

THE VARSITY.

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The view taken by Mr. Lowell on the importance of the social side of life at college is worthy of reproduction. It affords us an opportunity of enforcing a doctrine in which we most firmly believe, and of doing so with the aid of other and more weighty influence than our own. Mr. Lowell says:—

"The friends of university training can do nothing that would forward it more than the founding of post-graduate fellowships and the building and endowing of a hall where the holders of them might be commensals, remembering that when Cardinal Wolsey built Christ Church at Oxford, his first care was the kitchen. Nothing is so great a quickener of the faculties or so likely to prevent their being narrowed to a single groove, as the frequent social commingling of men who are aiming at one goal by different paths."

We would enlarge the scope of Mr. Lowell's plan, and make it include all undergraduates. Students can never really know one another well by meeting in the corridors, or occasionally, at the different societies. They must be brought together in a social way. They must break bread together, and if they be lovers of the nicotian weed, must smoke the pipe of peace together. An Annual Dinner will do much to forward this, but it is more or less formal, besides being but a yearly re-union. Daily social intercourse is really what is wanted. Opportunities for this are not within the reach of the students at present. When the new Convocation Hall is built, the present one might be utilized for a general college dining-hall without much trouble, and with very beneficial results.

Students very often have schemes and plans to talk over which do not come within the province of an open meeting to discuss. An open meeting very often is made into a bear-garden, or degenerates into the control of demagogues and wire-pullers who manipulate it to serve their own purposes. Some place is wanted—in addition to the dining-hall—where schemes and plans and various matters of interest can be mutually discussed without any formality. In other words—Recreation Rooms are what is wanted. Although the Committee of the Literary Society has done much this year to popularize the meetings of the society—and with very gratifying results—still the rooms in Moss Hall are not suitable for the purposes of a Recreation Club such as we would desire to see established. Moreover, the rooms are in constant requisition for meetings, either of students or of committees. There is no other building or set of rooms at or near University College which would be available for the purpose we have indicated. No other alternative is offered than to hire rooms down town. And this could be done with comparatively little expense. It would be no reflection on the authorities of University College to do this; for the College Council has not room enough at its disposal as it is, for the ordinary and necessary exercises of the college. Much less can it provide recreation rooms. To obviate this difficulty, we have a very simple plan to propose. It is this: to hire two or three good-sized rooms, *en suite*, down town; to fit them up comfortably, but inexpensively; to hire a piano; to have the rooms open from 9 a.m. till 12 p.m.; to allow graduates the privileges of the rooms on the same terms as students; to have affairs managed by a committee of students, with a representation of the graduate body on the governing board.

In outlining this scheme we have one grand central idea in view. And this is: To organize the friends of University College into some sort of corporate union. Graduates and undergraduates must

unite in this. Thus, and thus only, as we regard it, can the nucleus of a strong and vigorous Alumni Society be formed. And at the present juncture, it behooves the friends of University College to look this matter seriously in the face; to do something definite; and to do it at once. University College is about to enter into direct competition with Victoria College. This University has a very flourishing Alumni Society, and its graduates and friends stand by one another on all occasions. Convocation is the only bond of union between our graduates; but it is a very different thing from our idea of an Alumni Association, worthy of the name. We would broaden it and make it what it ought to be—a University College Club.

We would interest the students in the matter, so that during their student career they may cultivate a sound University College spirit—a spirit of loyalty and affection for their *Alma Mater*, which will but grow stronger and more powerful for good when they leave her. And by having undergraduates in this association or club, the graduate body would be kept in touch with the student sentiment and the current University thought of the time. Graduates and undergraduates, having one common object in view, would work together with a community of interest and oneness of purpose that would break down existing prejudices, unite separated forces, and carry with it an enthusiasm and power which would be well-nigh irresistible. If this has been our want in the past, it is surely our absolute necessity at the present time.

NEW YORK LETTER.

It has occurred to me you might like to have an account of the performance of the Acharnians, given in this city, on last Friday, by the undergraduates of the University of Pennsylvania, in aid of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

The same comedy was acted in Philadelphia last May, but the *personnel* of the company has necessarily changed since then, as many of the actors of that time are no longer undergraduates, so that for many this was the first public performance.

The audience was a most "brilliant" one, as the reporters say; all the professors of the colleges of New York and adjoining States, the artists and literary men of the neighbourhood, the most conspicuous politicians and plutocrats, and the wives and daughters of all. Fifty ladies of this city appear as patronesses, or, as they are called on the programme (a hotch-potch of Greek and English), *'ai ovvepyatides tou epyou*.

Naturally, few cared to follow more of the play than the meagre pantomime suggested, but fewer still were willing to let it appear, and eagerly caught at any stirring of applause as a means of indicating that all was clear and appreciated. As the Academy of Music was plentifully sprinkled with old graduates and undergraduates not actually engaged, who naturally and unconsciously played the part of *claqueurs*, the applause was frequent and noisy. To all appearance the vast audience was enjoying itself thoroughly, though it must have been a tremendous struggle for two-thirds of it to keep awake.

For nothing could be drearier than the acting. The voices, manners, pronunciation, were more like those of the tragedian seen at Drury Lane by the Rev. Micah Sows than anything else.

For this the teachers of Greek at the University of Pennsylvania, I should say, were chiefly responsible; for the method of pronunciation was such as to make acting, fire, humour, or feeling of any kind impracticable. This method (which, by the way, one of the New York papers declares to have met with the approval of all the professors present) seems to be, to pronounce every syllable as if it was a distinct word, and to make every syllable as long as possible. Accordingly, there appears no accent, and all vowels have the same quantity (which must be a great relief to the student. Even ϵ and η , o and ω are sounded alike. Thus, *ἀγορά* becomes *aw-go-raw*. This, as must be manifest, is fatal to expression. For example, the groomsman comes rushing in, deeply anxious to procure a few days' peace for his friend's honeymoon, and impetuously the happy possessor of a private truce thus (v. 1048): "Dee-ky-oh-pow-lee; Dee-ky-oh-pow-lee." Dikaiopolis might have been out of sight before the third syllable was reached.

To make matters worse, most of the performers had high and more or less nasal voices, which never varied a tone. The worst example was Dikaiopolis himself. This young gentleman knew his prodigiously long part admirably; but apparently had not the slightest conception of the character he represented. Instead of a middle-aged father of grown daughters, he appeared as a boy of seventeen; and, beyond an occasional waving of an arm, did nothing but drawl his weary syllables for two hours, as if he were calling off numbers in a bank. When it is said that it seemed never to have occurred to him that there was any humour or fun