

# THE VARSITY

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## UNIVERSITY SPIRIT

IT WILL scarcely be necessary for me in this brief article to discuss at length the desirability of fostering among Graduates and Undergraduates of the University a vigorous University spirit, or to define in set terms the thing itself. I would, however, like to say to the students in general that, as they pass out of the University into active life, and as their knowledge of the world increases, they will realize more and more the importance to themselves and to their University of cultivating a lively sentiment of respect and affection for Alma Mater.

The University of Toronto—with its faculties of Arts, Medicine, and Applied Science, its federations and affiliations, its administrative bodies, and last but not least, its numerous student societies—has, through process of evolution, become a very large and complex organism. Amid the expansion that has taken place on every hand there is a danger that the true University spirit may decline. The situation is at any rate rendered more difficult by this largeness and complexity. Loyalty to one's faculty, or college, or club, is easily fostered. It comes of itself as a matter of course. The danger is that the necessity for loyalty to the University itself, which contains and includes all these organizations, may be lost sight of, and that a spirit of sectionalism may prevail. Now, these two kinds of loyalty are not incompatible or inconsistent. I rejoice to witness the enthusiasm of a student for Victoria, or for University College, or the Medical Faculty, or the School of Science, but I rejoice still more to see the same student manifesting a legitimate pride in and affection for the great Provincial University of which he is a member, and it is for the purpose of emphasizing this idea that I have undertaken to pen these lines.

It must be taken for granted that the University is an institution fitted to inspire respect and affection. It has behind it a most honorable record, and it has before it a great future. What are the difficulties in the way of what surely all must desire, namely a strong University spirit? Two main hindrances have suggested themselves to my mind. The first of these is the ignorance which prevails among students themselves concerning the constitution and organization of the University. I have repeatedly met with students in some of the faculties who were unaware that the faculty to which they belonged was really a part of the University. The remedy for this is not

very apparent. The constitution of the University can hardly be taught as a branch of study, and yet I would urge students to devote some attention to its history and organization.

A second hindrance, also arising from the extent and variety of our interests, is the difficulty of bringing together the students of the various faculties and schools, of making them acquainted with one another, and of uniting their efforts and interest in some common cause. The science student or the language student is too apt to associate exclusively with those of his own department of study. For him the University is too apt to be non-existent beyond the round of his daily work. Anything which will counteract this exclusiveness is a move in

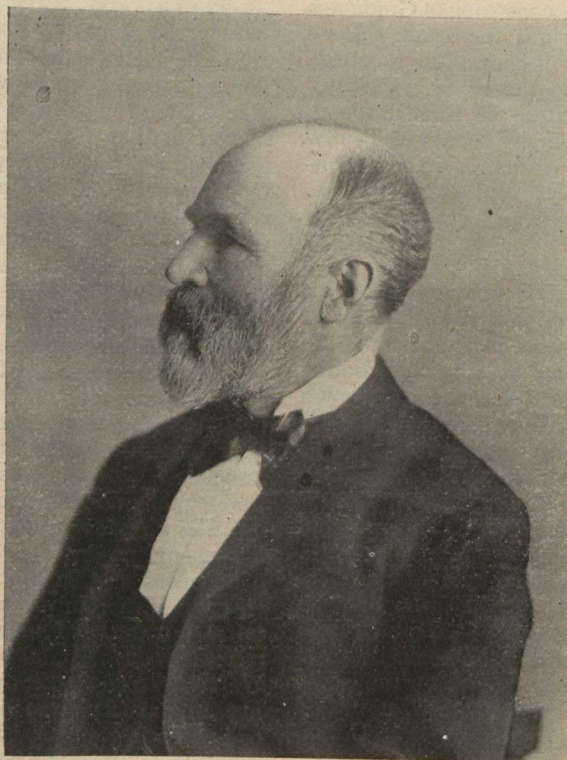
the right direction. The societies within colleges and schools are good, but the societies whose membership is open to the whole University are much better. We have already made important beginnings in this regard. The Athletic Association, with its numerous clubs, is an example, and it has, I am sure, done an enormous amount of good in helping to fuse together the different student elements.

The University Dining Hall affords the very best opportunity for social intercourse among students of all faculties. The Undergraduate Union, lately organized, is doing good work in a similar respect, and will prove most helpful; and I have now the pleasure of congratulating the students on the organization of THE VARSITY on a broad and liberal basis, a basis with place for representation from all faculties, colleges and schools. I congratulate them especially upon the harmonious spirit in which the delicate business of adjusting conflicting interests has been carried out in the preliminary negotiations. I take its establishment as a good omen for the development of a University spirit such as I have

in mind, and I wish the new enterprise every success.

I feel that in spite of inherent difficulties we are making substantial progress. University spirit cannot be manufactured to order, but by keeping its promotion as a definite object before faculties and students, by increasing our knowledge of the inter-relation of the various parts to the University as a whole, and by merging all sectional interests and enthusiasms into loyalty to a common Alma Mater we cannot fail to strengthen the University in the affection and support of its alumni.

J. LOUDON.



PRESIDENT LOUDON.