

an institution against attacks from every quarter.

That marked the real beginning of the opposition to fraternities in the University of Nebraska. Some members of the Palladian society who were asked to join the fraternity did not do so because they wished to devote their spare time and means to the society, and not because they had any objections to the secret organization. Later, when more was known about the fraternities they were opposed with some vigor, partly because they were considered objectionable on general principles and partly because they were considered a menace to the welfare of the literary societies. In another year a new fraternity appeared, selecting its members mainly from the Union Society. Opposition on the same line soon developed there. A young ladies' fraternity followed, and it was seen that unless something was done the student body would soon be dominated by the fraternities and that the literary societies would be shorn of their old time importance.

It has been charged that the barbarians were the aggressors in one or two of the little brushes that were indulged in by the opposing forces in the spring of 1884. That all depends on the point of view. It can be said in their favor that even if they were the first to attack, a thing which is by no means admitted, they had ample justification for it in the challenge that was virtually made by the organization of the fraternities. One of the most objectionable features of the whole system is its ostentatious secrecy and its widely advertised friendships. Perfect frankness can hardly pass across fraternity lines, and "barbs" and "frats" cannot, except in exceptional cases, get along in the same organization without a clash sooner or later. It is an almost indispensable part of the business. A fraternity would be flat, stale and unprofitable, according to its widely published code of morals, if it did not advance the interests of its own members at the expense of students outside. It would

not be considered worth the price of initiation if it did not have vitality enough to breed a scrap, having for its object the discomfiture of those without the pale of its membership.

The history of events in the spring and fall of 1884 will show that the barbarian forces were knit together by a belief that the fraternity was a distinct evil to the University. It is usually charged that opposition is aroused by students with personal grievances. When there is nothing more than "soreheadism" behind a barbarian party, that party speedily disappears. The members flock off to found a new secret society, or attach themselves to those in existence as fast as they receive invitations. Perhaps there were a few soreheads in this reform movement, but it was a matter of common knowledge at the time that nearly all of the leaders had been invited to join societies already here, while others had been entreated to unite in the organization of new chapters. At one time, a young man came all the way from the Kansas State University to take a batch of barbarians into his fraternity all at once. The boys heard all he had to say about the advantages of his order, plied him with questions, and ended the incident by telling him that they were more than ever opposed to the fraternity system.

One of the students in his zeal for knowledge even went so far as to attend unbidden the meetings of a fraternity until he was thoroughly familiar with its mysteries. These meetings were held in the office of the state superintendent of public instruction at the capitol. The young man sat at his ease on the broad window-sill, watching the proceedings through the shutters and hearing, as the window was generally raised to admit the air, every word of the doubly sacred ritual. This young man, W. E. Johnson, was heartily disliked when the story came out, and there are some people in this vicinity, perhaps, who would like to see him cooked over a slow fire, even at this late day. There are others who are obliged to laugh whenever they