

# THE VARSITY

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## A TERSE ROMANCE.

Information, derivation.  
Trepidation and vexation.  
Fumigation, ventilation.  
Cogitation, proclamation.  
Congregation, consternation.

Aggregation, denudation.  
Lavation and mundation.  
Mutilation, spot carnation.  
Recreation, contrectation ;  
Exclamation (p'rhaps damnation.)

Titillation, indication.  
Jactitation, consolation.  
Resignation, short vacation.  
Consultation, restoration.  
Celebration, dissipation.  
Vaccination.

—SARDONIUS.

## FOUR VETERANS.

They were chums through college—the four of them ; came from widely separated counties, and had never dreamed of one another's existence before they met 'neath the Norman tower and graven portal of the grand grey pile.

Balfour was a youth of Scottish parentage and tongue ; hard to match in trade or argument, but for all that a being full of generous enthusiasms and deep-rooted affections. Conway was also of Celtic blood, but of the red Irish breed—impulsive, garrulous, generous with his own and others' goods, slovenly in method but often brilliant in achievement. Yoxall was of English descent, an offshoot of stubborn U. E. Loyalist stock, a plodding, dull, determined soul, capable of enduring all things and hoping all things. The fourth and youngest, rejoicing in the cosmopolitan and undescriptive name of Smith, was a curious mixture of diverse currents, racial and temperamental. No one could describe Smith in a few words or with satisfaction to any who knew him. He presented as many facets as a precious and well-cut stone ; and each aspect was different from any other. Without insincerity or self-consciousness, he was all things to all men. Yet everyone admired him, confided in, and in turn sought the confidence of, the shy, diffident youth, who listened more than he talked.

Balfour, Conway, Yoxall and Smith entered the university on the same day and left it, with their sheepskins,

together. The great world swallowed them up for a time, as it swallows up other young graduates. They went in different directions, enjoyed or endured different experiences, saw the world and humanity each from his own viewpoint and in the light of his own personality, acted upon their environments and were reacted upon in turn. Almost completely they lost track of one another, immersed in the airy plannings of the twenties, the strenuous pursuits of the thirties and the settled drift of the forties. Only a distant echo now and then from their several fields of conflict, told vaguely of advance, of victory, or of discouragement and even defeat. Fate had set them far apart in her war and given them little respite from the daily stress.

But some twelve months ago they met again, here in their college city, veterans scarred and grizzled, ripe in knowledge of the world—that hostile country, so stern, so hard to master and to hold. As old campaigners will, they sat them down to fight their battles over once again.

Balfour, now a captain of industry famed in two hemispheres, told of the far-off mountain camps where men wash from the silt of ancient streams the gold with which they gamble for each other's souls ; of merchant ships and foreign voyages, of railways built by him in tropic lands—tales wonderful and full of the rare romance of truth.

Conway had wandered much in Europe ; had studied art and literature in the galleries of Italy and the schools of France. By endowment a poet, and by choice and habit a rover he had seen life in a thousand phases, had observed and judged it critically, if kindly, accumulating as he went a wealth of anecdote, and laying up much store of marketable reminiscence. A brilliant stylist and an accomplished linguist he had served on both the *Times* and the *Figaro* ; had published here, there and everywhere verses, stories and descriptive articles marked by humor and eloquence ; and now had brought out his first novel—a book accounted, if not a great work of fiction, at least clever and entertaining.

Yoxall, dumb, patient soul, had chosen the cloistered calm of studious life ; toiling in laboratories and rooting in libraries, bending by the hour over microscopes and test tubes, thumbing musty tomes when other men lay locked in sleep, raking the earth for forms and specimens, writing now and then a learned paper, and winning at last an international reputation amongst savants for painstaking research, accurate observation, precise statement and sound logic.

Of Smith—poor plebeian Smith—what must be said ? A struggling lawyer in a country town, it seemed as if the great god of success had quite forgotten him and passed him by. Balfour and Conway had gone out to seek and meet the deity and court his smile. Even to Yoxall's closet the high guest had come, entering unbidden, yet