

The Varsity

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TORONTO, NOVEMBER 20, 1911

EVERYDAY HISTORY

To a proposal which was brought up on Friday evening, in the University College Lit, The Varsity wishes to give its whole-hearted approval and support. A member laid before the Society a plan as follows:

Let every organization, executive, committee, and deputation appointed by the various sections of the Student body have one member whose duty it shall be to make a full report on the activities of the organization, with full particulars as to contracts made, moneys expended, difficulties encountered, et cetera, and with general recommendations to the next organization of the same nature as to the course that its members should pursue.

All this information should be filed in some central point and be constantly open to inspection to accredited persons.

This is a plan which, we submit, would be of universal value. At present the members of every new executive or committee have to scurry around for several days to find out just how the affairs which they are to undertake should be managed, and even then quite avoidable perplexities crowd upon the unfortunates, with great loss of time and patience. Further, they begin exactly where their predecessors did, instead of where they left off, which latter should be the case in any progressive community. The various functions around the University could go on increasing in interest and success if the newcomers had before them the wisdom (and errors) of those who held office before them.

If The Varsity can be of any assistance in furthering this plan, the promoters should have no hesitation in calling upon us. Perhaps we could furnish, in our little quarters in the West Wing, a suitable location for the file. The point is central, and the office is always open.

The idea, we believe, admits of considerable expansion.

Why should not these reports that come in be one small part of a basis on which some prominent fourth year man, or recent graduate should write the history of the University for the year? In our familiarity with things as they pass we forget that everything we think, say, and do, is tending to influence the progress of the University in some way. Let us have a chronicler, as did the monks, and priests, whose records of daily doings form the foundation for a very great part of the history of the New World and the Old. This is not a conceited view. We cannot avoid making history and it would be well if we simply acknowledged the fact and handed on to the man who in the year 3050 will be writing, say a chapter on "The Universities in the Middle Period of the Emancipation Movement," the straightforward account of what we are and what we think we are.

But the history would have also a good effect on the immediate present. It would help those who read it now to see their lives in proper perspective, and to realize just whether their efforts in academic life are carrying them.

The office of University Historian, it will be at once recognized, would under such circumstances be one of considerable responsibility and honor. It would have to be filled by men who have a thorough working knowledge of the University, a broad comprehension of current events, a clear insight, and the historical viewpoint.

On either of these plans The Varsity invites criticism and discussion. We feel that something of permanent usefulness may quite easily be evolved.

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THE BLUMENTHAL BOY.

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You have often seen him strolling down Yonge Street about five o'clock in the afternoon. He dresses immaculately, he walks like a matinee idol and smokes cigarettes with an air. In sooth he is a sweet little idiot.

With all due deference to our big cousin to the south we are forced to conclude that the Blumenthal Boy is a product of the American College. We have come to the point where we must decide whether we are to model our college after Yale or Oxford, after the American or the English university. The recent discussion on gowns is a case in point. Let us decide that question now and decide it right. More depends on our decision than appears on the surface.

THE ONLOOKER.

CURRENT COMMENT

THE CALIFORNIA JURY LAW

A comparatively little known jury law is that which obtains in California. Its beneficial features are being exemplified in the current trial of the McNamaras for blowing up the office of the Los Angeles "Times," and one wise feature, at least, might well be incorporated in the laws of other countries.

This provision is that which enables the State Prosecutor to demand the selection of two extra jurors. These two extra men will hear the evidence, and in the event of one of the regular twelve becoming ill before the trial is over one of the substitutes will take the place of the absentee. This will obviate the necessity of postponing the trial, or of having a new trial, as would be necessary in the case of a juror's death under the ordinary law.

The Constitution of California provides for alternate jurors, the idea being adopted from Italy. It is being practised in the present Camorra trial, and is used whenever there is any likelihood of there being a long-drawn-out trial.

I. U. D. L. SCHEDULE

Old System of Three Judges Replaced By One

At the annual meeting of the inter-university Debating Union an important amendment was made in the constitution with regard to the judges. The amendment reads:—Instead of the old system of three judges, appointed by the home club, the president of the I.U.D.L. appoints one judge—who must be a member of the bench—he acts as sole judge. The points allotted for matter and form, i.e., true debating style, have been altered from 75 and 25 to 60 and 40 respectively.

The schedule for 1911-12 is:—Preliminaries, Queen's at Ottawa, Dec. 5. Mc Gill at Toronto, Dec. 1. Finals—Jan. 25, 1912. If Toronto and Queen's win—at Queen's. If Toronto and Ottawa win—Toronto. If Queen's and McGill win—McGill. If Ottawa and McGill win—McGill.

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As Interpreted by Newton's First Law of Motion

One of the most remarkable demonstrations of Newton's first Law of Motion—that a body will contrive in its state of rest or of uniform motions in a straight line unless acted on by some impressed force—is due to Laplace, who argued that this must be so since a body, not acted on by a force could not have any more cause for going in one direction than in any other—and hence must go in *non!*

So neat and convincing a proof must needs be applicable to other phases of existence and we propose an extension of it which will, we hope, clear up a much discussed problem of to-day viz. a man's duty in regard to relinquishing his seat in a conveyance to a woman. We shall for charity take a concrete example—a

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healthy and robust youth, seated in a crowded street-car is nonplussed by the entrance of three or four women who gaze eagerly about for a seat. Being well-bred he fairly trembles in his zest to give up his place—but which one shall he ask to assume it.

We dare anyone to extricate him from this quandary—He cannot offer it to the one who is apparently the oldest because she would at once suspect his motive and his fate would be summarily sealed. Neither can he offer it to the prettiest because ulterior designs would almost certainly be attributed to him and his reputation as a gentleman be irretrievably lost.

The only solution, then, seems to be that indicated by the Laplacean proof—owing to there being no more reason for his favoring one than the others he dare not favor any—and must needs retain his seat.

Quod erat demonstrandum!

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