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VALUE OF SCHOOL DEBATES

During the past few weeks we have been interested in a series of debates here at Chemawa. These debates have been between representative teams of our school societies, and, as the "local color" of these events has been "touched up" in other columns of *The American*, it is not our purpose to go into detail here regarding each item.

We desire especially to call attention to the benefit derived from contests of this character. It is impossible to sift such a problem so fine that the exact amount of good can be estimated—much must be felt in such a matter, as there is no other way of measuring possible. We have taken a special interest in the series of debates just finished. It was desired to see what the result would be on the student body as a whole. It has been good—better even than we dared hope for.

First of all, to go into a public debate as one of the contestants obliges a pupil to dig about for data relative to his subject. He should know, as nearly as he can find out, everything pertaining to the question, both for and against. This is worth while. Then there is the valuable experience gained by standing before the public and battling to win, which of itself is of greatest benefit, and which makes for self-reliance all through life. No one can elect to engage in such a contest without the members of his society becoming alive to the situation, and all begin studying the "question" and looking for data. In this way all are benefitted; those who lose by the verdict of the judges are still winners by a big margin—they have gained in certain ways far more than they lost.

We think such a series of debates as we have just had was creditable