

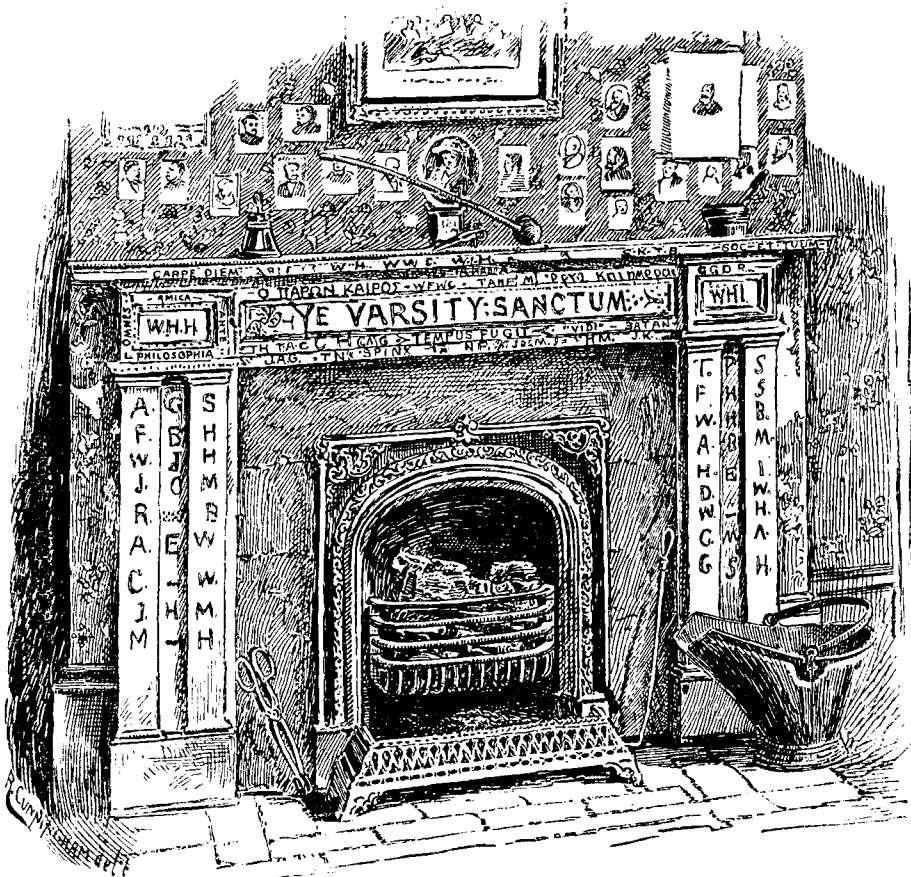
# THE VARSITY

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YE VARSITY-SANCTUM.

In his charming *Voyage Autour de ma Chambre* M. Xavier de Maistre has immortalized what one might almost call conventionality and the commonplace. In the *Philosophe Sous les Toits* M. Emile Souvestre has sketched for us an equally charming study of an interior. When one remembers the countless rooms one has been in, one is very much tempted to ask, What can there be attractive or romantic about a room with four walls, a floor, and a ceiling? If it is true that we are what we eat, it is equally true, at least in the majority of cases, that our houses, our rooms, our dens, become what we make them, and unconsciously exhibit our tastes and fancies. A Boudoir is naturally suggestive of delicacy, refinement and everything poetical; a Studio of everything artistic, sensuous, and beautiful; but an Editor's Sanctum—what? To the ordinary mind nothing but scissors and paste and printers and “devils,” and with as bare and uninteresting a background as a lawyer's office. And certainly there is some colour to this belief. The Editor does not surround himself, outwardly at least, with luxury and display. But he lives in an atmosphere of ideality which, to him, makes up a thousand-fold, for the painful realities of life and his environment therein. Though the Sanctum appears dull, cheerless and empty, it is the birthplace of ideas. It is in the silence of the Sanctum that the learned Owl witnesses

the mysterious transference of mighty thoughts from the brain to paper; and the Owl is discreet and tells not how it is accomplished, nor with what pangs they come to the birth and are delivered.

It is now nearly eight years since THE VARSITY had a Sanctum; it is but four, however, since the Owl has had a room for his very own. In 1879 he was born, and in 1880 he was christened. For four years thereafter he flitted uneasily about from place to place in Residence, having no place of abode, no local habitation, though he had a name. In the fall of 1884, by the kind permission of the Dons, he assumed sovereignty over the *suite* of rooms in the east end of Moss Hall, and placed there his household goods and the perch upon which he now sits as we write this. During his tenancy of these quarters he has amused himself in various ways, sometimes by assisting the Editors in their work and their play, and has never been absent from his comfortable corner—the seat of honour—at the right-hand side of the fireplace, when business or pleasure has demanded the attendance of the Editors at the Sanctum. A silent and discreet looker-on has he been, forsooth, of all the sayings and doings which the walls, if they have ears as we are told, must have heard. What multitudes of faces has he seen, what numberless voices has he listened to! What quantities of stories—good, bad and indifferent