

The Varsity

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NO NEED of our University—and certainly it has plenty of them—has been so strongly emphasized during this term as the need of a suitable building for public meetings. At each of our Saturday popular lectures people have been turned away for want of better accommodation—a fact which speaks volumes for the popularity of the University extension idea even in these small homœopathic doses, but one which reflects no credit upon our limited capacity for receiving a crowd. Neither the Students' Union nor the Biological Building is adequate for such uses. And two weeks ago on the occasion of the McGill Debate, the Literary Society was obliged to look beyond our borders for a hall—and that not a large one—commodious and comfortable enough to serve their purpose. This is surely a lamentable lack in our equipment and one which has few parallels, if any, in other universities.

But there is another lack here, and that is the want of a chapel. This is a recognized institution in various forms among American colleges, is regarded as an integral and indispensable part of the University, and completely in charge of the University authorities. We cannot see why Toronto should not reap great advantage from such an addition to her present resources. Now THE VARSITY places these two wants together in order to direct attention to the obvious fact that both may be supplied at a single stroke. And we offer this suggestion especially to those wealthy friends of ours who are yearning for some way of applying their money for the good of the University, and incidentally it may be of handing down their names to posterity.

The necessity of a better hall for meetings will be readily conceded by everybody, but possibly the advantages of a college chapel may not be so apparent at first sight. But we believe that a careful consideration of our

own circumstances, and of the experience of universities that have tried chapels will lead us to a favorable conclusion with regard to them.

The charge has been made repeatedly that Toronto is a godless university—a charge to which all state universities are liable. If the religious convictions of the undergraduates be taken as the ground of this charge, it is utterly foundationless. President Angell of the University of Michigan has published recently, with the object of refuting this contention, a pamphlet containing the results of the religious census of the students of several representative American State Universities. The result in general was, that over 50 per cent. were found to be members of the so-called evangelical churches, and about 89 per cent. were either members or adherents of churches. These figures correspond very closely with results obtained from a similar number of denominational colleges. In this regard we do not think Toronto would take any back place by comparison. But the University as such recognizes no duty to cultivate the higher spiritual nature of its undergraduates, if we except the ten o'clock prayers in room 3 which have unfortunately been made far too frequently a butt of ridicule by the thoughtless. We cannot stand behind our neighbors in this particular without loss to our own best interests.

The methods of conducting these chapels vary somewhat in different places, but in all as far as we know they are directly under the management of the College authorities. In some colleges attendance is compulsory as at Yale, at the State University of North Carolina, Amherst, and Williams Colleges. At Harvard, till recently, attendance was obligatory, but was made voluntary by President Elliott. The best results are obtained where attendance of students is optional, as at Cornell, Columbia, and the University of Michigan.

At Columbia, they have a paid chaplain, who holds service every week-day at 12:30, but none on Sunday. At Yale, a service is held every morning at 8:10 which is conducted by the President and lasts twenty minutes. On each Sunday a regular church service is held, conducted by the best men available in the section. Harvard's chapel is somewhat similar, but there one preacher remains for three weeks at a time devoting himself to the students. But the ideal we think is the Sage Chapel at Cornell. This is richly endowed, and is thus able to secure the very best preachers. No services are held on week days, but every Sunday morning a service for students is held, and so great is the interest that seats have now to be reserved for students. At the beginning of each term the authorities make out a program giving list of services and preachers. One has only to glance at a few copies of the Cornell Daily Sun to see what interest is taken in these services by the students.

Now we see no reason why we should not have a similar system in Toronto, could we but get a building for the purpose. We have not the endowment of Cornell to