

## The Varsity

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TORONTO, FEBRUARY 7, 1912

### TASTE

Now when we are enthusiastic over the triumphs of the Mendelssohn choir,—soon, we hope, to be eclipsed by the concert of our own Glee Club—and are patting ourselves on the back as cultured and artistic people, it may not be out of place to consider how far our good taste extends to the other arts. How many of us wend our way after the concert to a room which is anything but a thing of beauty even if it be a joy forever. There will probably be several banners crimson and ochre and purple, several "College Life" posters in equally striking colours, a row of picture post cards, depicting the main streets of the home town with emerald green for the trees and pinky purple for the skies, four or five carefully denatured photographs of friends, one green and yellow earthenware stein, one tin ash tray, and two torn magazines and a lamp with a cracked green shade. And all the while excellent reproductions of good pictures may be bought for the enormous sum of fifteen cents—some even for five cents—the shops are full of reading lamps costly in inverse ratio to the taste of the design, and handsome brass ash trays may be purchased for a quarter. Surely there is no excuse for having one's room atrociously ugly. Nor is the matter of our surroundings so unimportant as to be passed over without thought. True education consists quite as much in the forming of the taste, as in the acquirement of useful information. Good taste is not to be acquired by visiting the Art Exhibitions at the Reference Library and comparing the numbers on the picture frames with the numbers and names in the catalogue, but by living in surroundings that at least are not ugly. The curious enquirer might trace much of the proverbial savagery of the "School" men to the influence of red brick walls, and factory chimneys, the pitiless cruelty of the proverbial Med. to iron stairs and formaldehyde-scented cement corridors. The authorities evidently recognize this, for the buildings now in course of erection will at least not be an offence to the artistic eye. They might help further in a minor way by making a better distribution of the reproductions of famous painting in University College. At present many of them are out of sight in dark passages, and at the rear of lecture rooms. Could they not be moved to places where they can be seen and studied. Some might even be placed in the Undergraduates Union, and hold up ideals of dignity and good manners to the groups around the piano, and the smokers lounging in arm-chairs with their feet resting on the table. No doubt it would be a little incongruous to have one of Raphael's saints or Michelangelo's angels looking down on the happy mob of pool players, but Franz Hals' "Laughing Cavalier" would be at home there, and Velasquez's grave Spanish grandees would find kindred spirits in the sanctity of the chess room. This by the way; but surely we can all devote a little thought to the decoration of our rooms and be as artistic, as well as music loving people.

Percy—Lend me a five old chap, and I'll be everlastingly indebted to you.  
Reggie—That's just what I am afraid of, old fellow.—*Pathfinder.*

### ONLOOKER'S CORNER

There are a good many of us who long for the good old days. We look on reform as the most demoralizing of all influences. We hate democracy as we hate our relatives. We hate electric lights, parliaments, railways, wire fences, high finance, motor-cars, radiators, telegrams, politics, phonographs—because they are the evidence of reform, because they constitute the civilization that has been thrust upon us by short-sighted reformers—and dear conservative romance, adventure and humanity are gone into the *ewigkeit*.

O to turn back the hands of the clock! To find some celestial hair- tonic to dye Father Time's beard to its youthful blondity! Then we lovers of life would see vagabondage restored to its honourable station. Pedestrianism would return— with the broad highways free of horrible cars and poles. And then, too, we would have fireplaces! Who, I ask you, can dream of castles and arabian gardens, with his feet on a radiator? Who can not see visions, when he sits on those rare occasions beside some fortunate friend's broad hearth? The hearth is one of the oldest human institutions and to-day it is reduced to miserable proportions, and when lighted, is fed with coal and even gas. I think our forefathers had the true vision when they held their hearths sacred, the abode of spiritual things. If some wise benefactor were to denote his fortune to the cause of fireplaces about the University, there would be a recreation of mankind, and an epic age in Canada.

THE ONLOOKER.

### HABITUAL HIGH-BROW



forgetting all my Highbrowism as I roared: Hurrah, Hurrah, we're champio/s again, Hurrah, Hurrah, bring on some better men... and then—

Toronto, Toronto, Toronto Varsity. It was great, inspiring. Four thousand of us, filled with the spirit of Varsity sweeping along, giving ourselves over wholly to the expression of our joy. Here was the True College Life. Faster, faster, I urged, and louder rose my paeon. My School man reached out his cane and flicked off a civilian's hat. I laughed a reckless laugh. We had won, won, and I wanted all the world to know it.

A touch at my elbow, a voice at my ear: "Say fellow, cut that rough stuff." I looked up angrily. "Who are you?" I blared. In answer he showed a printed badge, labelled "MARSHAL."

The veil fell from before my eyes and I saw it all—a frame up. The moment I saw that the scene and its barbarianism had been planned, and was not spontaneous, all its ecstasy and enchantment disappeared. We should go just so far and no further. I felt that I had been making an awful fool of myself, and dropped the School man's arm.

"This is not College Life," I pondered, "but rowdyism. I must seek elsewhere."

### CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Varsity*:

Dear Sir:

As one of those poor unfortunates who are compelled to devote some 35 hours per week to lecture and laboratory work, I would like to add my evidence in support of the sentiment embodied in an editorial headed "Thoroughness Wanted" which appeared in last Friday's *Varsity*. Last fall in the first number of your paper President Falconer in an address to the students stated that it was his hope that each year there would be fewer students come to the University to derive their education from lectures and laboratory work alone. A lost commendable piece of advice! But is everything being done by the University authorities to make it practicable for the student? Speaking as an undergraduate in a Science course I think they are not. How can a man be expected to make himself active in student affairs and thus attain that training which

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is lamented to-day as not being characteristic of University men when he is compelled to listen to lectures and do laboratory work 38 hours out of a possible 45? College spirit cannot be cultivated until a man is given enough time to devote his energies to the interests of the college outside of his academic requirements.

Again another point that might well bear consideration is that of the type of instruction given. By the method which is at present pursued in the Natural Science courses at the University of Toronto, it is practically impossible for a man to do any outside reading—in his own subject let alone attempt to penetrate into other fields. In the different subjects elaborate courses of lectures are given and to these the student confines himself in acquiring a knowledge of the subject. The reason for this narrowing of the students grasp of the subject is not difficult to ascertain; it is simply that he has no time to do otherwise. As a result of this the student whether he realize it or not is being more and more educated—if the term might be so applied—by a spoon-feeding method. No measures are adopted whereby that which is original in the student is brought out. He dares not learn to do things for himself, but he does learn to "plug up" a whole mass of facts which after May 20th will be, at the best, a mere figment in his brain.

Again is not a compulsory library fee of \$2 rather a touching sarcasm than anything else in the case of a man who is burdened with as much work as the above?

It has been stated by one who is in a position to speak that at present in one of the Natural Science Courses in the third year by cutting down the work one-half and placing more upon the student the responsibility of doing the work himself and giving him more time for outside

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reading, a better education in the real sense of the term could be secured. That this—or anything near approaching it should be so—is surely a state of affairs that should not exist at our boasted University of Toronto. To those who are in charge might be asked "What are you going to do about it?"

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W. W. CORY,

Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.

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H.Q. 94-5.

10-11.

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