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In charge of this Issue: T. W. Owen '26

ABOLISHING TECH NIGHT

TO do away with that one of Technology's traditions which has for so long been regarded as the outstanding feature tending to make Tech life approach something like those "good old college days" about which we have heard so much, is one of the most serious and drastic moves the Institute Committee, or anyone else for that matter, could ever think of. Before any tradition is abolished there should be a very minute and detailed investigation of all the factors involved on both sides. This preliminary research should be all the more exhaustive and complete when the tradition is such a famous one as the Institute's Tech Night.

There will no doubt be a considerable reaction in the minds of a great many of the student body when they learn that an attempt has been made to abolish this event from Tech's activity calendar. Before jumping at conclusions, however, it will be well for them to consider the problem in an impartial light, in a light in which their own selfish and stubborn selves are forgotten, but which illuminates with perfect clearness the part Technology itself plays in the consideration. This is not a question involving government which represents them. It is a question involving Technology's name before the public and its reputation throughout the country.

The facts brought out in the report of the special committee appointed to investigate the matter tend with surprising unanimity to indict the present form of Tech Night at the theater. Comprised as it was of students, alumni, and members of the faculty, this committee certainly cannot be accused of not reaching an impartial decision. It went into the details very carefully and the decisions which it reached, and which are recommended to the Institute Committee for action, are so sensible in their essence that it will take more than a scanty refutation on the part of the opponents of the abolition of the present program to overcome them.

THE Institute Committee has done well to table the report of its sub-committee so as to give the student body a chance to express itself before any formal action is taken. But more than mere personal disapproval will have to be shown. Because the student body will be deprived of a chance to let its enthusiasm overcome it and carry it into riotous action one night a year is no reason why Tech Night should be preserved. The reputation of our Alma Mater is worth far more than one foolish night of revelry and mad carousing. If a man must indulge in such carryings-on, then let him do so himself, or at least where his connection with the Institute will not be revealed or made a subject for public gossip.

Getting down to fundamentals, what is Tech Night other than a pure invitation to unfavorable publicity, a game of sporting chance to see if the newspapers can find out things as they are, and then to exaggerate them to please the public's passion for scandal? To say even that it is a sporting chance is too moderate, for the risk is too dangerous and the compensation too nil. For who enjoys the show, unless it were those in the first few rows of the orchestra? With a din too noisome to permit hearing of the players it seems that the only reason a man buys a ticket is for the opportunity of being present at a boisterous gathering and of giving vent to his feelings by way of hindrance to others who may want to hear something of the play.

To us there seems but one sensible thing to do. An unselfish consideration of the problem will lead most of the really loyal sons of our Alma Mater to the conclusion that, strong and cherished though the tradition may have been, it is too dangerous a one to preserve for the ignominious, sensual, personal joy which is obtained from it.

CENSORING OUR SPEAKERS

IT is not without apprehension that we learn of the recent action taken by the Institute to exclude students from the open forum conducted by the Speakers' Club. This action comes on the heels of a popular and well attended meeting and is significant in its intent and purpose.

The Speakers' Club, in itself, is a small organization, claiming perhaps not more than twenty-five or thirty students, and has been active in securing several men to give open lectures and more recently a debate. It is probable that the public nature of the meetings has been instrumental in inducing some of the speakers to come and give their time, and under the proposed ruling it is more than probable that the prospects of lecturing to a mere handful of men will not be sufficiently attractive to bring men who have other demands for their time.

There is still no doubt about the value of an open discussion, and however reactionary the new policy may be the fact remains that those who wish to taste of the forbidden fruit are merely accentuated in their desires and become more resourceful as the difficulties increase. When things are forbidden we become inquisitive, sceptical, and often defiant.

Whatever cloak a truth, a half truth, or a fallacy is clothed in, there is nothing which will reveal the inner structure like open criticism after the inspection. Intolerance will avail nothing, and compassion will not be appreciated by "Les Stupides" who insist on drawing their own conclusions. The fundamental precepts of this education are discredited when we are obliged to bow to the censor, and we are sickened at heart by the realization that, officially at least, we are incapable of arriving at a "correct" independent judgment. If there is anything to be gained by an education it is the ability to differentiate between the genuine and the dross, to distinguish between the true and the untrue, and to realize that all that is accepted is not infallible. This principle is not recognized in any program which aims to support arbitrary and artificial barriers and which tends to destroy a student's last refuge—the right to his own opinion.



From the effervescing seclusion of High Ball John's to the unsophisticated, docile, and harmless surroundings of a simple tea dance. Such is the history of the evolution of Tech Night. The Lounger was awakened from a somewhat lengthy and delicious sleep yesterday noon by an excited disciple of the proverbial apostle of news—Marco Polo, or Nero, or Adam, or whoever he may have been—and told to be on his toes; for there were "big doings" in the making. The Lounger was in a pugnacious mood and lazily pointed the way to the door. But the reporter would not be outdone and the diplomatic threat of the application of a handful of refreshing snow to the Lounger's face had the desired effect.

Abolish Tech Night. Were they crazy? So they were trying to sneak something over on him, were they? Well, they were in for a little surprise. No durstly gang of politicians and too serious-minded, self-appointed godfathers could put such an autocratic piece of legislation over on the Lounger and the student body. The Lounger would put a spoke in their wheel. "Faster!" he shouted through the speaking tube to the pilot of the swiftly moving checker board. Inwardly, he was having visions of another conflagration akin to the one precipitated last spring when the discussion at one of the Institute Committee's meetings got so hot that it set fire to the awning over the window of the West Lounge. Only this one would require the whole metropolitan fire department to extinguish it and the combined Cambridge and Somerville police forces too, perhaps.

Deacon Robinson opened the meeting with all due solemnity, and business, both old and new, proceeded with astonishing rapidity considering the viscosity of the brain cells concentrated within the room. By kind design of Fate the chairmen of nearly all of the standing committees departed "No Report." The other reportings were disposed of in quick and commendable fashion. And then the Lounger held his breath as the report of the Tech Night Committee came up for discussion. He must admit, however, that while the report was being read he had lost his nervous rage and had to concede to himself that the report was sensible in substance. The arguments he had been preparing so copiously now appeared to be completely unreasonable in the light of the report; in fact, the Lounger was ashamed of them as products of his famed imagination. He abandoned them and sat back to listen to the discussion.

But no discussion followed. And here the Lounger began to perceive that legislation goes through all too much of a mechanical and cut-and-dried process. Before an opinion had been sounded the report had been tabled until the next meeting. Yet this move was a tactical one, for the Committee will not have to commit itself until student opinion has been sampled; which is as it should be.

And the Lounger went home disappointed because the fires had not been lighted. His opinions on preserving Tech Night are not so determined as they were, and he is afraid he has been converted. He issues warning to all the student body, however. If anyone is opposed to abolishing Tech Night let him say so openly. A frank contesting of opinions in this paper is what he wants to see and let it come, whatever there is of it, immediately. His friend, the editor, wants a flock of communications to boom up his page.

WHO SAYS?

The familiar sayings for today are: 1. "When I was County Superintendent..." 2. "Like unto this—" 3. "Now this has no practical use." The answers to the quotations in last issue were: 1. Professor Hamilton. 2. Professor Lambert. 3. Professor Miller.

Play Directory

ARLINGTON SQUARE: "Mary." Revival of familiar musical comedy. BOSTON OPERA HOUSE: Chicago Opera Company. "Manco." Tomorrow, Matinee. "Jongleur" and "Maestro di Cappella." Evening. "Othello." COLONIAL: "Vanities." Passable revue. COPLEY: "Windows." Galsworthy comedy again. HOLLIS: "The 1st Year." Comedy. MAJESTIC: "Polly Preferred." Comedy. Good. PLYMOUTH: "Whispering Wires." Last week. SELWYN: Jane Cowl in "Romeo and Juliet." ST. JAMES: "The Green Goddess." Boston Stock Co. SEUBERT: "Greenwich Village Follies." Last week. TREMONT: "The Clinging Vine." Musical show drawing good crowds. WILBUR: "Up She Goes." Humorous musical comedy.

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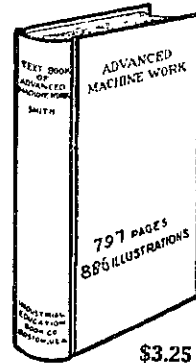
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