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IN CHARGE THIS ISSUE
J. M. Keck W. G. Peirce, Jr.

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 1921

THE STUDENT TAX

THE committee which was appointed by the Institute Committee to investigate the student tax has recommended an increase to \$15.00 per annum, the greater part of the increment to be devoted to athletics. The increase, while large, does not seem excessive when the need of more money is considered.

When the student body consisted of less than a thousand men the teams were few in number, and a small income was sufficient to support them. Now, however, the larger number of students brings a diversity of interest and a demand for a variety of sports. The cost of supporting them rises out of proportion to the increase in revenue from the old student tax. A number of well-equipped teams gives an opportunity to nearly every man in the Institute to keep himself in physical trim, and at the same time to do a bit for Technology.

Successful athletic teams bring two big benefits to any school in addition to the physical betterment of individuals: to the public, they give the institution desirable publicity, and within the walls they tend to bring the undergraduates into closer association and to develop the enthusiasm which results in that intangible but very real something that we call "school spirit."

A NEW BRIDGE

THE Harvard Bridge, which links Boston and Cambridge on Massachusetts Avenue, is antiquated and inadequate. It was built from 1887 to 1891 and was opened to the public on September 1, 1891. The designing was the work of John A. Cheney and the bridge as constructed was 2166 ft. long and 70 ft. wide with a 150-ft. draw. The original building cost \$511,000. Repairs have been made upon the bridge from time to time in addition to the regular upkeep which amount to \$9,000 annually. The Boston Elevated strengthened the bridge at their expense when they made use

of it for their cars. Two years ago the city spent \$22,000 on new planking and paving. Today the bridge is a poor structure utterly unworthy of its position as a main avenue between two large cities. Its paving is in bad shape, its lamp posts tottering, its railings weak, and its general appearance dilapidated. The passing of a five-ton truck or a trolley makes the whole structure rattle like a five-year-old Ford. Thirty years of constant usage are enough to fatigue any bridge with the repeated stresses of varying loads and changing temperatures and the Harvard Bridge is today weary and old with service.

The setting of the bridge, the beauty of the Charles River Basin, and the handsome appearance of the buildings at its heads cry out in contrast with its ramshackle weather-beaten condition. There is opportunity to make this part of Boston a show spot, and a civic pride. The construction of a great new bridge leading over the river to the solemn gray pile of Technology would be indeed the fulfillment of an architect's dream. It would be also the replacing of a tottering decrepit structure with a safe broad avenue over the water. How many more days and nights is the worn-out Harvard Bridge to be left rattling and shaking under the constant stream of traffic and marring the most attractive part of Boston Esplanade? That is a question which all who pride themselves in being Bostonians should promptly answer. A new bridge should be built—a fitting structure designed to harmonize with its setting—an ample link to span the Charles and connect two cities. And when it is named we recommend, in deference to logic, that it be called Technology Bridge.

WATCH YOUR STEP

OCCASIONALLY we are obliged to make note of the deplorable lack of thought and consideration which characterizes a portion of our student body. Again it is the old question of the students' thoughtlessness in regard to the neatness of the Institute buildings and grounds. Not long ago a man was seen to deliberately smash one of the lamps which border the great court and laugh at his seeming cleverness. One who

enjoys such acts of vandalism is mentally deficient and should be dealt with accordingly. There are, however, other cases of carelessness, such as littering the floors with refuse and cutting across the lawns. The latter is especially apparent on the Walker Memorial lawn where the athletes and others have done it so consistently that there is a path worn. We are sure that this is due only to carelessness and lack of regard for the appearance of the grounds, and therefore can easily be remedied without the erection of a fence or the insertion of ever-reminding signs. Pride in the appearance of our buildings is the first essential to proper school spirit, so watch your step!

ACOUSTICS IN WALKER

THE main hall of Walker Memorial has been the scene of many large and dignified gatherings during the past year. Besides the regular student affairs there have been a number of other gatherings less closely related to the student body. The Alumni Dinner and the Radio Banquet during the winter are typical of this kind.

Sometimes when the hall is comfortably filled, those at the back of the hall, and especially those under the balconies, have difficulty in hearing the speakers. All too often it happens that men prominent in science and engineering are not good orators. These men, however, are the kind we want to come here and address. They are an inspiration to students in the long and sometimes seemingly futile struggle after knowledge. Our own students are often hampered by poor delivery. It is, indeed, quite a task for an inexperienced person to address an assembly with any degree of efficiency. Now both kinds of speakers are especially valuable to us. From them we can receive much, and it behooves us to go out of our way to help them.

Could not a sounding board be built for the main hall? It need be elaborate. It should, of course, be portable, in order not to interfere with the ordinary uses of the hall nor with the moving picture screen.

The labor necessary to set up such a sounding board whenever a big affair is to be held would not be much in addition to setting up the platform.

A sounding board is not needed often, but when it is needed, it is needed badly. The initial cost need not be large, and maintenance expenses would be low. By all means, let us have an acoustic device of this sort.

KEEP THE GROUNDS NEAT

WHENEVER a person or organization at the Institute wishes to make some announcement or advertise some fact to the entire student body, the common way to do so is to distribute circulars to the men as they go through the various entrances to the Institute grounds in the morning. This method is no doubt quite efficient insofar as it accomplishes its purpose. The idea, however, certainly does not tend to improve the appearance of the grounds, as these handbills are scattered everywhere by the men who receive them. Recent examples are the notice of the convocation and the Cosmopolitan Club's advertisement. In each case the circular which was distributed contained only a few words, and, as soon as a man read it, he threw it away. There are some organizations which print their information in booklet form or on blotters so that they will not be thrown away. Rather than prohibit absolutely the distribution of any notices, it seems advisable to induce all organizations to print their material in such form that it will be retained by the men who read it. This can be done by assessing the cost of cleaning up the grounds to the organization responsible for its appearance.

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COMMUNICATION

To the Editor:

It is generally conceded that the Institute occupies a unique place in the ranks of educational institutions. It has the obligation to supply to the business and commercial world the material from which the captains of industry and many of the future leaders in serious thought are to be molded.

Men who aspire to fill these chosen places must be ones who can rise to great emergencies and act on them adequately. This can only be accomplished by men who have a sufficiently broad outlook on life in general and business life in particular to grasp the meaning of these emergencies.

It is with the purpose of ultimately giving that broad outlook that an attempt is being made to organize at Technology a real club for the development of an informed and not a formed or unformed student opinion on the many vital matters that confront the nation.

Many have stated that such an organization would of necessity be a radical one, as it must be such to attract the right type of man. That is a fallacy, for there is nothing so detrimental to the welfare of such a club as the subservience to any "isms". The club must be one that will not attempt to unduly influence or mold student opinion directly. If it succeeds, by bringing here to Technology the leaders in thought and industry who will give to it all sides of the many questions that we are confronted with, and answer frankly any questions that it may have in regard to these questions, and then leave the solutions of these problems to the students, the club shall have many times over justified its right to existence.

The after-war extremism has left the liberal stranded and has thrown him into dire-pute. It should be the function of a Liberal Club to bring back to the word "liberal" its real significance of open-mindedness and independence of thought.

DAVID LASSER '24.

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