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First, Second and Third Rate Minds

Something J. Stitt Wilson said in one of his addresses here leads up to the theme of a talk presented by Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn at Reed college recently.

Mr. Wilson was introduced as a pioneer in new education. Dr. Meiklejohn has been written of in a little book by Lucien Price, called "Prophets Unawares." Each is looked upon as a leader in a new type of learning, and each seems to use the same fundamental principle as a basis.

Seek truth. Learn to think. Then use truth as the stuff with which to do this thinking.

Mr. Wilson said, "You are sleeping on yourselves. Don't allow yourselves to be cheated by the prevailing ignorance of the average college campus. Be alert, awake, and quick in your own mind and conscience. Awake and make a survey of the great truth before you."

But where to get this truth?

Dr. Meiklejohn pointed out three sources. He called them first, second and third rate minds. Contact with the first rate minds may be had through books, the books written by thinkers, investigators, the truth-seekers since human records have been kept—Socrates, Plato, Jesus, Huxley, Newton, Darwin and others whose thoughts and lives have come down through the blurring of time, but still undulled.

Second rate minds also are accessible in books, but in books of modern times and written by the best minds of modern times—by the truth-seekers of the twentieth century.

And third rate minds—are the college professor.

"It is too easy for the student to turn to his professor with questions to be answered," says Dr. Meiklejohn. "And he is turning to a third rate mind for his solution, a mind which has not, on the average, sought out these solutions itself. When a student comes to me and asks what I think of a question, I answer, 'I can tell you what I think of this matter, but what I think does not mean much, perhaps.'"

"Turn to the masters, to the ones who have sought and found truth. Hear what they have to say, think about what they have to say, then form your own conclusions. You can do that as well as I."

That is the message of these prophets, these pioneers of the "New Education."

"Don't sleep on yourselves. Learn to seek the truth, and to think in its terms. Learn the truth from those who sought and have found it—the first and second rate minds."

These minds are on the shelves in the library. —D. L. W.

Longer Examinations

There has been much discussion here and elsewhere on the value of examinations. Some would do away entirely with examinations. Others hold for numerous quizzes with examinations only counting slightly toward the final grade. Others have ideas that vary greatly.

One faculty member whose opinions are valued highly in faculty circles has submitted, at our request, his ideas on examinations. We present them forthwith for discussion:

1. If written examinations are minimized or eliminated, what is the alternative? Certainly not intelligence tests, which are yet in the veriest stage of experimentation and will not be perfected for decades, if ever. Certainly not oral examinations into which the personal element enters so greatly that most

orals I have listened to failed really to search out the candidate. Nor is there time to give orals to each candidate for the bachelor's degree: it is hard to trump up a suitable committee to examine even master's candidates. And candidates can't be graduated sight unseen.

2. No substitute has been found for the written examination. The mutterings against it have arisen largely, in my opinion, among the professional tinkers with education. The fact that our freshman classes cannot carry second-year language or freshman mathematics, in many instances; the fact that numbers of the students attempt to dodge both altogether; the inability to study concentratedly organized work or to take organized notes, and many other deficiencies with which you are familiar as well as I, show the result of tinkering. (I am ascribing the blame, of course, only in part to the tinkering; certain defects in matriculants are common to all countries and are inherent.)

3. The written-examination system here is defective in that examinations are crowded together, and last only two hours. Also, and this is a material defect, in that the grading of papers is done often with entirely too great haste. Final written examinations should count very materially on the final grade. I think that somewhere there is an archaic statute in the faculty legislation which forbids an instructor to allow more than 25 per cent for the final examination. Such a rule is absurd, and many instructors neither know of its existence nor observe it. I have heard of students taking four examinations in one day.

4. I believe in a fairly lengthy formal period for examinations, during which students are given formal examination facilities, not being crowded together with only the arm of a chair on which to write. I believe that the June examination should cover the work of the year and that courses should be organized in year sequences to permit this. I believe that instructors should have the privilege of setting three-hour examinations and that schedules should be arranged so that no student would take more than two examinations in one day, and rarely more than one. I believe in an interval between the close of lectures and the beginning of examinations. And finally, I do not believe in a system that calls for the turning in of grades within 72 hours or so, so that registration for the next term may be possible.

5. I believe in the written examination unaccompanied by any other form of test up to and including the bachelor's degree. There after for the master's and doctor's, I believe in very stringent examinations, with orals and any other reasonable form of test superimposed upon them.

6. But the formal written examination, conceived of as a dignified vital institution, ought now to be and must long remain the essential basis of estimating the competency of students for degree confirming.

Varicolored Language Here Today and Gone Tomorrow

By H. W. P.

A university campus has many strange and weird phenomena which make the landscape of student life a glittering, varicolored, ever-changing and withal an extremely fascinating one. They are so fascinating in themselves that they seem to weave a spell about us and even make us giddy. So hypnotic is their lure that they set us in a trance and as their sparkling lights dance about on the horizon, we are forced by some invisible power of attraction to dance in time to them, and sway and swing and chant rhythmically. There is one phenomenon in particular which is especially hypnotic in its effects and to which few students are immune. It is that of passing expressions which strike the campus. Some of these expressions linger for a considerable while, but most, like strange comets, are here today and gone tomorrow, never to be seen or heard of again.

When some new adjective such as "dumbell" is given birth in a remote part of the country and works its way shyly, hesitatingly, staggering on the point of death by starvation, strikes a university campus by accident, it is grabbed up, nourished with glee and made the mascot of the student body. Within a week everybody is calling their enemies dumbbells and their college professors dumbbells, and finally, where there are not enough dumb ones left, they begin calling their friends dumbbells. Instead of saying "Hello, Jack," they greet one another with, "Hello, you dumbell, how's everything?" Finally the profs begin referring to the students as dumbbells and it is not long before every sentence and phrase is so cluttered and interspersed with dumbbells that it is hard to carry on understandable conversation.

This is but one example of an infinite number of words, phrases and expressions that form a veritable continually evolving language, each with its own peculiar by-products and multifarious phases of development.

And then there are the expressions to designate capable individuals such as "The guy who knows his eggs," and expressions of encouragement such as "Do your stuff" (this latter belongs to the vast spark-plug complex, and there are expressions for absolutely every occasion and circum-

stance, each forming the nucleus of a vast system, and each involving its own technique of usage. It is these things that the college student must learn to absorb and juggle with dexterity. Studies! Why they are purely incidental to a college education. A college student hasn't time for studies. His mind dare not go wandering off on some long laborious pursuit of serious problem. It must be alert and ready to change from one thought to the next on an instant's notice, forever flitting here and there, bestowing upon this person the designation of dumbell, and perceiving in a flash any opportunity to exclaim hot-dog as befitting occasions flash upon the scene of activity, and filling in the interims by babbling "Yes, we have no bananas."

It is not so bad if a student does not know the difference between the Darwinian theory and Professor Turnbull's rules for a reporter, but if some day he should by accident get his tongue twisted and refer to the Delta Gamma fraternity or the Kappa Sigma sorority, he is dubbed a "dumbell right" for life, which is the same as a numskull par-excellence, and his name and deed spread like wild fire over the campus and he soon finds himself among the outcast order, known as the Hypogoofoacs. He may survive the ordeal, but he is more likely to develop an inferiority complex and be shoved into the discard as an intellectual incompetent.

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Little Food—Life of Student in India

(Continued from page one)

throughout the state. Yearly the students go from the outlying districts to the center to take their examinations. A freshman examination, a sophomore examination, and one after two more years for the B.A. degree—such is the system, and the reason why so many students flunk. If a student fails in one subject, he fails in all.

A college newspaper would be inconceivable in India. They do, however, have a magazine published every three months, in which the articles of the students—on every subject but politics—appear. Sports are for the very rich students only. In a college of 1,200 there are but two tennis courts. There is no college yell with which the Thundering Thousand cheers on its football heroes, no waving of colors.

Recreation is, indeed, almost unknown. And there is no junior prom. Men and women in the same classes do not speak to each other. There is no mixing in the social life with the opposite sex. A young man of India would not keep a young lady's picture in his mirror as a trophy of the chase. Custom would forbid her giving it to him, he would be unable to purchase it from a photographer, and if he stole it he would likely enough land in jail.

TWO INSTRUCTORS GIVEN M.A. DEGREE

Florence Whyte and Henriette Gouy, both of whom are now teaching in the romance languages department, have recently received their master of art degrees in that department. Miss Whyte, who graduated from the University of California in 1915, has been teaching Spanish at the University for the past four years. Next year, however, she expects to attend Bryn Mawr, where she has a fellowship. Miss Whyte will work for her doctor's degree at Bryn Mawr.

Miss Gouy, who graduated from a French university in 1915 and from Colorado college in 1920, plans on continuing her work here during the coming year. She will also teach French during the summer session.



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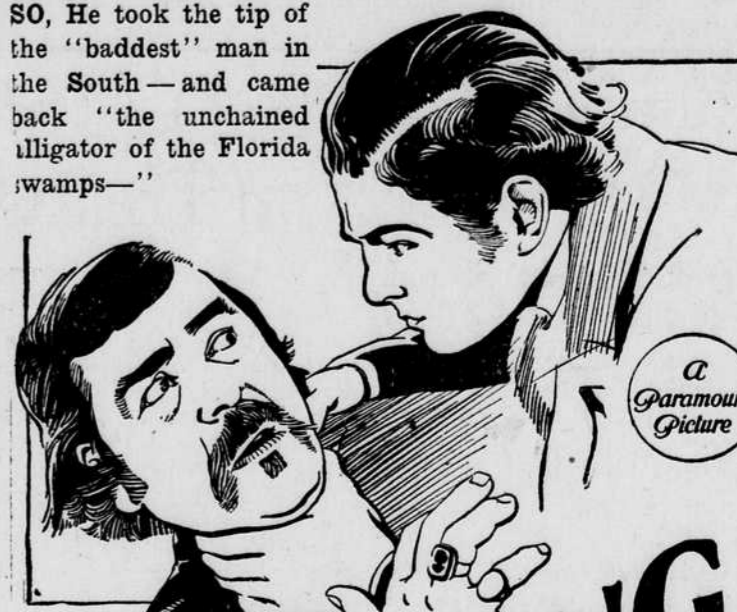
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