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UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP.

The holiday season is by no means the most favorable for dry dissertation on serious subjects. The world surrenders itself to cheerful gaiety and practical brotherly kindness. As for study, perhaps light literature and the important department of gastronomy serve most common needs at Yule-tide. *Non omnia possumus omnes* said Virgil; and it is equally true that most of us cannot brace ourselves to ordinary tasks in the declining weeks of the year. Men enjoy an ante-mortem wake over the death-bed of the last offspring of time; anon will come the reckoning, and the duns with their troublesome accounts will haunt the cradle of the new-born year. *N'importe*, let us enjoy the festive week with zest, *unice securi* about the troubles of January, 1881. It is a time for good wishes, and the opening up of the jovial springs of human hearts; so a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all.

At a time of good fellowship like this, has it not occurred to some of the 'Varsity's readers that the lessons of Christmas may be made available beyond their fleeting limit? Why should there not be a permanent fellowship amongst all who love *Alma Mater*, because they owe her much. Nothing seems more anomalous and unreasonable than the isolation, icy and perpetual, which separates, one from another, the sons of the University. During undergraduate years we were, or are, more or less thrown together only to be severed for life in the end. Where is the graduate who has not felt, in those calm and salutary moments given up to memory, a yearning back to those days which have gone forever. Our old class-mates, where are they all? Some of them, prematurely snatched away, slumber beneath the sod; others are removed far away from us, if not by distance, at all events by divergence in the pathway chosen for life. Why are we so scattered, and why does not a common love for our University unite us in the bonds of an abiding fellowship?

Surely no ties are so close as those formed under academic shades; and yet how easily they are broken off, snapped asunder without hope of re-union. It is true that diversity of occupation will, in spite of themselves, sever men, and drive them into separate grooves, which, however near, are parallel, and thus never meet. One young man selects the law, another medicine, a third the pulpit; their brethren find a vocation in teaching or journalism, on the farm, or at the merchant's desk. So their life-work divides them, and from the common port of setting out they sail away upon the ocean of time, to encounter its storms, and to rejoice in its calm sunshine and favoring breezes, yet never to return to the harbor whence they set out in company. Ought this to be so? Should there not be—not perhaps a freemasonry—but a recognized bond of union, indissoluble and appreciable, amongst University men? At this season no more fitting subject for consideration can be suggested than that of University fellowship, since it carries into life the passing fashion of the time, gathering up the broken threads of our chequered existence and weaving them into a pattern, consistent and homogeneous.

Apart from the purely sentimental side, which is only of subordinate value, there is a practical view of the matter to be noted. The Provincial University and College belong to the whole people of Ontario, and an endeavour was made in a previous article to show that every man and woman in Ontario is interested in its progress, bound to aid in its elevation, and to be jealous of every onslaught made on its integrity. If they fully realized the inestimable work it has done, and is ever doing, there need be no trouble in the matter of endowment. Released from the bondage of fear, and from the dwarfing and crippling stress of poverty, our *Alma Mater* would be at once raised high above the vicissitudes of fortune. So soon as the people recognize the value of the University, and learn to take a pride in it, the conflict between aspiration and possible performance will be over—the former ever rising with the needs of the country and the times, the latter expanding proportionately under the generous auspices of a grateful country.

But this goal will never be reached, until something like, organized University fellowship—until, if the language be permissible, graduates

and undergraduates feel that they are members not only of the University, but one of another.—of every other. The people will do their part, when they fully appreciate the necessities of the case; but it would be unfair to charge them with apathy and supineness so long as the sons of *Alma Mater* refrain from united and strenuous efforts on her behalf. If those who owe most to the Provincial University, and are conversant with her claims upon the people, and her pressing need be, indifferent, how can it be expected that others will bestir themselves and come to the rescue? It will certainly not be contended that our Alumni are looking to the institutions in which they have been trained; for, leaving the honor men out of the question, does not every graduate stand indebted to the University for what he has received, at a trifling and altogether inadequate cost, within its walls? The Crown and the Province endowed a magnificent seat of learning simply as a public boon, without expecting any return to the public treasury. As a matter of fact every student who graduates there, receives in money expended by him three or fourfold as much as he pays into its exchequer, with a liberal culture and a skilled training to boot. The University and College, as commercial speculations, have been of necessity complete failures. It was never supposed that they would be otherwise. They were founded solely for the good of the people, for the dissemination of the higher learning, and the elevation of at least a proportion of the masses in the scale of intelligence. That being the case, every son of *Alma Mater* owes a debt of gratitude to her for what has been so generously bestowed.

It is to be feared that too many graduates regard academic education from a selfish point of view. Having mounted the ladder provided for them, there is no further use for it, and the kicking of it away costs them not a pang of remorse. They have done with that part of life discipline, reaped all its advantages, and go their own way regardless of those who succeed them. This, surely is a sordid and unworthy view to take, whether adopted thoughtlessly or deliberately. Every member of the University has by becoming a member of it linked his fortunes with its fortunes, he ought to be proud of its success, jealous for its good name, and a faithful champion of its interests wherever his influence may avail. It may be said that there are few of whom it can be said that they are indifferent to the fortunes of the academic institutions to which they belong. If that be the case, so much the better; but how far do they prove their zeal, and what is their sympathy worth when put to the test? If, as most of us will reluctantly admit, it is found wanting at a time of need, to what cause are we to attribute the failure.

Clearly there is no lack of personal good-feeling towards the University. All her sons are individually attached deeply to *Alma Mater*, if only as a grateful memory; but they are isolated, unorganized, and unassociated with one another. What the present crisis demands, therefore, is University fellowship. So long as the members of the institution make no effort towards co-operation on behalf of it, there is no reason to expect voluntary effort on behalf of the people. Convocation in theory, at all events, serves as an associative bond; yet how feebly does it perform its functions; and if the pulse be so feeble at the heart, what of the mischief is the want of systematized co-operation. There is not a city or town, hardly a village in which the Provincial University is not represented by its academic sons. At times a solitary doctor, or a country practitioner in law stands alone; but at all the centres of population the number of her representatives is large. Now a system of University fellowship or association would at once bind together all graduates within certain geographical or political boundaries. Whatever diversity there may be in profession or ordinary pursuit, a basis of union ought to be found here. If then an endowment fund for the Provincial University be feasible, here are its agents spread far and wide over the Province from Ottawa to Algoma. All that is wanted is simply an organized effort to tighten the cords which connect all these scattered children of *Alma Mater* together and to her.

It is not necessary in an article that is rather suggestive than exhaustive, to enter into details. Yet it may not be amiss to hint at a plan. Whether under the auspices of Convocation or of a separate as-