

We must not—we dare not leave them go under. Advancing as we are almost by leaps and bounds both internally and in our inter-collegiate relations, we must not have it said that we do not possess spirit and energy enough to support such societies. We have the spirit, and we have the energy; but from a number of causes the societies are steadily declining.

Of course one great reason is laziness on the part of the students and a disinclination to do any more work than our hard courses impose upon us. This might be pardoned, as many of the boys really do not have the time but are compelled to put all the hours on their studies that health will allow, Friday evening being a welcome exception when they can take a much needed rest. Yet, if we run over the membership of the societies, we will find that these are just the men that join and make some of the best and hardest working members.

One reason advanced, and in some respects a good one, is that the Greek letter fraternities are replacing the societies and gradually taking all interest away from them. This is true to a larger extent than the Greeks will admit. Before the advent of the fraternities, the students found in the societies that principle of a nucleus around which they could crystallize, but the fraternities have usurped this place and have left the societies to suffer by it. The building of chapter houses has added greatly to this effect as students living in them get out of the way of going up to the main building to attend meetings, finding more congenial company and having a better time at the house. Thus they are gradually weaned away and drop out. This tendency, however, should not be made to bear such a large share of the blame as is now laid at its door. At numberless other institutions fraternities and literary societies thrive side by side and are mutually beneficial, in many cases the officers of the societies being points of rivalry between the fraternities.

The cause that is pointed to most by the members of the societies is the scoffing and contempt

that so many upper class men take pains to show. This is unfortunately very prevalent. In fact, it has become quite the fad among the older students to make all manner of fun of these unfortunate organizations. This can have but one effect upon the younger men, making them prejudiced against them early in their course.

But has it never occurred to the society members that they are greatly to blame for this scoffing? Could they not make their programs several hundred per cent. better and more interesting? The scoffers are not totally without a reason for their scorn. How many of the performers ever get up to speak fully prepared? Not many—in fact many an evening the program is in reality over half extempore, while often the debates are entirely so. This is where a great deal of the fault lies, and we are happy to say that the society members are beginning to realize it. Let to realize be to act and have better performances and more enjoyable meetings. If prospects do not brighten up then, some heroic measures will have to be adopted.

One suggestion has been made. Why could not an arrangement be effected by which work in the societies could count for part of the required work in rhetorical, orations, etc. Two or three of the professors have put themselves on record as favoring it, suggesting at the same time that an instructor might even be detailed to grade and criticize the performances. Why cannot this idea be brought to a focus. Let the societies get together and appoint a joint committee to confer with those in power and so start the idea. If the privilege is not granted no harm will be done.

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BASEBALL prospects are unusually bright this spring. Although very few games were played last year, our record was a proud one. This year there is every opportunity for a much better season. Although elected at a rather late date, Manager Swartz has succeeded in arranging a very good schedule covering most of the