

The Varsity

Published Three Times Weekly by the Parliament of the Undergraduates of the University of Toronto.

Subscription Price, One Dollar per year in advance.

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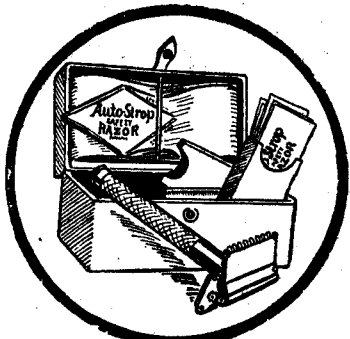
TORONTO, DECEMBER 13, 1911

ENFORCED OLIGARCHY

Anyone who is unfortunate enough to see the Executive group photographs which appear in Torontonensis, will be struck by the recurrence in them of the same wearied looking faces, the same untidy clothes of the same men. Almost all our University activities are directed by a small group of men, perhaps not more than fifty in all. These fourth year men are in everything and run everything. Athletics, Journalism, the College and Faculty societies, and the various Clubs are all directed by a very few men. As a consequence these men are overworked; they are so busy rushing from committee to committee or beguiling unsuspecting freshmen into parting with their hard earned (?) cash, that they have no time either to read, or think. Even their executive work is often slipshod, they are too hasty to think out other schemes. As our venerable Principal would say "They slop over." Their talk and ideas are too often superficial, and the clubs to which they belong, and which should form the centre of a healthy intellectual life, are too frequently productive only of very vapid and trivial discussions. A few men try to do far too much. And these men are not the only men capable of filling the executive offices which they occupy. There are dozens of men quite as able, who take no active part in University simply because they are not known. To them the University is simply a collection of buildings where more or less dull lectures are given, and more or less dull books read. They quite miss that stimulating contact with their fellow students, that interchange of ideas, and that practical experience in dealing with affairs, which is perhaps the most valuable part of University life. If by some means these men could be drawn into the active work of our clubs and societies, and committees, the burden would be lifted from the shoulders of the few who are at present overworked and a great benefit accrue to all concerned. The few would have leisure to think, the many would be able to, and to obtain something much more valuable than any book learning and understanding, of their fellows.

The evil is not so marked among men in Applied Science and Medicine who are thrown together in drafting room and Laboratory, but among the Arts Colleges, and especially University it is striking. The cause is perfectly patent. We have become so large, that the individual is submerged in the mass. It is only by chance that men get to know each other and find out each others abilities. Accordingly when a few men, by chance, find themselves in executive office in their first and second years, they naturally push out to assist them their friends whose capabilities they know. Power becomes concentrated in a small group simply because it is physically impossible that in a College of 800 or 1000 every man should be known. Everything as we have said depends on chance. It would seem as if the only remedy were the adoption of something like the English system of small colleges of 100 or 200 men each. At present this is of course impracticable. But much can be accomplished if the vast and silent majority, putting aside that very doubtful virtue of modesty, seize every opportunity of doing something.

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MORE ABOUT SLANG

To the Editor of The Varsity:

Dear Sir,
 Allow me to offer a practical suggestion, while heartily endorsing the views expressed in the recent editorial on "Slang." My suggestion is this: Let the "Onlooker" employ his keen observation and marked literary ability in selecting 57 varieties of slang. Let the chosen 57 be printed along with forceful synonymous expressions from the King's English; but let it be recognized that the 57, far from being convenient relishes, are intended only for the museum.

At the risk of being too frank, may I suggest that "The Onlooker" derive as much of his material as possible from "The Varsity." Nobody with an eye to business and general enlightenment would think of opposing the policy that "a little slang helps to make a breezy write-up;" but once in a while our breath is taken away by the breeze.
 In that number of "The Varsity" in which appeared the editorial on "Slang," appreciative readers noted three moderate breezes and one or two zephyrs. Referring to the "traditional event" of photographing the championship football team, the reporter relates with some vigor, that "After the whole mob had assembled, they adjourned to the front doorway of the Main Building."

Again there were three interesting accounts of three important University functions—the '15 Class Meeting the Arts Dinner, and the Rugby Dance. In the first we learn that a reporter was "startled by ungodly noises emerging from the West Hall; and upon investigating the new "corporate body," arrived in time to record that "the proceedings was declared open."

In the minds of those who were present at the Arts Dinner, there is no doubt that "A Good Time Was Had;" but such a breezily apt description probably occurred to very few. The special representative at the Rugby Dance gives us in his conclusion a gem of literary criticism: "One does not feel like going through a rough-house performance after four hours' dancing. This is not in the way of a knock, but is merely a suggestion. It was sure a peach of a dance."

Now let us hope that the student body will not place the whole burden of responsibility for reform on "The Onlooker" We all can shout for the honour of U. of T.; here is an opportunity for all to fight for it. Ordinary, everyday conversation is the determining factor in a man's choice of words when, on important occasions, he is called upon to speak extempore. At such a time it is essential that the King's English shall not be to him a foreign tongue.

This silent, individual campaign for self-improvement will be heavily handicapped without the support and leadership of "The Varsity." The best friends of the college paper are quick to recognize its many superior qualities; but at the same time they are the first to protest when they see a slight tendency to pander to the tastes of a "Smart Alec" minority. In the essays of Charles Lamb we have a convincing demonstration of the absurdity of the belief that a clear, breezy, and effective style is inseparable from slang.

I am, yours, etc.,

"LA CHINE."

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ONLOOKER'S CORNER

It is reasonable, in these days when women's societies and young men's sewing classes are agitating against the cigarette, for the Onlooker to whistle a little air against the evil, too. But it will be done only in favourable mention of the pipe.

Medically speaking, the cigarette has its value. The French army physicians prescribe it in the Foreign Legion as a deterrent of mental disorders. The presence of the cigarette in our midst may be due to a similar prescription. Indeed, there are many cases in which we would suspect this to be so.

But the heaviest argument against the cigarette, is the existence of the pipe. Why, in the name of Nicotine, should anyone go through life with a little, perfumed paper stuck to his lip, when there are pipes, sweet ambrosial pipes, to be had, in which you pack your dreams, and doze in perfect peace? You cannot color a cigarette. But look you at a meerschaum! You cannot season a cigarette. But look you at a briar,—a dear, delectable briar! Think of the sentiment of fatherly tenderness with which you nurture your briar into its perfect, luscious maturity. Then think of a cigarette—just smoke and a loathsome end in a receptacle.

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The College is a Government Institution, designed primarily for the purpose of giving instruction in all branches of military science to cadets and officers of the Canadian Militia. In fact it corresponds to Woolwich and Sandhurst.

The Commandant and military instructors are all officers on the active list of the Imperial army, lent for the purpose, and there is in addition a complete staff of professors for the civil subjects which form such an important part of the College course. Medical attendance is also provided.

Whilst the College is organized on a strictly military basis the cadets receive a practical and scientific training in subjects essential to a sound modern education.

The course includes a thorough grounding in Mathematics, Civil Engineering, Surveying, Physics, Chemistry, French and English.

The strict discipline maintained at the College is one of the most valuable features of the course, and, in addition, the constant practice of gymnastics, drills, and outdoor exercises of all kinds, ensures health and excellent physical condition.

Commissions in all branches of the Imperial service and Canadian Permanent Force are offered annually.

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The length of the course is three years, in three terms of 9 1/2 months each.

The total cost of the course, including board, uniform, instructional material, and all extras, is about \$800.

The annual competitive examination for admission to the College, takes place in May of each year, at the headquarters of the several military districts.

For full particulars regarding this examination and for any other information, application should be made to the Secretary of the Militia Council, Ottawa, Ont., or to the Commandant, Royal Military College, Kingston, Ont.

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