

# THE VARSITY:

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF

EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY POLITICS AND EVENTS.

Vol. 2. No. 18.

February 17, 1882.

Price 5 cts.

## THE ABOLITION OF SCHOLARSHIPS.

The meeting at Moss Hall on Saturday, referred to in these columns last week, was largely attended, and the question of the advisability of petitioning the Senate to abolish scholarships and medals was fully discussed.

The first motion proposed was :

"That a petition be presented to the Senate of the University of Toronto in favor of the abolition of medals, scholarships and prizes; such petition to be presented to another meeting of undergraduates for ratification."

It was moved in amendment to this :

"That while recognizing the necessity of instruction in jurisprudence, constitutional history and political economy in University Colleges, this meeting declare itself in favor of the present system of scholarships and medals."

After a long and exhaustive discussion, the original motion was carried by an overwhelming majority. The only argument that the opponents of abolition placed weight upon was, that if scholarships were abolished, men who now go through the University either would not go through at all or would be greatly delayed in doing so. The answer to this argument was pointed out. The man who possesses sufficient ability and energy to take a scholarship throughout his college course, will not be prevented taking a University education because he did not secure a prize of \$150 a year. In two years he could save more than the total amount of the scholarships he would receive; and if he started out for himself in life at as early an age as most Canadian youths who are without means do, he could graduate while nearly as young as his more fortunate fellow-students possessed of means. Besides, for every one man who gets through the University depending on his ability to obtain a scholarship, there are a dozen others who are equally dependent on their own efforts, and who get through without any external assistance. The man possessed of more ability than these men have, should be as capable of helping himself as they are. As a matter of fact, however, the majority of those who obtain scholarships would go through the University uninterruptedly without them.

A strong argument against abolition, and one which was not mentioned on Saturday, is, that men who are going into law or medicine, might, if there were no scholarships in the arts course to help them, abandon it altogether, and devote their energies exclusively to obtaining their professional education. In answer to this we say, that supposing a man to take the senior matriculation examination, if he were going into law, it would only require one year longer to get through both arts and law courses than through law alone, as the Law Society deducts for graduates two years from the time under articles. As to medicine, few medical men take the arts course anyway, and those who put themselves through would probably do so by teaching, for which they would require an arts education.

But surely there are broader grounds upon which we must view this question than the assistance of a dozen needy students. No one denies that this object is a most commendable one, but it is unfair to practise it when injustice is done to students as a class, and we hold that the present system does this in more than one way.

It was stated on Saturday that if scholarships were abolished men would be driven from this University. We believe that instead of drawing men to the University the present system drives them away. Men who take scholarships and medals are considered *par excellence*, the best men in the University, and those who are not fortunate enough to get these are ranked in the popular mind as men of no ability or

learning. Students possessed of good ability yet content to acknowledge that there may be others with more than they have, in choosing the University they will attend, and seeing the keen competition here, despair of securing any of the prizes offered, and unwilling to be ranked as second class men, go to some other University. We hold that all first class honor men should be ranked equally, and when we see the injustice that is done by granting prizes to only the men who stand first, the remarks of one of the speakers at the meeting seems not too strong: "The present system is not only *bad* but *infamous*." If the Senate is at present too closely wedded to the system of scholarships to part with it, they might at least effect the desirable reform of ranking all first class honor men in the graduating class equally as none of the arguments in favor of scholarships apply to medals.

The course now open to undergraduates is concentrated resistance to the present system. There will be much opposition at first; unreasoning conservatism will oppose any change. We will be, and have been, told that this is a matter that students have no business to interfere with; but if the question is strongly agitated and kept before graduates and undergraduates, we *must* triumph, for we have right on our side.

W.

## PROVINCIAL VICE-ROYALTY.

Those who were present at the opening ceremonies of this Session of our Local Legislature, witnessed a scene that strikingly exemplified the lasting and disheartening influence of prejudice. With royal promptitude, at the proper moment, a carriage, drawn by foaming steeds, and bearing the Lieutenant-Governor, dashed up to the Legislative Hall. A corps of volunteers guarded the historic precincts of that venerable building, and successfully accomplished the double task of presenting arms to His Excellency, and of overawing the revolutionary populace without. Within, the Chamber presented an animated and impressive appearance. The diplomatic corps resident in the city relaxed for the nonce from the cares of international intrigue and finesse, and showed their brilliant uniforms to the best advantage. These, with the gorgeous costumes of the ladies, the venerable aspect of the Judges, the conscious modesty of the members, and the presence of the mace, were all calculated to make the casual spectator believe that the constitution was still safe. Had he any lingering doubts as to this, they were finally dissipated when the Speech from the Throne (what a resounding phrase!) was read in grandiloquent style by a stoutish gentleman in a cocked hat, with an amazing quantity of gold lace strewn in reckless profusion over his uniform, while a youthful officer struck stained-glass attitudes on his right. The speech read, the Lieutenant-Governor drove back to Government House and oblivion, and the members, after the regulation number of adjournments, settled down to the exhausting task of struggling with the Address.

Now, while deprecating any aimless tampering with the Constitution, it must strike every one who will for one moment forget mere prejudice and custom, that all this is out of place in