

Official Undergraduate News Organ of Technology



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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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Entered as second-class matter Sept. 16, 1911, at the Post Office at Boston, Mass., under the act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 19, 1918.

Member of Eastern Intercollegiate Newspaper Association

In Charge of This Issue: L. E. Fogg

MONDAY, APRIL 9, 1923

SPEAK NOW

THE dormitories are about to enter under a new regime. A constitution embodying many departures from the old one is to be established. In some cases entirely different rules of procedure for the administration of dormitory affairs are to be put into practice.

Yet the transition from the old to the new will proceed easily and, except at moments when their attention is required to elect new officers, without attracting attention from the students in the dormitories. With the habitual disregard for government affairs common to a citizen of a great democracy the dorm men are paying little heed to the change. But their indifference will bind them as surely as any positive act could do. If next year they find some feature of the new regime unpleasant it will be too late, its rule will have been established.

On the surface at least the new constitution appears to fill the needs of the situation. Certainly that is the purpose for which it was drafted. But the men who are to live by its terms are the men to judge and they must judge now. If they dislike anything in its articles now is the time for legitimate opposition, honest intent and able to state its case with force. Indifference now with an availing protest later on will not do. Then they will meet the proper rebuke merited by their carelessness.

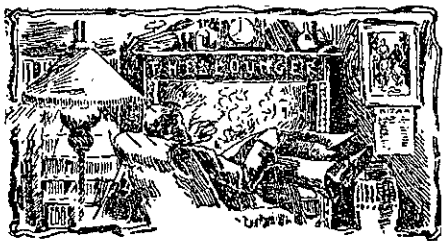
It is up to the dorm men to go into this thing with eyes open and minds functioning. Next year they will be bound by its provisions; if there is any kick coming let's have it now.

CREDIT IS DUE

FOR many years Technology crews have come and gone with little or no recognition because they were not generally victorious. Hampered by lack of equipment and coaching facilities they put in many strenuous hours of practice to overcome their handicaps and prove their right to existence among other Institute teams. Meeting the strongest college crews, in spite of defeats, they win their place as a major sport.

Now the needed equipment has been obtained through the efforts of generous Alumni. The coaching staff is built up of men whose interest in Technology crews make them willing to spend much of their busy time in developing and perfecting their charges to meet opponents on an equal basis. This same spirit which kept the oarsmen fighting against odds should go far under these more favorable circumstances toward making a name for Technology in this sport.

The chances for success this season are better than ever before. The Institute oarsmen are giving their utmost to realize them. A hard schedule against some of the strongest college crews in the country has been arranged. The gratitude of all Technology is due the men by whose interest and effort this chance has come. The crews show it by their work, the rest is up to the undergraduates.



So Walker's walls are to burst! This is indeed a menace of exceeding propensity. The Lounger cannot help shuddering at the tremendous import of the occasion. Built by alumni, a temple of seeming sturdy permanence has been set up. It has lasted but a few years. And now it is to blow itself up. The Lounger is bewildered! What is all this gossip about Walker bursting its walls?

It appears that someone has made a mistake in analyzing characters. This someone has supposed that activity men are superhuman beings, that they possess ultra-natural energies by virtue of which they may swell themselves up indefinitely, throw themselves against the walls of the various rooms at a previously agreed upon instant, and thus precipitate Walker into a mass of pulverized Gold Dust.

The Lounger voices dissent at such a presupposition. The Coliseum did not experience such an abuse of its structure even when its exits were jammed with people who had come to witness the ever famous Battle of the Cubes between Julius Napoleon and Senator Lodge-Podge. The Lounger admits that the grandstands at the Polo Grounds have capsize in the past, but Walker has a separate set of bleachers to prevent this. From the hypothesis expounded, man must finally have conquered matter and force. An activity man, therefore, must be an atom in embryonic development, whence comes this aptitude of expanding himself to such dangerous proportions.

After not a great deal of ponderous thought, the Lounger believes he can divide the "despoilers" of the piano into three classes, viz., those who pound the piano for the pleasure of hearing the noise. Those who regard a locked piano belonging to someone else as a challenge to their skill in Jimmy Valentine's profession, and those with a perverted scientific bent who want to "see how it works."

The net result of this mental labor is some constructive criticism and a few suggestions, viz., there is a larger and more satisfactory selection of noise-making instruments at any of the toy shops in Boston or Cambridge. They are guaranteed to give pleasure to even the most infantile of minds.

To the would-be safe crackers. For shame! A piano lock is in the same class as the lock of a baby's bank. Don't try to learn calculus by practicing simple arithmetic. To the third and comparatively highest type, wait a few weeks and then ask any of the disciples of the hurdy-gurdy for a dissertation on the theory of stringed instruments. In the meantime, learn Italian.

Whip Culprits to Enforce Honor System in Belgium

For a violation of the honor code a student at the Belgian Military College is publicly whipped by his own classmates. The Military College corresponds to U. S. M. A. at West Point and like the American school for future army officers is run entirely on the honor system. However, at the Belgian institution the jurisdiction of the code includes all personal conduct, not simply with respect to cribbing. Any violations are reported to and judged by a senate of upper classmen who administer corporal punishment to the culprit before the regiment drawn up to witness the whipping.

Several communications which have lately appeared in these columns purported to show up the proposed Honor System in its real light. In practically all of these the theses were a personified system with a big spectre of Student Control looking in the background, the result of which was the basis for working up the writers.

But in none of them was there discussed or even frankly mentioned the real reason for an Honor system. A desire to protect the standards of the course, and the class, and the Institute in the eyes of the world.

Army and Navy Men Criticize

It is the commonest thing in the world for Army or Navy men, all bred under the Honor System to come here and say, "Yes those Tech men have a fine student government but they are terribly soft on their pride and honor." The latter part of that impression is what we must eradicate, by a long and, if necessary, painful process.

If we are careless where our Honor is touched and remain content under the disgusted eyes of men who place a high qualification to real manhood, then will our shame be so great and our skin so thick that we may well announce the facts to the whole world. But to try to outwardly glorify Technology while we know in our hearts that our standards are low, is useless.

Friendship Game a Camouflage

Although Mr. Oberwarth is undoubtedly sincere in his statement that a person, presumably he, would not report a friend, he is thereby giving cover to the number of men, who beg off being judged by their peers, on that pretext. The "friendship" game has long been a camouflage for proctor systems, and in my opinion, a vicious camouflage.

Following Mr. Oberwarth's idea, that if a person caught a friend cheating he would talk to him about it instead of reporting him, I believe that would tend to make the Honor System eminently successful. Even the most enthusiastic proponent of rigid Honor Systems would be glad to see a man talk to his friend about infractions. Here the friend can accomplish more than a remote group, but if he found his pleas unheeded the bonds of friendship would be strained or broken.

If the friend did not talk to the infractor, but allowed him to cheat, both men are equally lax and the basis of friendship is a queer one. I think that takes care of the friend idea. Few want rigidity in a system for its own sake, and will welcome the human touches that tend towards success, even though they don't quite follow established rules.

Council Judges Human Element

As to the august tribunal which is the fear of some men. Why could they not also reason with the men caught cheating, they are their own classmates. No one wants men thrown summarily out of school for a single infraction. And the trial, so called, is only a human, not a legal process. In cheating there is hardly any question as to facts. Either a person was actually caught red-handed or was not caught. The tribunal or council can thus devote all its time to the human elements in the case, and work out a decision from that.

The real differences between the present proctor system and the proposed system called "Student Proctors" by Mr. Buchard would be great. Instead of policemen paid to parade up and down with eyes eagerly aglint for some errant student we would have students whose main business in the room is to pass their examinations and leave. They would not keep their eyes open for cheating and rush to report it, as a proctor would.

They would be too busy to snoop but if a case was forced upon them they would report it feeling that the infractor was lowering the standards we have set. Few students would report others. Then if they do act they must really feel keenly on the question of honor and must be serious on what they ask from their fellow-students. I can hardly see the designation of student proctors, the ideas contained are too dissimilar.

System Would Still Be Good

A vital point of controversy is that cheating would not diminish. Mr. Oberwarth mentions this but adds that "the comparatively small amount of cheating at Technology is gratifying." Granting these two statements, the Honor System is still extremely desirable. It cannot be believed seriously that cheating would tend to increase with an Honor System. If it only remained as it is now (remember it has been said that there is very little now) the Honor System would be successful.

Let us reason from analogy. If two business systems were each able to make the same amount of money, one working as honestly as it could and the other somewhat crookedly, would not the honest concern rate higher although it had made the same profit as its rival? So if we can have proctorless system for the men who are habitually honest, and this includes the great majority, the few thus freed to cheat would not make a serious hindrance. The idea of Honor having been implanted, perhaps forcibly, in the minds of these thick-skinned men, the system could gradually reach the state of perfection which we as engineers desire of everything.

As a parting shot I should like to remark that the theory underlying our government police is that they can prevent irreparable damage to person and property, not to pass their time guarding against things comparable to cribbing.

The Spectre of Student Control

By David Lasser '24

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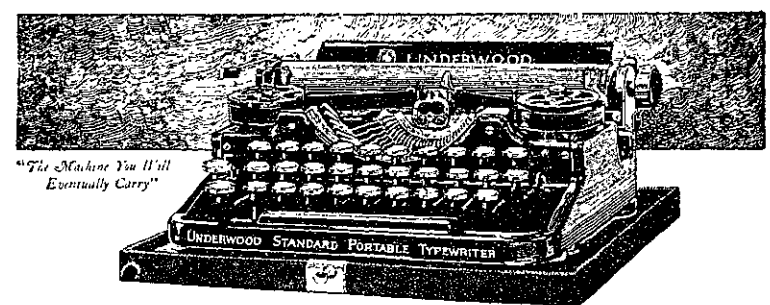


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College Nine Visits Japan

The Harvard baseball team has received an invitation to visit Japan by the Waseda University. It is expected that the trip will be taken if the arrangements can be made to have it after the close of school.

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