

THE VARSITY.

A Weekly Journal of Literature, University Thought and Events.

VOL. XVII.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, NOVEMBER 18, 1897.

No. 6.

THE CHRYSANTHEMUM FLOWER SHOW.

Oh! surely this is Fairy-land,
The land of tender dreams,
Where lights are strewn with lavish hand,
And music, all pervading, seems
To glide into the souls of those
Who bend their heads in the fragrant air,
To worship their queen, the drooping rose;
To view the lily, pure and fair;
To seek in quiet and hidden spot,
The blue-eyed flower, "forget-me-not."
But Queen of the flowers, at least for to-night,
The quivering, gleaming Chrysanthemum
Is seen in the varying hues of light;
And in every nook, mid the busy hum
Of the eager voices which gather near,
Is homage paid the stately flower.
Then music, sounding soft and clear,
Recalls the mind to the late-grown hour;
Recalls the heart from a state of bliss,
Of perfect joy and happiness—
The flowers are left to fade and die,
And hearts, to the notes that softly fall,
Sing "Au Revoir, but not Goodbye,"
For a memory lingers with each and all,
A memory, sweet, oh! sweet to recall.

JESSYE FORREST, '01.

Undergraduate Life at Oxford.

[*Note.*—So many peculiar difficulties attach to any attempt at a complete exegesis of Oxford undergraduate life, that I feel reluctant to have these desultory notes of mine appear under such a misleading title. I beg of you to remember that in Oxford there are two dozen colleges, each with its own particular system of study and discipline, each with its own traditions and customs, and each with its own definite individuality. Naturally, it would be useless for me, with my limited experience and power, to attempt such a Herculean task as an exhaustive treatment of Oxford and Oxford ways. I understand, however, that the editor of this journal has arranged with Mr.

Harry Dwyer, of Oxford, for two articles on undergraduate life at his university; and since my knowledge of Mr. Dwyer's charm of style and affection for his city of spires makes me assured he will tell of these things infinitely better than the present writer, I leave to him the task of giving you a more detailed, a more specific, and a more technical description of undergraduate life in the greatest university of the world.—A. J. S.]

Your first college is like your first girl. Both seem apparelled in celestial light; with both Eden revives. If you have had the girl and not the college, you will still understand what I mean; if you have had the college without the girl, I can only refer you to that little sermon preached by Byron on a certain text from Anacreon. For you will, in time, with your big sheep-skin and your wisdom, wander forth from those first beloved walls, just as you will, with your huge boyish heart-ache and your sonnets, pass beyond the pale of that early sirenic enchantment. You may venture out into wider fields, you may fall under the spell of other influences, you may seek other hearts and other halls, but never, oh visionary youth, can you know again the charm, the mystery, the first fine care-less rapture of those early awakenings, of those new bewildering emotions, and those strange, intangible aspirations. Call it what you will, the unfolding of the mind, the awakening of the heart, the dawning of virility, this it is, and neither the greatness of the college nor the loveliness of the girl, that will cause you so often to look back with regret on those seemingly happier days of the past. And it is futile to go back, wistful-hearted, to the old haunts; they will seem no longer gilded with the old illusions. The ideal girl, I am told, is rare, and the ideal university, I know, is rarer. You would be foolish to break your heart for either. Though I once knew an Oxford man—but this is not the place for *his* story.

Yet, looking at it with our casual eyes, from day to careless day, we have lost sight, it seems, of the true significance of our university life; or perhaps, it would be wiser to say, our university life as it should be. For, indeed, when one meditates on it, this is a strange and a wondrous thing, this shutting up of young men within the walls of some great building, giving them a hand-made universe of their own to play with, insulating them for the time, in so far as they are capable of insulation, from the exigencies and the storm and stress of the feverish outside world, and detaching them studiously and deliberately, during the most receptive and formative years of all their existence, from those surroundings and those influences which environ and dominate the ordinary man engaged in the ordinary pursuits of life. And what is their gain for this isolation, what their recompense for this costly severance from that actual struggle with actual things, which so tempers and toughens and strengthens the character of our mortals? Why are you taken, at a time when you are most impressionable, most responsive, most plastic, and surrounded by a world of studied simplicity and beauty, as simple as one great enduring aim, the Periclean "pursuit of culture in a manly spirit," and as beautiful as the wisdom of great