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THE FREE LANCE.

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IT is with genuine pleasure that the FREE LANCE hears of the formation of the Pennsylvania Inter-collegiate Oratorical Union. To use the expression which is often applied to much less worthy enterprises, it supplies a long felt want. In fact, such a union is needed in this State, and there is a broad field for its action. We have had our State football and general atheletic associations which have done an immense amount of good in their own way. They have stimulated college spirit and healthy rivalry and a pride in one's *alma mater*, while they have drawn the colleges into

closer relations with each other. Pennsylvania State College, especially, has been benefitted by them. The prowess of her boys and their gentlemanly bearing while away contesting has won many friends for the blue and white. We would see them decline and go under with great regret. They have their much needed part to play. But, up till the present time, one great part in our collegiate system has remained inactive, that of Inter-collegiate Brain Associations, if we may use the term. They are needed, needed greatly, to counteract the tendency that has brought almost all inter collegiate spirit and rivalry to be synonymous with athletics. Fortunately, the reaction is coming. This Union is one of its forerunners. The recent inter-collegiate chess contest was another evidence of it. We do not see why an institution can not be as proud of victories in the forum as on the football field. Would not the medal or the banner of an Oratorical Union be as great a trophy as the cup of an athletic association, or the winner in its contests as much to be envied as the man who takes the greatest number of points in an athletic meet? We think they are.

Another phase of the question is that it will give a stimulus to the study of oratory as a study. Here, we pass it over very superficially, and, in some other institutions, even less attention is paid to it. No school in the State makes a specialty of it, even in their law courses. The time of the student is being given more and more to cold facts and technicalities. This Union would thus step in at an opportune time and enter its silent protest, while it strives to reawaken the old love for oratory that is gradually passing away with its Websters, its Swards, and its Blaines. Oratory is a noble art, and it is a grand thing to be a good orator. The FREE LANCE therefore extends to the Union a hearty welcome and bids it "God speed."