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Editorial Comments.



OF the measure of utility of such institutions as Public Libraries, is the number who take advantage of its facilities and the extent to which they do so, it is safe to say that at least half of the possible advantage is lost to Toronto University Students by the regulation prohibiting the use of library books except in the building.

Of one hundred and fifty ladies not more than five, and of a total eight hundred and thirty-four undergraduates in art, less than one hundred read in the library between seven and ten p.m. Nearly the same men appear night after night, and the conclusion must be that less than one-fourth of those desirous of using the library books for evening study are able to do so. Many reside in parts of the city so distant, that the inconveniences of reaching the library counterbalance the advantages it offers; to these the regulation is most unfair. The ladies especially, appear in very small numbers, and are so sensible of the disadvantage that they have petitioned the senate to allow the taking out of books. Had they circulated their petition amongst the men they would have obtained a large number of signatures.

If the taking out of books were incompatible with keeping the library open in the evening, we should hesitate to recommend the adoption of that plan. The fact that a considerable number use the reading room constantly is itself evidence of the advantages at their disposal and of the loss that others less favorably situated sustain. But they are compatible even with the books at present at the disposal of the committee and would be incontestably so, if a comparatively small sum were expended in the purchase of extra copies of the books most commonly read. For other reasons we hold that the Library Committee must keep in contemplation the future issue of books for home reading.

We have noticed that the average number of readers in the library is one hundred, but though this is a comparatively small number (less than 12 per cent), it will not admit of any considerable increase. The accommodation is limited, and with any large increase in numbers the individual advantage will be more than proportionately diminished. As it is, at present the constant coming and going renders concentration of mind sufficiently difficult, and if the library is to meet the necessities of the future, some extension of the present system is inevitable. At

present, however, we think the following plan would work satisfactorily. Let the books be divided into two sets by reference to the initial letter of the Authors' surnames, and let these two sets be allowed out during alternate weeks those from A to L being left to exclusive use in the reading room, while those from M to Z are allowed to be taken home. In the following week the order would be reversed. With the large list of books to be read in each department no one could complain of hardship in being restricted to half that number each week. At any rate we offer the scheme to the Committee and Librarian gratis, with the hope that it or some other will be adopted, whereby the advantages of such an excellent and valuable institution may be more widely and fairly distributed.

The rejection of the At Home scheme by the Literary Society leaves Toronto University without an annual social event. It is to be regretted that no opportunity will be afforded to the public and the students of inspecting the fine edifices in connection with our University. To most of us, the interior of the library, the Biological building and school of science is an unknown quantity, and an opportunity of exploring their mysterious recesses would be very welcome. If it could be arranged that on a certain day these buildings would be thrown open to the students, we think that a great many would avail themselves of the opportunity.

A large number of Varsity men turned out to hear their old favorite Keene at the Grand last week. That he appreciates highly the good-will shown him is evident from the following clipped from the Baltimore News:—
"I find that I am, perhaps, best appreciated in the British provinces, possibly because Canadians read Shakespeare more than we do in the East. In all the Canadian colleges the students study Shakespeare thoroughly, write essays upon his plays and represent them at private theatrical entertainments. In Montreal and Toronto my audiences are chiefly composed of students. And they are very appreciative.

"In Toronto not long ago, I was taking a much-needed nap in the afternoon when a waiter tapped at the door of my room in the hotel.

"Some one to see you, sir," he said.

"Well," said I, gruffly, not relishing this interruption to my rest, 'show him up.'

"Can't do it sir," replied the waiter, "the room wouldn't hold 'em all."

"And I was forced to get up, go down-stairs and address about 200 students who had called to see me.

"But when an actor finds himself so honored he will be content to forego afternoon naps.