

# THE VARSITY

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## Editorial Comments.



HERE is much uncertainty existing at present as to what provision is to be made for the departments of Mineralogy and Geology. Until a week or two ago the students in those departments believed that adequate accommodation would be provided for them in the New Building which is to be erected at a cost of \$100,000—now, it is understood, that the New Building is to be devoted to Chemistry alone.

The men in Professor Chapman's department have been induced to smother their grievance for years past by promises of better quarters and brighter days. If those promises are not fulfilled, if no better provision is made for Geology than it has at present, the complaints will be broad and bitter.

The present accommodation is wretchedly inadequate. By the re-arrangement and re-adjustment of Lecture rooms and Laboratories in the School of Practical Science consequent on its completion, the students in the above mentioned departments have been deprived of their old place in this building and have been assigned one in the basement of the Biological Department.

Professor Chapman claims that his department has been persistently neglected by the Senate, greatly to the detriment of the students taking his course in Arts and Science. His old quarters in the School of Science were not what they should be by any means, being poorly equipped, difficult of access, and unhealthy in consequence of their being almost completely underground. His new quarters are little if any improvement on the old, being situated in the bottom flat of the New Biological Department.

The claims of the professor and the students in his course should receive the Senate's immediate attention—not because the Professor has been lecturing for thirty-eight years, nor because he has performed all duties devolving upon him satisfactorily, nor because he has shown a zeal which betokens love for the department over which he presides, but because it is of the highest importance to the University and to the Province and to themselves that the students in Mineralogy should be well and efficiently trained.

And of the three the claims of the students are the strongest—the University will outlive the charge of lopsided development, the Province can wait to have its mineral resources explored by later generations of students, but the man or woman who has taken an improperly equipped College course has suffered a loss incalculable and irreparable. And in him the Science has suffered. We hope that the claims of the students in Mineralogy will receive due attention.

The opinion of the students on the "cap and gown" question has been pretty thoroughly tested time and time again. About three-fifths of the men—and in the first year the percentage will be larger—are mildly in favor of adhering to the old custom. Those who do not wear it sometimes say that the gown is inconvenient, that it is not suited to the climate and the changed conditions of student life; and some offer the harsher objection that it isolates the students from the men and affairs of every day life, by giving an air of ostentation to the members of a profession that should not be ostentatious. And then of course there are the extremists on both sides—the one swears by the gown as the badge of an honored profession, the other swears at it as a relic of the time when learning wore long clothes. Still almost all the men wear academics at Convocation and on examination days, and a great many wear them at lectures; and the students are unanimous in one thing—in desiring that the matter be left to individual choice. The gownsmen do not want the custom made unpopular by an attempt to enforce it, and the great ungowned claim that their opinions should be tolerated and their wishes respected. There is no other unanimity in opinion—it is useless to expect it, there is no uniformity in action, and it is unwise to attempt to enforce it; but there is a quiet tolerance of both conservative custom and radical opinion which makes our life very comfortable and does not deprive us of the picturesque of either.

The whole question does not deserve as much attention as it has received. The best way to encourage the wearing of the gown is to provide lockers in which they may be kept, and the surest way to make the custom unpopular on all occasions is to attempt to enforce its observance on some.

We hope that the *Patres Conscripti* have no intention of returning to the paternal methods of government—at least to those methods which mark the relation of the *Pater* to infancy and early childhood.

We hope that they will be so much occupied with their task of providing for the efficient equipment of the Courses and the sufficient accommodation of the students that they will leave it to the men themselves to decide and provide what they shall eat and drink and wherewithal they shall be clothed. For if Rex is to be Lex, our forefathers have lived in vain, three centuries have faced to the right-about and our bodies belong to the enemy.

The graduates and undergraduates of the University of Toronto need no reminder of the gallant services of their companions and predecessors in the University, and the volunteers, when Fenian invaders crossed our frontier, and were so bravely repelled.

But there is one feature connected with the memory of the brave young soldiers who were included among those