

# THE 'VARSITY:

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF

EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY POLITICS AND EVENTS.

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## THE START.

A few years ago, a series of brilliant essays appeared in the New York Times, which enhanced the reputation at once of the writer and the paper. They were subsequently collected and published together in a single volume with the remarkable preface — “I have been urged to unite these dissertations in book form by the wishes of numerous and malignant enemies.” By contrast are we reminded of this literary incident. The Varsity starts upon its career unattended by malevolence, and amid the hearty “God speed you!” of friends. The chief incentive however, has not been encouragement, but the consciousness of a capability to supply what is beginning to be looked upon as a trustworthy indication of vigor and intensity of life in a university. We lay bare the spring of action with a reluctant hand, because exposition of motives is, not infrequently, mistaken for indulgence in an apologetic strain. An appeal to charitable forbearance would be sinister to any statement regarding the opportuneness of the Varsity’s appearance. If there is conviction as to such a statement having foundation in fact, then all color of extenuation should be bleached from the above given exposition. Indifference to the misapprehension we have anticipated might also be taken to argue against adequacy of conception with respect to our proper sphere of employment. The present undertaking is meant to serve advantageously the general good of a community whose professed passport to consideration is intellectuality of character. The first impression conveyed by this declaration may be, that the claim advanced is pre-eminently arrogant; that the implied assumption of competence to act efficiently in this field of operation is destitute of any responsible warrant. We hasten with the corrective. The justness of the impression would be unimpeachable if the Varsity presumed to pose as the guiding star, as the interpreter even, of a Canadian school board, or of graduate and undergraduate humanity. In reality our intentions are very demure: not a guiding star, not an interpreter, but a register of opinion in and out of the University in matters of education as unbiased annalist of University life; and, in this last connexion, a strenuous advocate of what constitutes individual well-being. Efficiency from each of these points of view will demand from the undergraduates intellectual effort of no small significance. The maintenance also of a passable standard of excellence is not to be reasonably expected unless such effort is supplemented by highly participative exertion on the part of the graduates. Finally, there is needed the moral accessory of strongly-expressed sanction from the generation whose recollections of academic life have become gilded athwart the distance of many intervening years. Few will be disposed to detect extravagance in these stipulations; a close spirit of exaction would be inconsistent with the enlightenment of an auditory gathered round a prominent seat of learning. At most, insistence will be laid on the conventional engagements of full liberty of discussion and fair play — engagements which are entered upon in an earnest spirit of determination to abide by in these columns. At the same time we decline to offer a field for the exhibition of religious proclivities, and to afford an outlet to the ardency of youthful political partisans.

Set phrases and popular formulas, however acceptable to the multitude, act as irritants when appealing exclusively to an educated audience of men and women. Hence, in forecasting the course of the Varsity, the affection of very precise language has been discarded. Yet we have an avowal to make which barely escapes the stereotyped form: Whatever element of ambition or audacity lies latent in our programme, it is wholly bound up in the desire that the University of Toronto shall possess the best university paper in America and an unrivalled index of the progress of educational systems.

*FROM NO. 1, VOL. 1 OF THE VARSITY, PUBLISHED OCT. 7TH 1880.*

## IN THIS OUR 130TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE.

WARDS 20 AND 27.

ANNIVERSARY.

MAYORAL RACE.

The Varsity commences upon a review of statements from a multitudinous collective of persons seeking election in Wards 20 and 27 on the twenty-fifth day of our present month. Turn to the fourth page of this issue to witness some fourteen candidates who, with boldness and vigor of spirit, having cast their names forthwith into the ongoing civic foray, were asked to edify the student populace on their visions for council and this greatest of cities in the Canadian Confederation. A geographical survey of the locations in which citizens shall be able to make heard their conception of the public virtue known is provided.

In celebration of this, the one hundred and thirtieth year of our most humble of publications, The Varsity invites you to turn to page four post-haste for a review of the period situated between its commencement and the present day. Underlying this review is an understanding that the newspaper’s pages represent a register for the periods of greatest tumult in the history of our institution; recognizing that, although its course has wavered alongside the prevailing passions of the respective eras through which it has travelled, it has never shaken from itself the solemn conviction to be a precise measure of the affairs of the day.

As the titanic struggle for election to that highest office in our city nears its conclusion, only three candidates remain who register above the first percentile on the polled measure of support each would receive, should the public suddenly declare its intent to exercise the full force of its democratic inclinations on the present day. Shattering the presumptions of the punditry which mediates the civic discourse so rabidly, three students speak from the eighth page with the balanced sentiments of caution, support, and celebration for those three persons, one of whom we suspect commands enough recognition to gain the office on the twenty-fifth day of the month.