

The Varsity

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TORONTO, MARCH 4, 1912

A CRISIS

In September last the fate of Canada hung in the balance. Two political parties had for over a year battled grimly over the question of Reciprocity, and the outcome of the struggle was to become an outstanding fact in the history of Canada, of the British Empire and the world at large. All hinged on the opinion of the people. To them the whole question was being submitted, and every man in the country, if not convinced one way or the other, at least had the arguments of both parties firmly in mind. The person who would refuse to vote on the issue would have been regarded with pity and scorn. Whether in favour of the agreement or not, the sanity, or at least the patriotism, of any man who would overlook his franchise on election day would have been severely questioned.

What absolute chaos would have resulted if ninety per cent of Canada's population had neglected to attend the polls! One cannot imagine the utter confusion of such a situation. It would have been as bad as if the British Parliament at the time of the trial of Shaftesbury or of the advance of Napoleon had suddenly taken it into its head to go for a few weeks holiday. The world would simply have been turned topsy turvey.

In a sense, the University of Toronto stands in a similar danger. There is no denying that we are face to face with a mighty crisis. We have tried for years to get away from the cold, unpleasant facts that government takes time, brains, and enthusiasm. We have placidly sent to Parliament a great number of representatives in whom we placed practically no responsibility, and behind whom we put absolutely no support. Small wonder it is that many and many an excellent man has simply thrown up his trust and retired from activity in the Parliament. What else could he do? No sympathy from those who sent him, no discussion of the current problems to guide his thinking, no thanks when he completed his work, no anything of a constructive nature among those whom he endeavoured to serve. We have neglected our privilege and our duty to one another; we have run into an impasse. By some heroic effort we must extricate ourselves.

Every man in the University must put his knowledge and reasoning power to the solution of these enormous problems. We are about to make history, we are about to set in the annals of the University, and of our own lives a record of a decision reached. Will indifference, stupidity, and cowardice be the qualities that future generations will apply to us?

Or will it be recorded that we met the question fairly and bravely, and not only made a decision, but stuck to it against all the odds?

Behind the men whom we elect to Parliament we must put absolute trust, and absolute loyalty. We must render them a clear cut decision on the way out of our difficulties and then follow them unwaveringly. If we instruct them to take over control of discipline we must be ready to be governed by them, to supply them with information and to see justice done whatever our personal desires may be.

If our government requires money we must be prepared to supply it; if our support in activities we must not fail them. We must be ready to overlook

ourselves in an effort to make this great University, of which we are all so proud, the seat of an intense devotion to all that advances the common weal.

BECOME FULLY POSTED ON THE ISSUES, SECURE A CONVICTION WITHIN YOURSELF AS TO THE COURSE WHICH YOU WISH YOUR PARLIAMENT TO PURSUE. STUDENT CONTROL OF DISCIPLINE OR NOT? THE QUESTION TAKES MORE THAN A PASSING CONSIDERATION.

HAVE YOU MADE UP YOUR MIND AS TO THE MAN TO REPRESENT YOU? HE MUST VOTE WITH THE FULL FORCE OF YOUR IDEAS ON THE QUESTION OF STUDENT CONTROL OF DISCIPLINE; BE READY TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO BIG PROBLEMS AND TO MAKE THE PARLIAMENT A GREATER FORCE THAN EVER. THIS IS A TIME OF CRISIS.

VOTE!

ONLOOKER'S CORNER

"Lo and behold yuh!" as our grandmothers used to say—Spring is coming. It will not be long now before the suburban roads will stretch away among the fields and woods, warm and dry. And we lovers of the roads sit by the barometer, awaiting the fulfillment of the seasons' cycle, and dreaming of the by-ways of last autumn's walks. Perhaps, on the side, we pray at some shrine of old things, that all gasoline fountains should run dry, and so leave our roads free of auto-fiends.

Come, now! What do you do with yourself from the middle of May to the tenth of June? How do you pass the vacant hours, when that mystic curtain with dismal black Results written on it, hangs leadenly before you? I know. You sit hopelessly weighing the merits of a ribbon-counter and a bank-clerkship. You roam about a miniature self-made Gethsemane.

Do you wish to know the antidote for this poisonous worry? Then on the day you write your last paper, go home and hoke out old shoes, sweater, and a tin box for a banquet hall. The next morning (O May morning!) dressed for dust, set off for a tramp. Do this every day for three weeks; and when the fateful morning dawns, you will roll off your pillow, shout for the "Globe," and run your eye over the column without a shrink.

Let us be Pedestrians. Let us have a "Vagabond's Club." There is a mighty literature ready to cheer us on. Take Borrow in one pocket and Goldsmith in the other. And in the shadow of some thicket on your favorite wayside, at high noon, read loud and free to your congenial companion. THE ONLOOKER.

HABITUAL HIGH-BROW



The dulness of despair bleared my eyes as I crept up the Union stairs in the late afternoon and sought out the darkest corner, where I might commune with myself and, perchance, find comfort. I was beaten. I, who had started out so bravely to discover College Life, must needs return empty-handed to face the wrath of the Managing Editor and the scorn of all the world.

Then the Simple Mug entered, and the curtain was rung up on the Second Scene of our Drama. I knew he had been looking for me, for I could read the bitterness behind his evil Eye.

"Found it yet?" as he dived into the nearest chair.

I shook my head. There was nought else to do. Pause.

"Say, Highbrow," he continued, looking me straight in the eye, "do you realize what an awful mess you are making of this thing?"

I winced.

"Did it ever come home to you that College Life is a bigger thing than Class Receptions and Term Examinations?"

"W-Why, yes?" I murmured, rallying weakly, "I have been pointing that out all along."

"Oho!" he said, and his smile augured ill for the Habitual Highbrow. "Then what is it?"

I shook my head once more, with funeral gravity. There was nought else to do. He drew up closer.

"I'll tell you what is College Life. Not Lectures, nor Poker, nor even Rugby—

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"I had thought of that—but, granting what you say, where is the difference between College Life and the Life Outside?"

"Simply a matter of degree. College Life is Real Life boiled down. What Outsider could run the gamut of experience as does the College Man? Can you conceive of the bank clerk rushing from a Philosophy lecture to a Gayety Show, and thence to a Discussion Club? No, I say, No!"

And he turned on his left heel and strode away.

Eureka!

'13—I never use a note-book to jot down my ideas, I find it handier to make notes on my cuffs.

'12 (glancing at the cuffs)—What with, chalk?

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