

them, and with a thoroughly national spirit, should develop herself along the lines of independence.

Then, with all her existing and proposed institutions, there are no reasons why her sons should not be able to develop their higher natures as well at home as at any institution in the neighboring republic, and almost as well as at any in the world.

We hope the day will speedily come when Canada's best sons will not require to go abroad to get the higher education, except, of course, for wider experiences, and evidently, if many steps are taken such as that one by McGill, that day is not far distant.

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Many have been the efforts to arouse a spirit of debate in our Alma Mater Society. Many have been the promises of candidates on the eve of election to reform the existing literary state of affairs, but so far nothing permanent has been done. It is true that the Society has shown at times signs of reformation, but such signs have been due to external influences and not to internal change. It is also evident that each President of the Society has done his utmost to advance its prosperity. But a President can do no more with a listless society than a reformer with an indifferent throng. The members heretofore have not been a unit in making our A. M. S. productive of literary culture. Some have carelessly wandered to the meetings with no fixed purpose; others have come for the express purpose of assuming the attitude of the fly on the wheel and saying, "See what a dust I raise." Motions never thought of until the President announced that the next order of business was "propositions and motions" were hurriedly moved and seconded with the only result of provoking a forty-minute discussion involving as many points of order, question of information and nonsensical remarks as would suffice the Pickwick Club for a score of ordinary meetings. Now while such a state of affairs exists, it is not surprising that the more studious members, rather the more thoughtful ones, absent themselves from such a time-wasting and, so far as practice in platform speaking is concerned, absolutely profitless meetings.

But are these absentees not wronging both themselves and the Society in holding aloof from its meetings? Evidently they are, for *the Society must get what it demands*, but these truants are not present to make the higher demands and consequently little progress is made. The members of any society not only give it shape and life but they get from it what they put into it. Let us therefore arise and demand a Society in which the business will be chiefly transacted by its executive committee and one in which the chief object will be to give a training in public speaking to its members.

Students of other colleges, feeling that as university men they required such a training, have formed "Literary and Metaphysical Societies," in which papers are read and discussed or subjects debated. Others again, especially law students, have formed "Mock Parliaments" for the sole purpose of developing themselves as platform speakers. And if we as young men were impressed with the fact that this is an age that demands public speakers, speakers who can touch a thousand hearts at once with the very same words, more attention

would be given to this part of our education. The masses of men and women in our land are to be educated and influenced not through the medium of books, for they have no time "in their struggle for existence" to commune with the departed sages, but by platform speakers. It is not sufficient therefore that we should be mere parasitical scholars but that we should be able to communicate our thoughts intelligently and impressively to others. There are many students who possess scholarly attainments, men from whose minds "thoughts leap out to join themselves to thoughts," but alas in whom "thoughts refuse to wed themselves to speech," and consequently they are partial failures in their professional calling. Let us therefore have more profitable debating in our A. M. S.

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Of the various educational forces which are brought to bear upon a student during his College course not the least important in contributing to the development of his intellectual nature, in expanding his mind and moulding his ideas, is that of the University societies. Their value as instruments of culture can scarcely be overestimated, if only a judicious use is made of them. The highest intellectual culture the world has ever seen, perhaps, was attained by the ancient Greeks. The educational system which produced such astonishing results ought to receive the careful consideration of all students. It consisted of two comprehensive departments—gymnastics and music. The course of study pursued in Queen's differs of necessity from that of the Hellenic schools. But those instruments of Hellenic culture which are not incorporated in our curriculum of study, are to a large extent supplemented by the University societies—gymnastics, music, elocution, intellectual discussion or debate. It seems to us that the part they should play in the evolution of our faculties and powers has hitherto not been fully apprehended. In consequence of this students generally have not applied themselves to the work of these societies with the enthusiasm and diligence which their importance deserves. Surely the intelligent and profitable discussion of a literary, scientific, social or political question, or the effective reading or recitation of a poem, requires and should receive for its preparation as careful and earnest study as the solution of a problem in physics, or the translation and rhythmical interpretation of a Greek choral ode. Yet are we not safe in saying that anything like the same amount of preparation is rarely made in the former case as in the latter?

To those who are looking forward to the pulpit or the bar, or the legislature as the arena of their activity, to those who are to be speakers and actors in the great national drama that is being enacted in this Dominion, the practical training of the University societies is of unspeakable value. Many who have availed themselves of the educational advantages they offer have realised this; while others regret that from ignorance of their true function, or indifference, they neglected to profit by them. It was in kindred societies in the Old World Universities that Pitt, and Canning, and Gladstone, and Chalmers, and Candlish received that practical discipline which so eminently fitted them to be the leaders of their time.

In a University there is an atmosphere highly charged with elements that stimulate a student's better nature