

The Varsity

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THE UNIVERSITY ROWING CLUB.

IT is with a great deal of pleasure that we publish in another column a letter from Mr. W. H. Bunting, B.A., a graduate of 1892, upon the subject of the formation of a rowing club in connection with the University. To those who were present at the meeting held in the gymnasium a week or so ago, this further enlightenment upon the matters, there discussed, will be perhaps unnecessary; but we hope through this medium to reach the absentees upon that occasion, among whom we are certain that there are very many who will become deeply interested in the proposal. Mr. Bunting, during his undergraduate career, was captain of the Rugby Football Club, doing much to place it upon its present stable basis. Since his graduation he has been prominently connected with that branch of sport in this city, which he is now trying to have fostered in our midst. He thus speaks from a very intimate acquaintance both with the merits of rowing and with our athletic needs. Presented by one whose words should bear such weight in the matter, we trust that the idea will at least be taken into a thorough consideration. When we have in our ranks plenty of men, who, if the means were afforded, would use for the benefit of this institution that skill with the oar which they have displayed in connection with non-academic organizations, there is no reason why we should not take advantage of their ability and their willingness. Further, there are many men among us who have all the requisites for the making of fine oarsmen, if an opportunity is but given of developing their latent powers in this direction. We thus in the formation of this club would not only be increasing the reputation of the athletic side of our college life, but we would be aiding this branch of athletics, deserving as it is, and improving much the general physical condition of our undergraduates.

We have been in business JUST FOUR MONTHS in Toronto, and it has come to this:—Ask any student where

We do not think that our students always regard athletics in quite the proper spirit. There are some who err in one extreme and some in another. Nobody who reflects at all upon the function of a university, denies that the main object for which a man pursues a college course is to obtain that learning, that educational training, which it is generally supposed a university affords. But this is not all. There are many advantages to be obtained in connection with our life here, for which our application to whatever branch of study we adopt, is not at all responsible. Who would consider the hours spent in that social life, so peculiar a university's, as lost? It is a mighty educative influence which springs from this constant and familiar intercourse with men of one's own age and condition. And yet we have, we regret to say, undergraduates who are so completely absorbed in the task of taking a high place in the class list that they are unable to recognize that college life has more than one side to it. It is for the most part in this class, with some very notable exceptions, that those are found who regard athletics with indifference, who do not seem to consider it as an essential, both in their own and in the University's life. To them mind is everything, the poor body nothing. It is to these that a certain very old adage should be brought home, concerning a young lad, with a very familiar name, who was in his day what might now be termed a downright "plug," who did not believe in athletics for one thing, and who ended up by not being as bright as many of those who less persistently applied themselves. We need not dwell here upon a man's duty to his physical nature. We have only to draw attention to the various brilliant young lives, which have in recent times been but short, but a short time after graduation, as a result of what was undoubtedly a neglect of the needs of the bodily frame. We do not believe that this neglect is as persistent among us as it was at one time, but there is still much room for improvement.

The reaction in recent years in college life on this continent has certainly been, in recent years, in favor of a wider development in athletics. We cannot but welcome this as a change, which has undoubtedly done much already to increase the vigor of the college man, mentally, as well as physically. But there is a great danger in carrying the movement too far. There is a class, happily, not very numerous with us, who stand in need of reproof, quite as much as those who neglect athletics altogether. It is composed of those who devote their time and attention to the different branches of sports and pastimes to an altogether unwarrantable extent. Instead of giving over only one's leisure hour to matters in connection with athletics, these are given a man's whole attention. As a consequence, we have the American comic papers depicting the American graduate as a man of splendidly developed muscle and very diminutive intellectual capacity. Of course, this is to a great extent a caricature, but one cannot deny that there are certain tendencies which go to justify it. In fact, in some American colleges, matters have gone so far, that it has been found necessary to prohibit places on college teams to those who are seen to be so engrossed with athletic matters as to neglect everything else. Should it not be our duty to try and suppress any