

Frank B. Stephens, of Doane. If Mr. Stephens had confined his argument to the time occupied by his opponent or even less, if he had not repeated his tactics of last year in constantly appealing to the "most honorable judges," and if he had refrained from his unwarranted personal attacks upon Mr. Yates, we should feel more like saying that the two debaters were on par. Mr. Stephens is to be given much credit for the impromptu parts of his speech and for its telling facts and figures, but it had an appearance of being manufactured much after the manner of the Doane oration. Mr. Yates, on the other hand, seemed to have thought all his out carefully, keeping closely to the line of the argument, and, aside from a peculiar enunciation, was the better orator.

The audience was attentive, enthusiastic and patient under the long programme, more so, perhaps, than any audience we have ever seen. Particularly in the debate, where one gentleman occupied fifty minutes between eleven o'clock and midnight, it was felt that the bounds of time should have been set. The contest, altogether, was a rare and brilliant exhibition of culture and declamatory power. In the preparation of each number the most earnest thought and careful labor had been given; in their delivery every nerve was strained and every art called up to make all perfect; in their reception by the audience it was seen, in the recitations particularly, how thoroughly in sympathy was the house with the stage, and how victory for Hesperians or Palladians would have been greeted by enthusiastic cheers.

And yet, after all this, after weeks of severe practice and unselfish labor given in hopes of deciding for one society or the other, after four hours of feverish expectancy to student friends, the three judges said that the performance was all very nice but that they couldn't really tell who was ahead. We were all well aware that the affair was "brilliant and spirited," we knew it would be so before we came, but we had come to a *contest* not an *exhibition*, so it was no wonder that the audience, citizens of Lincoln and citizens of Crete, expressed in groans their dissatisfaction with this (want of a) decision.

One of the Palladians sprang up and backed by cries of "Good, good!" requested Judge Morris to retire again with the judges and see if a positive decision, pro or con, could not be obtained, or that if he would not do this, that he would at least read aloud the marks of the judges. The Judge would do neither of these things, whereupon Lieut. Webster proposed that four persons appointed from the audience be added to the original three as judges to bring in a decisive verdict. This motion, notwithstanding

that Chancellor Fairfield tried to throw cold water upon it, was voted unanimously, but Judge Morris stubbornly refused to accede, though Editor Gere and Senator Howe offered to do anything the audience wished. What Editor Gere and Senator Howe should have done, being in the majority, was to outvote the tie. But they did not peep.

At this point, when there was danger of further complications, Mr. Yates appeared in behalf of the evening's class and requested that, as the late hour would prevent new judges from reading the manuscripts, no further action be taken. This was final, of course, and the crowd filed out of the hall, at one o'clock in the morning, in a most unhappy mind, feeling that a mistake had been made in the choice of judges and that there would be slight chance for other contests based on such uncertainty as this. If the palm had been given to the Hesperians, the Palladians would have been eager for another trial next year, if to the Palladians then we would know that we should have a hard struggle to hold it, and prepare ourselves accordingly. But as given, the decision was nothing; it dampened an otherwise completely happy day; it was love's labor lost.

"SENIOR STUDIES."

In his last article Gale admits that he had the classical course mainly in mind, still he used the words, "Studies of the Senior year." As to the distinctive character of these studies we had, and have, nothing to say. He also admits that his assertion that "the present course requires at least six different lines of thought" will not hold good of the scientific course, says nothing about the literary, and tries to prove that it is true of the classical by saying that "there are no two three-hour recitations occurring the same term that a Senior would be likely to choose." Let us see. The first semester he would have the choice of four three-hour studies, viz: Geology, English Literature, European History and Constitution of England. The second semester he would likewise have the choice of four studies, viz: Palaeontology, English Literature, European History and Ancient Law. Is it not likely a Senior will choose two of these four named studies? But if he does not, our objection was to the use of the words, at least. They imply that the minimum of the work required is six studies. In reality, by Gale's own figures, the maximum is only six. Does Gale recognize any difference in the meaning of these two words? or can they be used interchangeably?

We have no desire to discuss at length the advantages and disadvantages of the elective system. Few indeed are the stu-

dents that would ask for the old system now that they know something of the new. Nor do we accept without qualification the statement that the object of an education is to secure mental training and not the mere acquisition of knowledge." Let the two go hand in hand. Why should a student rack his brain with studies that give him mental discipline alone, when both discipline and useful knowledge might be attained by working in another line? This mental discipline theory of *itself* is fast losing its charms. Life is too short to spend four years acquiring it alone, and the system that requires it is a false one. We are also of the opinion that, in the past especially, there has not been enough special work done by the students, not enough useful knowledge gained along with the mental discipline. Of all our graduates no more than one or two were proficient in any one department when they graduated. Still they had a liberal education. The elective system gives a student a chance to make himself thorough in *something*, nor does it, in the least, lessen his opportunities for acquiring mental discipline. (We are now speaking of *students*, not those aimless creatures, who without the age to do University work, some without the ability, find their way into our colleges—into this one at least. Courses of study are not arranged, or should not be, for the benefit of the latter class at the expense of the former.) This, then, is the great advantage of the elective system—that discipline is acquired along with useful knowledge. This is of such importance as to override its disadvantages, the greatest of which is, too much work required of students necessitated by too many studies being pursued at the same time. Gale is unable to comprehend how, with a constant number of hours, the number of studies can be lessened without increasing the time (recitation time) given to each, rendering them perhaps consecutive, to which we objected and still object, as it would destroy the very principle upon which the elective system is based. But is there no other way out of the difficulty? If some of our two and three hour studies counted for three, four, or five hours but recited only twice or thrice a week, would not the matter be righted? The hours would remain constant, no more class time would be given to different studies. They would not recite on consecutive days, but the *number of studies* would be lessened. The fact is too many studies have not, thus far, counted for as much as they ought. It is not necessary for the students of the higher classes to recite every day. The work they must do for themselves, the professor can only guide and show them how they can best economize their time.