

## College Topics

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G. W. ROSS, Editor.

A. N. MITCHELL, '00, Business Manager.

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TORONTO, NOVEMBER 24TH, 1899.

For many reasons, it has been deemed advisable not to issue "College Topics" until Friday morning for the rest of this term. One reason is that we want to give a report of as many of the Mulock Cup games as possible. There are other strong reasons which are sufficient to make us believe that it is to the readers' advantage that we should defer the publication one day.

### THE RISE OF FRATERNITIES.

One definition of a Greek letter Society or College Fraternity might be as follows: A secret society formed of undergraduates of a University or a College for the promotion of good-fellowship and the cherishing of similar high aims. The Greek Letter Society is not an upstart by any means, and though not reaching back as far as Freemasonry, it had its origin about the time of the birth of the Republic of the United States. The minutes of the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity, the oldest of all, tell us that on December 5th, 1776, five students of the College of William and Mary, at Williamsburg, Va., met and organized a Greek Letter Society, "for the promotion of literature, and friendly intercourse among scholars." Thus, we have the origin of the first of a class of societies, which, if local fraternities are considered, would in all probability to-day number several hundred.

For forty-five years, Phi Beta Kappa, which is now an honorary non-secret society, had no rival, but then the second was organized and was soon followed by numerous others, up till the present time. The practice with the majority of the older fraternities has been to grant charters to other Colleges or Universities, until now some have fifty or sixty or even seventy branches of the parent chapter, in as many different institutions. The members of a fraternity are in full possession of all its secrets, and have certain means of making themselves known to any member of the fraternity. Each member wears the pin of the fraternity, and it is said that most, if not all, have a grip peculiar to the fraternity.

During the colonial days, when College life was freer and wilder than now, the constitutions and rituals of many of these early societies were stolen, and hence, it is known that a general resemblance exists between all Greek Letter Societies. The Greek letters are usually the initials of some motto. For example, Phi Beta Kappa are the first letters of three Greek letters meaning, "Philosophy, the Guide of Life."

The Greek Letter Society is an institution peculiar to American College life, and has nothing similar in the College societies of any other country. Some years ago a Chapter of Chi Phi was established at Edinburgh University, but it only lived a few months in the face of Scottish conservatism. In Canada, this has not been the case, and both at the University of Toronto and at McGill their growth has been as healthy and vigorous as at any American institution. There are now at Varsity (embracing in this term, Arts, Medicine, and the School of Practical Science), five chapters of American fraternities. These are given, as follows, in the order of their establishment: Zeta Psi, Kappa Alpha, Alpha Delta Phi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, and the latest of all, Delta Upsilon. These are commonly abbreviated to: "The Zetas," "The Kaps," "The Alpha Deltas," "The Dekes," and the "D. U.'s." As a rule, it may be said that chapters are obtained by a body of undergraduates, who have existed as a local fraternity, and who wish to have the added advantages of being connected with some good fraternity on the other side.

The College Fraternity fills a peculiar place in College life. It unites together in life-long bonds of fellowship a chosen body of young men, who derive therefrom many of the best and most enduring influences of their life. In Toronto, as in the States, most fraternities have their chapter houses, wherein the members live and hold their meetings. Thus, the fra-

ternity-house takes the place of the common boarding-house, and to those who are fortunate enough to live there, gives more of a home-life than even a good residence could offer. Moreover, it permits of more attention to studies than does either the boarding-house or residence.

Secrecy, though ever so harmless, always suggests evil intentions, to those who are not in the secrets, on the part of those who are. Thus, it was with the earliest of Greek Letter Societies in American Universities, and so it was with the first established at the University of Toronto. Many a hard election contest has been fought with the "pros" ranged against the "antis," and even now the opposition has not entirely, though it has nearly, died out.

The chief reason advanced against the Greek Letter Societies has been that they formed cliques and combines to run University affairs. "College Topics" does not believe this to be the case, and without discussing the question further would add that this is no argument at best. For in any institution, whether Collegiate Institute, College or University, whether in a Church Council, City Council or Athletic Club, there are almost certain to be cliques.

Having dealt with the chief argument against fraternities, we will close by quoting the opinion of a well-known man on this question, Anson J. Upson, on behalf of the regents of the University of the State of New York, recently said: "I believe most sincerely in College secret societies, so-called. I believe that the Greek Letter Fraternities are invaluable in the good influence exerted upon the members by each other, and in the ennobling friendships therein, which last forever. My conviction is deliberate, not altogether ignorant, but founded upon considerable experience, that these societies largely promote a loyal and enthusiastic interest in the College where they are; and that in College government and in University affairs they can be legitimately used to promote good order and manly ambition and honest work. If I were in a University Faculty, I should be the last to vote for their exclusion. I should rather be the first to urge their introduction."

### Heard in the Halls.

A man who wouldn't allow a third-rate physician to probe his lung, should take his watch to a specialist also, to insure close time.—Proctor.

A picked team from the Inter-Collegiate League will play the Western Association on the Athletic Field, Saturday, November 25th, at 3 p.m. Admission, 15 and 10c.

Proctor, the watch specialist, 344 Yonge street.

Mock Parliament will replace the debate at the open meeting of the Literary Society on December 8th.

The Inter-Collegiate Debate, between Knox and Wycliffe, was a complete success, and augurs well for the future of the Union. W. Mortimer Clark was chairman. The decision of the judges was given by Mr. Willison in favor of the negative, which was upheld by Knox, represented by Messrs. Matheson and Munro. The affirmative was supported by Messrs. Carpenter and Cotton. The subject was, "Resolved, that the present expansion policy of the United States is not conducive to the best interests of that country."

The Ladies' Glee Club concert will be held on the evening of December 13th, in the Normal School Theatre.

"Ross" Gillespie, '00, returned this week from a five days' trip to Boston, New York, and other Eastern cities.

Alf. Caulfield, '02, has returned from a hunting excursion in Muskoka, bringing back lots of venison and no lack of stories.

Owing to the Rugby match on Saturday, November 25th, Class '01 will hold their reception on Friday, the 24th inst., at 4 p.m. An invitation is extended to all the ladies of University College.

The Classical Association meeting on the 21st was fairly well attended. The papers read by Miss Creighton, '00, and J. A. Martin, '02, were of a very high order. Miss Creighton's treated of "Roman Philosophy before the Empire," and Mr. Martin's of "Sophocles and the Greek Drama."

The '00 fall reception is set down for Friday afternoon, December 8th, and an innovation will be introduced respecting invitations. Contrary to the custom of previous years, the Executive have decided to issue special tickets this fall, in order to limit the number in attendance. These tickets, which shall be in the form of invitations, will be presented to all the ladies of the University, the executives of the different years at Varsity and Victoria and to the members of the class.

A. L. McCredie, '01, is spending the week with friends in Belleville.

Class receptions are now the order of the day. '01 hold theirs on Friday, Nov. 24th; '02, on December 2nd; '00, on December 8th, and '03, on December 16th. All will take the usual form of a promenade.

Report has it that G. W. Hastings, B.A., '99, has a story which he could unfold of the dark doings of some of Toronto's footpads.

A large audience was present at the lecture on "Journalism," delivered by Mr. J. S. Willison, Editor of the Globe, be-

fore the Political Science Association on Thursday afternoon.

The Harmonic Club has decided to postpone its annual concert until next term, in deference to the Ladies' Glee Club concert to be held next month.

A retired humorist one day ventured into a cotton mill, and while in an unguarded moment he was explaining some of his post mortem jokes to an innocent operative, he was drawn into the ponderous gearing and dreadfully crushed. They combed what they could of him out of the machinery, and spread the effects on the floor. "Who is it?" was the anxious enquiry, as the crowd gathered around. Nobody could answer. Then the eyes of the humorist slowly opened, and his lips moved. "There is good reason why nobody recognizes me," the humorist painfully whispered. A sympathetic bystander bent down his ear. "Why is it?" he asked. "Because," explained the humorist, seeing an opportunity to steal home, "because I have been travelling in cog." And then a smile like a summer cloud moved for an instant over his features, and he was gone. He never spoke again.

Students in the Cornell Graduate School of Railway and Mechanical Engineering are being placed in railway shops for practical work. No less than 60 spent the summer in the shops at \$1.30 a week. The work has quickened the grasp of the students, and the railroad men co-operate heartily in the plan.

The University of Chicago has adopted a system of concessions calculated to draw students from foreign countries. So far it has been applied only to Japan. On the principle that one native tongue is as good as another, the University will accept a unit of study in Japanese for the same amount of work in English. Chinese, the classic for the Japanese, will be accepted in lieu of Greek.

The Modern Language Club held a very successful meeting on Monday, November 20th. The programme consisted of a comparison of Chateaubriand and Loti, with reference to their Descriptions of Palestine, by Miss E. M. Fleming, '00, and a comparison of 18th Century French poets with those of the 19th Century, by W. Elmslie, '00. Both papers were very exceedingly well prepared. Considering the extensive field which Mr. Elmslie had to cover, his paper was astonishingly exhaustive, the most praiseworthy parts being probably his style of comparisons.

The Chess Club are as enthusiastic as ever, and the fine points of the game are being taught to a number of novitiates. A Chess League has been formed between Varsity, the Y.M.C.A., and Athenaeum chess clubs. Messrs. S. F. Shenstone, R. G. Hunter, B.A., and F. E. Brown, represent Varsity on the committee of the league. A Tournament is being arranged in which twelve men from each club will be entered.

"Jack" Parry, '99, now in first year Medicine, is confined to his room, threatened with an attack of typhoid fever.

### INTER-COLLEGE DEBATES.

The programme of the Inter-College Debating Union for this season has just been issued. The officers for this term are: Hon. President, Dr. G. R. Parkin; Hon. Vice-President, N. W. Hoyles, Q.C.; President, W. J. Knox, M.A.; Secretary-Treasurer, G. H. Wilson; Executive, J. H. Osterhout (Victoria); T. F. Battle (Osgoode Hall); T. H. Cornish (McMaster); Dr. Smale (Varsity); E. P. S. Spencer (Trinity).

Following is the programme:

Knox College v. Wycliffe College, Nov. 22nd, at Wycliffe—Resolved: "That the present expansion policy of the United States is conducive to the best interest of that country." Affirmative—Messrs. W. F. Carpenter, B.A., and T. H. Cotton, of Wycliffe College. Negative—Messrs. H. Munroe, B.A., and H. Matheson, of Knox College. Judges—Mr. J. S. Willison, Professor Alexander, Professor Robertson.

University College v. Osgoode Hall, November 24th, at Osgoode—Resolved: "That governmental ownership of railroads in Canada would be more beneficial than the present system." Affirmative—Messrs. H. Fisher, B.A., and I. McNece, B.A., of Osgoode. Negative—Messrs. A. McLeod and G. A. Cornish, of University College. Judges—Mr. D. R. Wilkie, Professor Clark, and Professor McKay.

McMaster University v. Victoria University, December 4th, at Victoria—Resolved: "That competition is more beneficial to mankind than co-operation would be." Affirmative—Messrs. A. B. Cohoe, B.A., and T. H. Cornish, of McMaster. Negative—Messrs. J. W. Davidson, B.A., and F. L. Fairwell, of Victoria. Judges—Dr. Parkin, Professor Hague, and Professor McFadden.

Trinity has the bye this time, and will enter the next series as having won in this.

"Gentlemen," said the learned prof., "the law of Conservation of Energy is one of the most profound in the whole universe; and it is upon this fact (that no energy is ever lost), that the whole science of to-day is based. Let me repeat, 'energy is never lost'; it may seem to disappear, but in reality it reappears in some other form." Such was the strain of his discourse for some time; then he continued: "Yes, it is also another remarkable fact that all forms of energy, such as motion and electricity, tend to be reduced to the

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CALENDAR

DEC. 5.—Practical examinations at Provincial Normal Schools begin.

11.—County Model Schools examinations begin.

13.—Written examinations at Provincial Normal Schools begin.

15.—County Model School term ends.

15.—Provincial Normal Schools close.

22.—High Schools first term, and Public and Separate Schools close.

lowest form of energy—namely, that of heat; and I do not hesitate to prophesy that at some distant date the sum total of the various kinds of energy in the world will be reduced to that of heat."

At this enjoyable prospect, the boys burst into a laugh.

The professor stopped, searched in the capacious recesses of his cranium for the cause of the uproar, and having found it, retorted: "Gentlemen, that prospect seems to touch a very resonant chord in your hearts."

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