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MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1902

A MERE SUGGESTION

A number of proposals for debate and questions connected with oratory have come up before the students in some form or other since the beginning of the year, and the need of some committee charged with the task of dealing with such problems has been painfully felt. The debaters have had to take such matters into their own hands, and thus arouse the suspicion that they are assuming too much authority or not acting from purely disinterested motives.

When proposals of this kind requiring immediate attention have come before the executive committee they have hesitated and often sought counsel before taking definite action. The members of the committee have felt their lack of experience and necessary insight to deal intelligently with questions of this kind. Furthermore they have not felt privileged to take action which will bind the University in any agreement. Many such questions arise and it is not possible, or at least not advisable, to convene the student body to deal with matters which could best be disposed of by a committee or board composed of experienced students and vested with full authority to take decisive action.

Making arrangements for local debating and oratorical contests requires considerable attention. If there were a manager charged with making all preparation for holding local contests and state contests when they are held in Eugene, promptness and dispatch would be secured. Why would it not be well to have a committee or board of oratory and

debate to exercise supervision over these two important fields of University enterprise?

Such board might consist of three or five members. Their duties would be to receive and consider proposals for debate with other universities, to execute agreements, to arrange time and places for contests, to see that local contests and try-outs are held, and, in fact, to exercise in these departments powers somewhat analogous to those of the athletic board. To facilitate the work and secure dispatch the board might appoint a special manager for oratory and one for debate to act under their direction.

Such a board might be appointed by the executive committee for the remainder of the year. The constitution could be amended at the next regular meeting to provide for the choice of a board at the regular election in May. We believe that much convenience would result from the adoption of some such a plan.

INTER-SOCIETY DEBATES

Sometime ago we announced that a movement had been started to bring about a series of inter-society debates. An alumnus of the University has offered to supply a bust of some great American statesman like Webster as a trophy to be contended for. The society winning two out of the first three debates is to remain in permanent possession of the piece of statuary.

No better scheme could have been devised to arouse interest in debate and to bring the societies into contact with each other in a closely fought contest at least once a year. A little healthy rivalry would do wonders for the two societies. It would kindle latent interest, disclose and develop dormant talent, and bring to light the best there is in each organization.

The societies should hasten to accept the offer and begin at once to prepare for the contest. These inter-society debates should receive scarcely less time and attention on the part of the participants than the intercollegiate debates. They should be a most valuable training for and a stepping stone to a place on the University debating team. We believe that it would soon become a recognized practice to choose men for the local try-out debate from those who had represented the societies in their annual contest, and thus avoid having the University team composed, as it too often is, of men who are wholly inexperienced. Let the Laureans and Philologists take action on this matter at the earliest possible date.

One of the town papers says there is a Societas Quirinalis at the University. There used to be.

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