

a century have had time to show some signs of independent development. Queen's, we think, has been particularly original in its growth, and one aspect of this development—viz., that of student institutions—has been brought to our notice by recent discussions. In the early days the few students in attendance had no need of elaborate organizations, but as the university expanded and students increased in number, organizations naturally grew at the same time, even before the need for them was made explicit. Thus, for example, the ancient and honorable Concurus had as its birth place a vacant lot behind the present ruined brewery, then in full operation, where the students used to assemble on fine afternoons and hold high carnival. A judge was selected and some unfortunate was seized and tried on some fictitious charge, the fine being used to purchase the beer for the court at the convenient brewery. When this supply gave out another culprit was found and so on, *ad infinitum*. Nearly forty years ago the Alma Mater Society had its humble beginning in a students' debating club. Other institutions have had similar growth, but these two are most striking, as the A.M.S. has now become an executive body, controlling the whole of the university under-graduate business, while the two Courts are now very serious affairs and regulate the conduct of the students as individuals. In short our organizations have grown and been developed mostly by precedent, custom and tradition, having a minimum of fixed written law, and this is the secret of their perfect adaptation to the particular needs of the time. But while such a method is admirably suited for growth and freedom it has its disadvantages, for now and again questions come up for settlement which reveal the fact that while our systems work very well in practice they are by no means perfect theoretically. We must, therefore, from time to time take stock of our customs and see which are living and which are antiquated: which should be rigorously followed and which relaxed.

To take a few examples. In the earlier days of Queen's the football club, the reading room and the sending of delegates were supported by direct contributions, and any general management was controlled by the senior year, the Alma Mater or a mass meeting. This method of collecting funds became very irksome as growth went on, and the Arts Society was formed to collect a fixed sum from each student for the purpose of maintaining the reading room, sending delegates and meeting the Arts' share of football expenses. But meanwhile the football club was brought under the Athletic Committee and supported out of that fund, yet for several years the Arts Society went on mechanically making the usual grant towards football until last year general atten-

tion was called to the absurdity of the custom and it was discontinued. Again, even at the present time, the Alma Mater Society has full control of the reading room, while the Arts Society furnishes all the funds and receives no account of them. This matter is being discussed at present and will probably be rectified this session. The Arts Society also pays the expenses of Arts' delegates to other colleges, while those delegates are selected by the senior year. This also will be changed in time, but for the present it works comfortably enough. Within the past year or two the Arts Society has taken over from the senior year the general supervision of the Concurus, but this venerable institution still defrays its expenses, as formerly, from its own fund of fines and escheats, instead of being dependent on the treasury of the superior body. Thus in the early days each special object was attained by a method peculiarly its own, and this went on developing until the objects grew so various and important that the system became unmanageable, and in the case of those objects already mentioned, the Arts Society was formed to reduce them under a unity of control. But still the old customs hold sway until they become insufferable and are thrown off one by one to make way for a better arrangement.

Another instance of the growth of custom was brought out in the A.M.S. elections last session. In the society's youth, when it was by no means so important or influential as at present, it was tacitly admitted for the sake of securing the co-operation of all years and faculties, that each of those years and faculties should nominate men for certain offices. This custom went on unchallenged until last year one faculty very apologetically made a break. In the heated discussion which followed it was evident that a great many students now for the first time discovered that the customary allotment of offices was not warranted by the constitution. As the present is a time of systematising and defining in our societies, we should carefully examine which customs are the results of a past order of things, and which are the expression of the present conditions, and should deal with them accordingly.

* * *

Though the friendship of Britain and the United States has received a sudden shock, we must not conclude they hate each other. The "Queen's man in the United States" has some ground for the complaint made in our last number. It is not pleasant to be cited as a bad example, as our neighbors did appear in a recent editorial. Such an edifying illustration should be taken in the spirit it is given, for no general condemnation was meant, and the accusation of "low ideals and sordid aims" exists