

The Varsity

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TORONTO, FEBRUARY 26, 1912

AT OXFORD

It is perhaps not fully realized how great a degree of personal liberty is enjoyed by the undergraduate at Toronto University. The suggestion of more term exams., fuller supervision of the student's work, and a generally increased emphasis on the regularity of study throughout the year—all these reforms that are occasionally advocated as tending to palliate the evil of annual examinations, have invariably raised a storm of protest on the ground of interference with the freedom of the individual to pursue his course in the manner that pleases him best. We are prone to forget that at this University we enjoy a measure of personal liberty that is not found in some other seats of learning.

A letter recently received from a prominent graduate of Toronto now studying at Oxford, throws some interesting sidelights on the system prevailing at that historic shrine of knowledge. According to our correspondent, Oxford is far from being the leisurely, Bohemian haunt that some of us are prone to imagine. "The thing that struck me most," he writes, "is the way they make you work over here. Talk about interference with personal liberty! Toronto is a paradise to this place. They don't let you run your own show at all. I used to think annual examinations enough. Here they make me write three essays a fortnight, which are criticized with the utmost harshness. Besides these essays we have what they call "collections" at the end of each vacation, which means a vacation of most ferocious grinding."

Some of the rules of conduct at Oxford falls strangely on Canadian ears. "Of course," says our correspondent, "it is easy to see that there must be quite a bit of personal supervision over the undergrad. in the college system. But it does seem a real hardship to be dragged out of bed in the small hours of the morning to "roller" or chapel; to be forced to eat the wretched grub they provide you in Hall at least five nights a week; to be fined if you are not in College by nine o'clock each night; and to be "stung" £5, or even "sent down", if you are out after the midnight hour. I am still writhing over the fact that I was "gated" one night last term for missing a Sunday morning "roller." As I sat in durance vile I tried hard to recall when I had been "kept in" during my life before; and my sole recollection of such an occurrence carried me back to my high school days."

ONLOOKER'S CORNER

If Highbrow, in his quest of the unknown, had accompanied the Dopster and me to the gladiation meet last Saturday, he would have seen a sight that would have either shocked him to death or ended his series. The Boxing Tournament was a festival of gore. I watched cat-like for a stray tooth or a piece of ear to bring away, in order to have tangible evidence that I had not been in the grip of a brain-storm; but I have to be satisfied by the serene faces of people when I mention the event. The Dopster assures me it really took place. He explained to me during the carnage as he stabbed monosyllabic sporting notes into his programme, that the boxing tournament is a great and useful institution. He says it is the means of the settlement of old quarrels. For instance, two men disagree on some small point such as a debt or a lady's smile: they hold it over until the tournament and fight it out. It is like Heidelberg and duels. I had no idea that Romance was so much alive, that men were still so manly, and that chivalry still persisted.

However, let me suggest some reform. (Not that my reforms are worthy of acceptance. For example, I once suggested that each fire-hall be furnished with a special wagon equipped with an orchestra, which would play Wagner at fires, and so enhance the enjoyment of the spectators. But the city did nothing about it.) By way of reform—the contests in some cases were insufficiently bloody. Furthermore, the fights were stopped before either could get any satisfaction, quarrels were left unsettled, and the whole meaning of the institution was lost. If we are going to be brutal, let us be bloody and brutal.

There were a few fights that were gory enough to satisfy the most Roman of spectators. And when the last of the mighty came a cropper like a topless tower of Ilium, I turned away with the popular expression on my lips: 'Alas! I smattered, I must sneak elsewhere.'

THE ONLOOKER:
P.S.—By the way, reader, the ladies have been assailing us because we ignore them in these editorial columns. The neglect in my column is the result of my misfortune and not of my fault, I assure you. In reply to these ferocious assaults, we challenge the 'Varsity girls to come and take full charge and bring out one issue of the 'Varsity'.

HABITUAL HIGH-BROW



Wycliffe for holiness, the Union for smoke, and the chemistry Lab. at the School for bottles. Big bottles, little bottles, square round, and peculiar. And something tells you that there are millions more of them stowed safe away in the cupboards where the embryo Chemist keeps his gown.

Gown? A yellow toga, suggestive of Winton Six's and gasoline. And the ghouls who wear them are the guardians of the bottles. They know to read and understand the horrid labels; and take an unholy delight in mixing green and red to watch for the explosion.

Pipes are taboo, but the calous School man murmurs as he attaches his Bunsen burner, that "you can chew if you like." Abandon aestheticism, all ye who enter here.

I looked over their shoulders for a while as they made strange marks in cross-ruled note-books; then, hearing a militant "Toike Oike" resound from some distant passage, I deemed it wiser to withdraw while there was yet time. I had heard tales, and dreamed visions; flesh is weak. Just as I reached the door a jet of water spurted past my ear; their laughter followed me down the passage.

"Too many bottles," I reflected, running down stairs two-at-a-time; "I must seek elsewhere."

LETTERS! LETTERS!

The Varsity wants LETTERS from all faculties and all years. Speak your mind on these matters of student government; let no fact escape you, let no arguing with which you disagree go unchallenged. Express your individuality.

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The class of oney three of Victoria College have completed the election of holders of the Senior and Athletic Sticks for the year 1912-1913. The Senior Stick which is held by the most popular member of the Senior Year goes to Miss E. I. Gilroy, while the Knight who will carry it for her is J. D. Robins. The Athletic Stick goes to the man most prominent in Athletics, who has not allowed his academic work to give place to sport; or, in other words, one who has never had a star. The men of the year unanimously elected H. C. Jeffries to that much coveted office. The presentation of the Sticks to the respective recipients took place at the Senior reception on Friday evening.

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