and should receive as careful attention from us as the prescribed course for an A. B. degree.

It may be urged by many students that all their time is required to faithfully master the work laid down in the calendar. This may be. Yet we are inclined to think that a wise and systematic arrangement of the students capital will cause him to limit the time devoted to those various studies so that a small portion at least may be given to those parts of our education, the development of which is so evidently essential.

HARVARD has celebrated her 250th anniversary. Both the oration and poem of the occasion attest to the merit of the worthy gentlemen who produced them. Especially are some of the points touched on in the Hon. Mr. Lowell's address, of importance to any institution of learning. With reference to the elective system of studies, he says:

"There is some danger that the elective system may be pushed too far and too fast. . . . Are our students old enough thoroughly to understand the import of the choice they are called on to make, and, if old enough, are they wise enough? . . . We are comforted by being told that in this we are only complying with what is called 'the spirit of the age,' which may be after all only a finer name for the mischievous goblin known to our forefathers as Puck. I have seen several spirits of the age in my time of different voices and guiding in very different directions, but unanimous in their propensity to land us in the mire at last."

The wholesome tone of the advice given in the above extract at once impresses the reader. It would appear from this that the elective system is not beyond criticism even at Harvard.

In speaking of the possibility of raising the educational standard still higher, he says:

"What we need more than anything else is to increase the number of our highly cultivated men and thoroughly trained minds, for these, wherever they go, are sure to carry with them, consciously or not, the seeds of sounder thinking and of higher ideals."

By these means he conceives that Democracy will show its capacity for producing, not a higher average man, but the highest possible types of manhood in all its manifold varieties. The following language addressed to the University seems to comprehend in general, the ideal object of higher education:

"Let it be our hope to make a gentleman of every youth who is put under our charge, not a conventional gentleman, but a man of culture, a man of intellectual resource, a man of public spirit, a man of refinement, with that good taste which is the conscience of the mind and that conscience which is the good taste of the soul."

Harvard as one of our oldest and at the same time one of our leading universities commands great attention. Her course having a tendency to model others after it should, therefore, be the more thoroughly criticised. The remarks which we have been considering made by a man of the literary standing of James Russell Lowell are deserving of the thoughtful consideration of all interested in university education.

THE absence of any athletic club at Acadia would, at first sight, appear to be an indication of no favorable import to the interest maintained among us in sports of such a nature. Yet the case admits of explanation. It is not that there has been a lack of desire for such a society to exist, so much as the tendency of the system by which our gymnasium has been governed to prevent its existence. Granting that the managers do all their contract requires, the method of private proprietorship has for several reasons proved unsatisfactory. Last year an attempt was made to purchase from the student, then having the gymnasium under their control, what apparatus was in their possession and thus organize a club. Terms agreeable to both parties could not, however, be fixed upon and so the matter was dropped. This year the same question is before us only in a more favorable light; and the prospects for forming an athletic club are cheering. At a comparatively small expense the club, if organized, will be able to procure what additional material is needed and put the room in good condition. We trust that in reference to the matter an amicable arrangement will be made.