

nounced it a decided success, and smiled in a bovine German way for several minutes after.

In all there were six duels that Saturday morning, mostly about nothing. A point of honor, a friendly challenge, a chance encounter—anything serves as an excuse. The German student duel is anything but serious. My friend, the attache, told with abhorrence of an American student over there who had been challenged to a duel, who said, "If any gentleman wishes a fight let him get a revolver and fight right, and I'll do what I can to oblige him." "Bah, a Philistine," said the attache. That is the spirit in which most of the duels are conducted. All the time they are going on students sit around at the long tables drinking their strawberry wine and taking their rolls.

Wicket 94? W.

REMARKS ON "THE PLUG."

It was sixty years ago that Emerson said: "The timidity of public opinion is our disease, or, shall I say, the publicness of opinion, the absence of private opinion." His words are as true for our own day as they were for his, and as true for our college life as for any other department of life.

If independence of thought were to be found anywhere, one would naturally look for it among the student body. The aim of its members—a liberal education—might be quite naturally supposed to involve liberality in thought. He whose mind is being trained to study with nice discernment the works of widely different minds, would, one might think, welcome among his fellows the expression of ideas different from his own.

But in general this is not so. The Rotunda, not content with rubbing off the corners, has reduced us to a "mush of concession." The effect of this is seen in a spirit of intolerant self-complacency. A man who considers his time too valuable to waste in that which has little interest for him, or one who thinks that it adds neither to his dignity nor *esprit de corps* noisily to parade the streets, is labelled "plug." It is the same spirit that dubs a workingman "scab," who refuses to join in a strike that he believes to be iniquitous; that sneeringly brands the man of original thought along lines unfamiliar to the orthodox scientist as "credulous." There are few things more antagonizing, perhaps I should merely say disgusting, than to hear one in whom you know to be a spark of genius, sneered at as "plug" by one whose brains suffice him to root for his own team and hiss the adverse decision of the referee.

There is nothing in my college life that has given me as much real pleasure as the few "plugs" I have known. Closer acquaintance with them has shown me how unjust has been the term applied to them. I have found them to be, as a rule, anything but mere pedants or bookworms. On the contrary, I have more than once found them to be men working extensively on that which was entirely foreign to their college department—men who preferred a lower stand on the class lists in order that they might spend their energies on what they felt would eventually bring their larger returns. It is a skilful poker-player who knows when to throw down a good hand.

But my purpose was not to champion "the plugs." They would give me little thanks, for the attitude of college opinion makes little difference to them. But it seems to me that there is nothing more dangerous to a young impressionable student on first coming within our halls having his ambitions and dreams and ideals, as most of us have had, than to find that the road to recog-

nition lies along the plain of levelled individuality. One has only to remember how in his freshman year he took part in much that was uncongenial, partly because he had not the moral courage to do otherwise, and partly because with a freshman's humility he thought it his place to follow the precedent of other years.

One feels that there should be a stand made against this. I believe that this spirit of intolerance is by no means universal, but that it marks that section of the student body which not only is, generally speaking, the poorest mentally, but which is also in the minority. For there are those who acquiesce in this spirit, not because they believe in it, but because policy demands concession. It is not an uncommon thing for a man whose ability is of the highest order to be turned down, simply because he does not attend the different sports.

There are other influences outside of the student body that also tend in this same direction. It is all very well for members of our faculty to deplore the decline of "the frank expression of individual opinion among undergraduates." We hear considerable these days about the dearth of original contributions to our college paper. A student who was a class leader, and who has since graduated, told me that his freshman year here had been spoiled by a criticism—unkind and cruel, he termed it—of certain literary work required of him. Such a student, whose first attempt at self-expression had met with such caustic reception, would feel very little like hazarding anything original to a college journal. Perhaps a sensitive youth of sixteen, entering what was to him a strange world, should have been more hardened. Perhaps criticism to be effectual needs to be caustic. I do not wish to forget the respect due to authority. I am merely speaking of tendencies that check self-expression. There are also other things of which it is not lawful to speak—on paper.

Much could be read into my words that was never intended. I know something can be said on the other side. My position is that of a debater who, though believing fully in his own side of the question, sees that there is a certain amount of truth in the pleas of the other side. But I feel that we have been so permeated with this "other side" that our ideal of college life has lost its symmetry. I should be sorry if I were taken to uphold certain characteristics that are associated with the "plug." I recognize that a man may be as much of a voluptuary in his studies as in his sport. Football and gymnasium work are excellent. I should consider college life without its social side as decidedly wanting. But what I do feel is that all these should be considered subsidiary to a man's larger development, and that each man is himself to determine what is to his interests and what is not. If there is anything around Queen's Park that will not benefit him, physically, mentally or spiritually, I cannot see why what is termed college sentiment should make him include it in his time-table.

In conclusion: If a young friend, coming to our college, were to ask me of our life here, I should, out of my own experience, offer him this advice: Try to gain the friendship of a "plug" or two, and I believe you will find in them as worthy friends and as true gentlemen as any who follow the football or chase the puck.

C. R. Jamieson, '04.

There was a crowd, and they were three;
The girl, the parlor lamp and he;
Two is company, and no doubt
That is why the lamp went out.

—Ex.