

# The Varsity

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News Editor for this issue: H. V. Hearst.

TORONTO, JANUARY 26, 1912

## UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

We had occasion, in a recent issue of The Varsity, to speak in rather straightforward terms against the lack of interest in University organizations and activities. That this plaint was justified scarcely any one will deny. It is a sheer economic waste to form undertakings which we are unable to support. If we feel that the attractions in University life are too numerous, by all means we should ruthlessly choke off those which are sickliest. Another way of improving conditions would be to amalgamate functions which crowd the field. The Varsity, in this connection, would strongly advocate fusing a lot of dinners which succeed neither in attracting really big speakers nor in making a good financial showing. One all-University dinner would give us the pick, practically, of the Dominion's greatest men, and the magnitude and significance of the event would probably assure also the attendance of any of the distinguished visitors who happen to be touring in any part of the American Continent. A large dinner of this kind would give the undergraduate body an unprecedented opportunity of developing the true University spirit, while securing ideas of permanent and lasting value to all.

In the place of the sectional dinners now held there could be smokers, at which coffee and cigarettes would be mingled with speeches from prominent men and from students. The after-dinner speech is a form of art not sufficiently cultivated in Toronto University.

But eliminating superfluous functions and combining others will not alone cure the indifference toward our organized activities. Lack of self-knowledge lies at the root of the trouble. Not one man in five, we venture to say, knows what the powers of the Caput are; not one in ten knows the development of the undergraduates' Parliament. If these statements are borne out by facts, as we think they are, there is great room for improvement. One thing lies in the way, however, and that a dearth of carefully compiled facts about each organization.

Torontonensis tells us something about each, but does not go into detail as we should like. There is little straightforward account of the relation of the Union to the Parliament, or of the Glee Club to its manager, and practically nothing of Theatre Night to University finances. All these matters are of vital interest to the man who is keen on the subject of University activities. Every one enrolled should be fully posted on all the affairs of the student body.

To carry out this idea we would suggest the publication almanac, or blue book, containing the history, constitution, powers, and customs of every factor in University life. This would be a permanent volume, and should be supplemented from year to year by an appendix containing the names of the officers, and changes in constitution of every organization, and a complete directory of the students enrolled.

Such a publication, we feel certain, would arouse more interest in some of our activities, and give every man a chance to get the proper perspective in his view of College life.

## ONLOOKER'S CORNER

It is the lyric spirit that is lacking hereabouts: the spirit of expression. In fact it is worse than lacking,—it is discouraged. Our few dignified publications will accept orthodox opinions, or orthodox dissensions, But they criticize whatever is new, of fresh, or modern. Their competition pages make one's collar hot—they invite people to write songs, and then they sail in with their learned knives and cut the poet's heart up. They pay five dollars for a subject on which to display a pretty wit.

It is the criticism of the moderns that keeps down originality and creative impulse here. But I suppose Homer was dubbed a modern in his day. And there were some in high places who scorned Shakespeare and his merry 'Mermaid' companions. The Brahmins whose articles in the heavier critical magazines attack viciously the moderns will some day be laughed at as we laugh at the scornors of Shakespeare; or held unforgiveable, as we hold Blackwood on its treatment of Keats.

Let us examine the moderns. It is the most delightful study, this intimate life of modern authors. Let us read about the artificial schools of France of the past century. Read of the mad Gerard de Nerval, who was found in the Palais Royal, leading a lobster on a pink ribbon. Or of Baudelaire, who dyed his hair green and wrote sonnets to cats. Of the crazy extremes to which they went in expressing what they felt. Then, perhaps, stirred by the overflow of lyric spirit, say something, write something, *express* something yourself.

THE ONLOOKER.

## HABITUAL HIGH-BROW



Turn to the left at the top of the first flight of stairs in the Union, and you will find the Philosophers in session. Pause for a moment. Some one is telling what Layenby said, or what Martin Luther Rouse thought about Noah's flood. Cross the corridor and stand by while some ardent youth explains with wealth of gesture how Jack Newton once dropped a goal over from half-way. Downstairs a party of politicians are lamenting these degenerate days in the Lit, and harking back to the Golden age when Norman A. McLarty swayed hundreds, whose terrible logic cut like a knife and burned like a red-hot brand. Truly, there were giants in those days.

It is not comforting, mildly aesthetic undergraduate, you who have read 'Ghosts' and 'Hedda Gabler,' you who have drifted through 'De Profundis' and re-read some passages—is it not comforting, average man, athlete or politician, whoever you be, to consider that five years from now, some bleary Junior, dependent because the summer is so short and the winter so long and examinations so near, will forget for a moment his load of care, and was eloquent as he dwells upon the grand old days of yore when you were an undergraduate here. Verily (he will say) there were giants in those days.

## CORRESPONDENCE

REPLY TO "YANKEE."

To the Editor of The Varsity:

Dear Sir,—In your issue of Jan. 24 I was pleased to notice the publication of a letter regarding the use of the word "Yankee." I admit that it has been wrongfully used, but the same is true of the word "American." The people of the republic to the south of us glory in calling themselves the Americans. The word American when rightfully used includes all the people who live on this continent, but the nations of the United States consider that they are the only ones of importance and consequently assume the whole glory of the word. If they do not like to be called Yankees let them find some other name, but they should not take too much responsibility on their own shoulders, and call themselves the Americans. Let all Canadians stand up for their due rights.

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## HISTORY

To the Editor of The Varsity:

Dear Sir,—It is sometimes said that History consists in learning facts. This statement is indignantly repudiated by members of the Historical Department; they regard facts as vulgar and uneducative and consider the suggestion that they find even a fugitive lodging in the precincts of the Department of History as a dastardly insinuation.

Now this attitude, which heretofore we have unquestioningly accepted, seems after all, despite its fine spirit, rather dubitable. The Historical Department is not teaching facts, is it then ready to admit it is regaling its devotees with fiction? It refuses to qualify as a science—what then are its actual pretensions in the realm of knowledge? A recent article in Varsity inquired into the purpose and aims of the Moderns Course, might it not be profitable to continue this self-examination and to ask of the historians a reason for the faith which is in them?

What is the real value of historical study? That History is an intensely interesting even thrilling pursuit, that it affords unequalled opportunities for dazzling paradox and winged epigram, that it attracts alert and brilliant minds—all this is readily admitted. But wherein lies its value except as a fascinating kind of mental gymnastic?

The present position of History is somewhat anomalous. Could the despised facts be reinstated and diligently examined

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and classified, then History might ally herself with the economic and social sciences and seek with them to set forth the laws of the social order. Or, on the other hand, if History would deign to join forces with philosophy the two might co-operate to discover those great ideas which have informed the thought and actions of men in successive ages of the world.

But History prefers to stand alone. The question is, on what does she stand?

LUCKY FAMILY.—"I made a mistake," said Plodding Pete. "I told that man up the road I needed a little help 'cause I was lookin' for me family from whom I had been separated for years."  
"Didn't that make him come across?"  
"He couldn't see it. He said dat he didn't know my family, but he wasn't goin' to help in bringing any such trouble on 'em."—Washingtomn Star.

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## The Royal Military College of Canada

THERE are few national institutions of more value and interest to the country than the Royal Military College of Canada. Notwithstanding this, its object and the work it is accomplishing are not sufficiently understood by the general public.

The College is a Government institution, designed primarily for the purpose of giving instruction in all branches of military science to cadets and officers of the Canadian Militia. In fact it corresponds to Woolwich and Sandhurst.

The Commandant and military instructors are all officers on the active list of the Imperial army, lent for the purpose, and there is in addition a complete staff of professors for the civil subjects which form such an important part of the College course. Medical attendance is also provided.

Whilst the College is organized on a strictly military basis the cadets receive a practical and scientific training in subjects essential to a sound modern education.

The course includes a thorough grounding in Mathematics, Civil Engineering, Surveying, Physics, Chemistry, French and English.

The strict discipline maintained at the College is one of the most valuable features of the course, and, in addition, the constant practice of gymnastics, drills, and outdoor exercises of all kinds, ensures health and excellent physical condition.

Commissions in all branches of the Imperial service and Canadian Permanent Force are offered annually.

The diploma of graduation, is considered by the authorities conducting the examination for Dominion Land Surveyors to be equivalent to a university degree, and by the Regulations of the Law Society of Ontario, it obtains the same examinations as a B.A. degree.

The length of the course is three years, in three terms of 9 1/2 months each.

The total cost of the course, including board, uniform, instructional material, and all extras, is about \$800.

The annual competitive examination for admission to the College, takes place in May of each year, at the headquarters of the several military districts.

For full particulars regarding this examination and for any other information, application should be made to the Secretary of the Militia Council, Ottawa, Ont.; or to the Commandant, Royal Military College, Kingston, Ont.

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