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MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1902

All of us can not have failed to notice the deplorable lack of interest on the part of students in purely student body affairs. It was made painfully apparent at the first meeting of the Associated Students held for the purpose of nominating candidates for the members of the executive committee. The meeting was scheduled for 11:30. It was nearly noon before a handful of students had gathered in Villard Hall.

Thirty were necessary for a quorum. Tired of waiting for the delinquents to gather in, some of the more active members went out to "rustle a quorum." Despairing of finding anyone willing to come in, some of these departed and left things in a worse shape than ever. Finally, some innocent Freshmen who happened to pass by and who had not yet acquired the habit of staying away, were induced to come in; and a count revealed the fact that barely thirty were present. The presiding officer hastily called the meeting to order lest some hungry student should escape from the door and leave but twenty-nine.

One nomination for president was made. The nominee hurriedly withdrew his name. No one seemed willing to accept the highest honor within the power of the students to confer. There was but one nomination for each of the offices, excepting that of secretary, and here the first nominee had to name her opponent.

When election came around there was no contest over any office except those of president and secretary. Little interest was shown and hardly half the students entitled to vote cast their ballot. This can not be wondered at. When an elector votes, he wishes to exercise and make known his right of

choice. When no choice is offered he has no motive to vote.

We have often lamented the tendency of nominees to withdraw, leaving but one candidate in the field for each office. This disposition to draw out results from many causes chief among which is the view which most nominees take of defeat. Some look upon defeat in student elections as a dire calamity, an irreparable loss, and had rather be burned at the stake than accept a nomination and fail of election. This position is unjustifiable. Such students will learn in after life that defeats and disappointments must sometimes come to the most talented and most fortunate; and that he is greatest who can bear defeat the noblest. Defeat, if it teach us to accept the inevitable philosophically and with resignation, may bring forth richer fruits than victory itself.

There is another reason for such withdrawals which comes nearer containing its own justification. At one or two student elections the presence of more than one candidate in the field was made the signal for a "campaign" in which tactics of a doubtful order were resorted to. To avoid the recurrence of such transactions, some conscientious candidates have felt constrained to withdraw their names and leave their opponent in full possession of the field. We hope that days of cooler heads and calmer tempers have rendered such precautions unnecessary. We believe that the students are capable of weighing deliberately the qualifications of different candidates and of voting according to their own deepest convictions; and, if defeated, we believe them capable of bowing to the will of the majority and pledging their support to our officers elect.

The presence of but one aspirant for each office has deadened interest in elections. The student feels dissatisfied because he is cheated out of the chief boon for which he paid his student body tax—the privilege of exercising his right of choice. Inferior officers may be secured. A man with little or no qualifications for a place may slide quietly into office because no one opposes him. The Associated Students are forced to be content with men who are not their choice. At the next election we hope to see two or three candidates for every place; we hope to see the whole student body turn out to vote, and we believe that much of the coveted interest in student affairs will be revived, and that the interest thus aroused will creep up into every branch of University activity.

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