

# THE NEBRASKAN.

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The eloquent recital held in chapel a week ago last Thursday was a decided surprise to those unacquainted with the work being done by Mrs. Manning's classes. The willing student here finds a field in which he can improve himself and get more practical benefit from it than almost any other course offered. The first rudiments of that culture which is so noticeably lacking among us can be obtained under her instruction.

Concerning the recent oratorical election, we think that "much can be said on both sides." There seems to be as much dissatisfaction existing in the barbarian camp as there is among the fraternity men over the outcome. The opinion of Mr. Smith, which is published in another column, seems to be fair and just from his standpoint, and while we do not agree with him in some minor particulars, yet his view can be taken as typical of the less narrow-minded society members. We think it would be well if some of the more pronounced barbs would ponder over his remarks and accept the question from a more broadened standpoint.

Our barb contemporary never loses a chance to cast a slur at fraternity men, and they laughed in fenshish glee when they found some statements of Prof. A. G. Warner's which exactly suited their purposes. We suppose Professor Warner considered that his paper would be read before an audience dominated by the influence which prevailed eleven years ago. He was certainly swayed by prejudice, or had but a small idea of what time and progress could do to "Palladian traditions, which undoubtedly have held," etc., when he penned the following:

"It is almost wholly in the domain of college politics that there is and must be an irrepressible conflict between the frat and the anti-frat. For all purposes of political intrigue the organization of the fraternity men is infinitely superior to that of the barbarians. The game of politics as played by them is not the same as the game of politics when played by those who are all unpledged. It consequently follows that the two factions cannot work amicably together in the close relations of an open literary society. There may be a fair game with loaded dice if all the dice are loaded alike, but not if one man has loaded dice, the other dice that are unloaded."

This seems very small doctrine to be preached by a professor, an alumnus, and one who holds the position he does in such an institution as the Stanford university. We would not have to go far out of the way to get evidence to refute such statements as the professor has made. In fact it has been offered by those who knew the state of affairs he attempts to describe, and it is not the less complimentary to the fraternity element than to the barbarian.

The suggestion that steps be taken to perfect an interstate oratorical association between several state universities is timely. The advantages to be derived from such an association are many. Our state universities have a common plan and purpose of organization. Their standard of learning, their system of instruction, their curricula, and, yes, the ultimate purpose of their existence, are primarily the same. Why should there be no friendly and fruitful rivalry between them? Would it not unite them under a stronger bond of friendship and give an incentive to advancement in the broader and better education of today? The results of

athletic competition are fully appreciated. But this alone should not usurp the time and attention of students at the sacrifice of intellectual rivalry. The function of the typical university is to educate the brains instead of the brawn entrusted to the alma mater. Every reasonable effort should be used to arrange for annual oratorical as well as for debating contests. They both have their place in college life. They are distinct callings. The one is contention and requires the reasoning powers. The other is persuasion and plays with the emotions.

What are we to gain by continuing our membership in the present state association? The answer is apparent. As an institution of higher education, it speaks ill of us to remain a party to such contests and tactics as have characterized the state association in recent years. Action upon our part is necessary. The denominational colleges do not intend to come up to our standard, nor can it be expected. Their work is of another character and in truth on another plane.

It is true some time will be required before the new association may be perfected. But is it not worthy of our endeavor? If oratory is to be carried on with vigor and with success there must be some ultimate purpose in view. This purpose must be a noble one. It can be realized by forming an oratorical league with our sister state universities. It would be an association worthy of the name. Like institutions with like educational interests would have fruitful rivalry. Let us push this proposed plan with vim and vigor. Nebraska can well afford to take the lead. Let us strive to obtain that which is for the brightest and best in college life, and the future of oratory in this university will be secure.

### A COMMON SENSE VIEW.

In more ways than one the fiasco of last Friday afternoon may be said to mark the rise of a new era in university politics. Never before have the fraternities so signally failed to act in unison, and never before was there so much dissension and so great a desire for peace on the part of the barbarians. Let no one think me blinded by the action of the fraternities. From the first it was plain that they could not or did not care to act in unison. It would be wilful perversion of facts to say that they desired to play the magnanimous. They knew that a fight was inevitable and used various means to prepare for it. But these failed and as a last resort they were anxious to compromise. So much has been admitted. Who shall set himself to judge and say they were not sincere? When have the fraternities ever pledged themselves to stand by a ticket and not done so? Not in the last two years, at least.

But this is not the point. When Mr. McMullen said that political intrigue had been used on the victorious side he was right in the main. Very few of the barbs knew anything about the ticket nominated until Thursday, and fewer still had anything to say in regard to who should be on it. No caucus representing the real barbarian forces was ever held, and if any meeting was held we may be sure that only the chosen spirits of one of the three organizations were present. And perhaps the sentiments of these chosen politicians may best be characterized by what one of them said after the defeat of a year ago: "If we ever beat the frats we will have to organize a secret society of a few members from each of the three literary societies, let no one know of it, and then lay our ropes to beat them." This was fine sentiment, coming from one of the leading members of a society that prides itself on its democracy and anti-secret policy! From one of the three societies he never received any encouragement. The result of last week's campaigning might imply that this large-hearted, broad-minded barbarian was more successful elsewhere.

But this, too, is not entirely apropos. It was a bitter dose for the barbarian element to have to listen to such stinging reproaches as the only speaker on the other side administered, nor was it any less palpable because it came from him. It speaks none too well for the manhood and womanhood of the entire body of students present, and most of all for the inglorious victors, that

not one move was made towards wiping out old scores and setting up a new political precedent. It was like hitting a man when down to do as those present did. What if the majority of us did doubt the good faith of the fraternities? Was it ours to judge? Did two wrongs ever make a right? Was there ever offered to any intelligent audience a better opportunity to rise up out of petty strife and enmity and once for all set a stigma upon chicanery and intrigue and contention unworthy of the dignity of those engaged in it? And yet no one stood forth to plead or act for the more noble part. No one? Yes, there was one, and he was hissed.

The students (and there were many) who saw and said that the fraternities gained a greater victory Friday than ever before spoke a truth which every thinking student must concur in. They asked that politics be laid aside and the best man be elected for each place. They even went so far as to say that five of these best men should be barbarians. How many were willing to meet this request half way? Scarcely a dozen, and most of those were interested in a Christian organization the very members of which at once accused this association of becoming a political body. Thus was killed the last chance of a fair, open election, uncontrolled by secret caucuses and iron-clad pledges. When church members take part in politics, does the world say that the church has become a political organization? Has university politics become so noisome that good men cannot take part in them without losing their friends and influence?

It is to be hoped that before another election comes we will have awakened our privileges and will be ready to do the manly thing. It is time that professional politics be frowned down once for all, and we assert our dignity as lovers of justice and open dealing. The day should not be far off when such a thing will be impossible as a frat-barb fight at an election, and when every candidate will have to stand or fall on his merits. When this time does come university society will have adjusted itself as it should be. Our education is not doing what it should for us if it is not bringing us towards this view. And when such a time does come there will still be barbarians, but they will be so from principle, and not from necessity and enmity. Will they therefore be the worse barbarians?

The literary societies are full of men and women of the most sterling sort. For the most part the integrity of their motives is unquestionable. But they are allowing precedent to bandage their eyes, while they are led by less worthy followers of a dying past.

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