

The Forum

Appropos the discussion concerning the deplorable lack of spirit in the University, I desire to give the few observations of a comparative stranger in the University. The analysis of the situation which appeared in this column in the issue of Dec. 17th, is probably a correct one. But what is the remedy? Will conditions be changed by a general admonition or exhortation, "let us clique no more." It is hardly to be expected.

On the other hand, does it not seem to be a fact that the cliques are rather the result of a lack of spirit than the cause of it? No one will admit that the personnel of the Nebraska student body is inferior to that of other schools. Neither will we admit that fraternities and other organizations are incompatible with a strong school spirit. Therefore, let us seek for something more fundamental.

The innovation of the green cap plan is undoubtedly a step in the right direction if it is handled rightly. A strong class spirit will make for a strong University spirit. And there are probably many other plans to be advanced which would aid in securing the desired end. But in order to have real spirit there must be something upon which it may grow. And of course that something is tradition.

Tradition can not be formed in a day. Let us try not, while it is in the making, attempt to incorporate in it some idea for which the school will stand?

Some ideal will distinguish the school from all other institutions. The implanting of a proper ideal in the character of students is in itself an end of education. Why not "kill two birds with one stone?" And what is the use of spirit if it does not have some lasting effect?

The ideal, whatever it would be decided upon as most fitting, could, in time, be interwoven in every activity of field, society, and class room. To uphold it, would become the pride of the faculty and student body. It would be a real unifying point. It could be incorporated in the college songs.

And speaking of college songs, what is the alma mater song of the University? The apparent absence of a song or songs known and used by the general student body is certainly most noticeable. The one song that has become inextricably associated with the University in my mind during these three months, is not one which does much credit to the school. It is possible that it is so frequently heard because of the luck of a better one?

The writer is not, and does not claim to be, cognizant of the exact conditions in Nebraska. And being a comparative stranger he has been somewhat hesitant in forcing himself into this controversy. It is possible that in view of other conditions, unknown to him, these suggestions will be considered unfeasible, or at least not timely. But they are made in all sincerity. The absence of an ideal and the absence of a body of college songs have been the two things most noticeable to him. And as a general proposition, it is submitted, that if that if these wants are supplied, if the ever incoming freshman is supplied with these two fundamentals, the "house divided" will right itself. Having started rightly, it will be a comparatively easy matter to establish the "honor system," the "single tax system," and other admirable plans.

D. W. SWARR.

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