

Corbin's Corner

In my fall Western trip I shall be at

Chicago, Sept. 22, 23.
St. Louis, Sept. 24, 25, 26, 27
Columbus, Sept. 28, 29,
Harrisburg, Sept. 30.

F. A. CORBIN,
1000 CHAPEL ST.,
New Haven, Conn.

NO STUDENT WAITERS.

Yale Dining Hall Adopts a New Plan.

Early in the Summer the students who had been waiters at the Yale University Dining Hall, known as Commons, received the following notice:

NEW HAVEN, CONN., July 8, 1899.

Dear Sir:—I have been informed by Mr. Farnam, Treasurer, that at the last meeting of the University authorities it was decided to have only professional waiters at the dining hall hereafter. I was not present at the meeting, but the plan proposed is, to considerably extend the meal hours, so as to do away with the great crush, and thereby to improve the service, cut down the waste of food, and have better order in the hall.

I therefore write to inform you of this action on the part of the powers that be, so that you may not depend upon a place in the hall next year.

Personally, I wish to thank you for your faithfulness in the past, and assure you that I shall be only too glad to render you any service I can outside of the dining hall.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) JOHN Q. TILSON.

The receipt of this notice by the thirty-three or more students who had been securing their board free by acting as waiters at the Dining Hall, was in the nature of an unpleasant surprise. There had been from time to time during the year, and, in fact, for a number of years, warnings from those in control of Commons that it would be necessary in the very near future to abolish the system of student waiters, unless certain changes could be made in the way in which the service was rendered. These warnings, and particularly the latter ones, had been quite distinct, but it was generally believed that the radical change suggested was at least a matter of the quite distant future.

Gowdy's

The store has been all torn up and there is yet no chance to display the new stock. But we are still doing business and when the new front at last is in and all the changes made we will be better prepared than ever for supplying Yale men with all kinds of gentleman's furnishings.

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Opposite Osborn Hall,

Successors to DeBussy, Manwaring & Co.

It was said at once when the steps became known, that this meant that a number of men, variously stated at from five to fifteen, would be unable to return to College, and that a similar number of men would, in the future, be discouraged from entering Yale from year to year, because this means of meeting one of the principal expenses of the year was to be removed. It remains to be seen whether this contention will be borne out by facts and it is also open to question whether the elimination of this particular opportunity for earning one's board will, in the end, be an unmixed evil to those affected.

This much is true. The management of Commons has taken this step only after the most careful consideration and after trying for a long time the system hitherto in vogue. An interview with a reporter of the WEEKLY with Mr. John Q. Tilson, Yale '91, the Steward of Commons, resulted in a general statement of the reasons for the change.

In general, it was simply a business necessity. This would go without saying for anyone who knew Mr. Tilson and his own College course and his attitude towards those who were trying to make their way through College. Mr. Tilson himself worked his way through college, and he says now that in spite of the recommendation of his predecessor that the plan ought to be at once changed, he has used such influence as he has had with the authorities governing the management of Commons to retain the system up to this point, believing that he might be able to eliminate the difficulties and so preserve the means of support for the individuals involved.

Before stating the reason that finally impelled the change, it is well to say that Mr. Tilson has not final authority in this matter and that he was not present at the meeting at which the change was ordered; that his only function was to report the facts to the Committee in charge. This Committee consists of the Treasurer, Mr. Farnam, as head of the Department in which the Dining Hall was run, and certain members of the Faculty who are considered to be most in touch with student life.

The circumstance precipitating the change was the order of the authorities for a lengthening for the hours of service of the meals. This lengthening, it was contended, was necessary in order to properly serve the food, to prevent the confusion, noise and distraction in the hastily served meals hitherto, and also to make it possible to serve more men. A longer time for each meal means that some of the tables may be occupied by two sets of students, and so the number of men who find accommodations at Commons will, it is hoped, be raised from something over 400 to between 500 and 600. With meals covering two hours in the morning, from 7.30 to 9.30, one and a half hours at noon, 12.20 to 1.50, and one and a half hours at night, from 5.30 to 7, it would become simply an impossibility for students to serve. It would take too much of their time and would be sure to conflict with recitations, so that probably a double set of waiters for one or more meals would be necessary.

So the time element may be considered one of the first and most important considerations. The second is the matter of system and discipline, and the careful following of rules. It is claimed that the experience of the management of Commons from the time of its foundation to the present time is unmistakable on the point that it is impossible to secure the same absolute obedience to all regulations and the same system from student waiters as from those who are professionals, and who know that their place depends entirely on the manner in which they live up to every rule. It is said that disciplinary measures have hitherto only provoked a great deal of protest and unpleasant feeling, and that if young men who are students in the University will not accede to a simple request to conduct themselves in that manner, they will not fulfill the requirements and any system of penalties which may be stated. It ought to be said, however, that the present manager of the Commons, Mr. Tilson, has relied not on disciplinary measures, but on requests for coöperation to improve the service. In regard to his success in such an effort, Mr. Tilson says, that he has nothing to complain of concerning any individuals, but that the general result, after all these years of control, shows him that there is something inherently wrong in the system, and the Commons cannot be conducted as it should be conducted until its employees are paid employees, who rely for their positions absolutely on

the way in which they fulfill their duties. The principal criticism under this second head of failure to get a satisfactory service, is that of waste of food. It is contended that the student waiters in such an institution of such size as the Commons, with such a hurry and rush accompanying the feeding of several hundred students in a short time, are unable to use sufficient care in serving the food and that food is wasted. On account of this, food is wasted in large quantities every day.

Commenting on this view of the case, one business man who has studied the situation with a great deal of care, put it to the WEEKLY in this way:

[Continued on next page.]

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