

Unscrambling Commencement

The board of deans deserves an orchid for taking the first step in unscrambling Oregon's traditionally scrambled commencement. The decision to post the list of graduating seniors ten days or two weeks before graduation may seem a small thing at first glance but it's going to save many a headache.

Commencement, 1948, is a good example. As has been the practice, the graduation list appeared in Johnson hall the Saturday morning before commencement. Several students, who were entitled to receive their degrees, found their names absent. Some errors had been made by professors and by the registrar's office. This precipitated a mad rush to check grades and records and to add the names of the deserving students to the list.

Some students who had confidently hoped they would graduate found out that they wouldn't. And they had families and friends arriving on the campus who expected to see them turn up on the stage of Mac court.

Under the new system, grades and records will be carefully checked and students will know at least ten days before commencement, whether they will graduate. A lot of embarrassment, bad feelings, and unfavorable publicity is going to be avoided. Also, the news bureau will be able to send out the list of graduates to the Oregon newspapers before the last minute.

While orchids are being handed out, the Mortar Boards deserve a big one. The board of deans was aware of the situation, true. But the members of the senior women's honorary came into the meeting with a stiff argument for taking remedial steps. Members of the group had devoted fall term to interviewing deans, collecting material, perfecting arguments.

This isn't the end of the matter, however. There's a lot more to be done. The Mortar Boards asked for much more than they got and successive classes will undoubtedly be asking for the same things—the abolition of spring term finals for seniors or a substitution for finals, the holding of commencement the Sunday before the regularly scheduled final week so that students other than seniors can view the ceremonies.

The start is auspicious. For one year, it's all that can be expected. But there are more refinements and changes to be made in future years.

The Latest In Books

By Estelle Nordgren
"You've wrote it good, Martha."

This praise from Uncle Mont Hawthorne, said Mrs. McKeown, was her greatest reward for the 3 years spent writing his story, "The Trail Led North." Debunking the Klondike Gold Rush myth, this book is written in the salty grammar of "an old-timer who remembers good." Not only is truth stranger than fiction, but it's better reading.

Young Mont Hawthorne became a man of the wild, rough 80's and 90's. In those days Astoria, Oregon was a booming cannery town where men were shanghaied onto merchant ships. Mont "caught on quick" to the raw realities and unwritten rules of pioneer life. He had "an itch for adventure," but a methodical mind and "a heap of horse sense."

When he sailed to Chignik, Alaska to work in a cannery, the untouched splendor of the North got into his blood.

Ever heard of the Russian Indians? Mont Hawthorne met them in church. "There just ain't no better place than church to size folks up—unless it's at a public hanging," he observed philosophically. In Chapter 5, "tea-to taler" Hawthorne enjoys an Indian tea party at the expense and chigrin of a friend.

Mont was a shocked spectator at a gruesome Chinese "embalming" and a superstition-instigated burial at sea, when the bark "Hope" was returning the cannery crew to San Francisco in a wild storm.

Later, Pedro, a huge, shaggy-haired "sonofagun" became Mont's best friend. When Mont sailed to the Yukon to prospect for gold, Pedro was on board. "Pedro was the best partner I ever had," said Hawthorne. They sailed up the inside passage to the two passes—White Pass and Chilcook Pass, about which he remarked, "There wasn't no choice; one was hell, the other was damnation." They shot the Whitehorse rapids and wintered at Dawson, to search a gold claim at Bonanza. They "took nothing from nobody," and minded their own business.

During the idle, cold days, the partnership was threatened by Pedro's fancy for a disreputable woman. However, Pedro was a typical dog, and Mont forgave him. A red-haired canine "character," half St. Bernard and half water spaniel, Pedro has probably won more acclaim in literary circles than any dog since Buck in "Call of the Wild."

Kudos to Martha Ferguson McKeown for resisting the modern trend to write a witty, slick, pseudo-historical novel! Bent on accurate reporting, she and her husband Archie (who made the publicity photographs) retraced her Uncle Mont's trail north. They sailed up the inside passage in a stern-wheeler built in 1898, went over the passes, and down the Yukon to Dawson. Guided by her uncle's records, they verified names and checked distanced. They returned to Whitehorse by boat and made a bus trip over the Alcan highway to Fairbanks to complete the factual gaps with the aid of University Alaska records.

An exceptionally fine piece of reporting, the book "stands on its own bottom." Virginia Kirkus Bookshop Service acclaims "The Trail Led North" as a unique piece of Americana.

Raising Kane Apprentice Pedagogue Must Face Many Trials with 'First School'

By Henry Kane

An education major only begins to realize what he is getting into when he tries to teach his first high school class as a student teacher during his senior year.

His friends rib him mercilessly with their peculiar sense of humor. They ask how he is to be told from the pupils. And with fiendish glee and gory phrase they tell what sometimes unwary teachers, including the incident of the young teacher in an eastern school who interrupted a game of chance in the washroom and was killed by a student for his lack of courtesy.

Or his buddies piously hope he won't teach in a one-room rural school where the teacher must be able to hold his own with the biggest student before discipline can be established.

Then he is warned of the perfumed pitfalls in the guise of adolescent girl students who have seen too many motion pictures and therefore tend to have more than a cursory interest in handsome teachers.

"Never be alone with a member of the weaker sex unless you think you can successfully protect yourself. If worst comes to worst you can always yell for help," his friend suggests.

The novice teacher often learns to his dismay that his pupils know almost if not more about the subject than he and rarely hesitate to inform the teacher of that fact.

This columnist recalls an instance when a teacher of elementary French was corrected in fluent French in front of the class by one of her 13-year-old girl pupils. It seemed that her uncle

was chairman of the Romance languages department of Columbia university and believed in early foreign language training for children.

Unfortunately for student teachers, their temporary pupils are quick to take advantage of any uncertainty concerning discipline. When given an inch they seize the whole foot to the time-tested tune of "But we're allowed to leave the room whenever we want to," or "Our regular teacher never says anything when we pass notes to each other during the lesson."

There is little the apprentice teacher can do but accept the statement, for the regular teacher sitting in the rear of the classroom knitting a sweater for a grandchild will not interfere. She often has difficulty in keeping a straight face and is inclined to join in the massacre of the would-be teacher's dedication to the education of the young.

The most difficult, according to old hands who have been teaching as long as a week, is the preparation of the daily lecture. One consolation is that like the notes used by college professors they are good for the next 30 years or more without change.

But our future teachers despise the easier ways of making a living and usually come through with bedraggled but flying colors. As one said after teaching high school students supposed to be studying history, "They don't bother me, bother me, bother me. . . ."

And then with a sigh, "The only thing that keeps me from using a baseball bat on some of them is that I was the same way myself once."

The Lowdown

Hurst Promises to Explore UO Secrets--Starts with 'Shack'

By Bud Hurst

Once a week, from now on, this column will explore the mysteries of the different schools and departments of the Universitas Oregonensis and report to the numberless readers of the Emerald what goes on behind those closed doors. Perhaps in this way we can help to dispel a little of the innate mistrust of an architecture student by the music major, etc. From now on there will be light.

Let's start close to home, in the Journalism school for instance. What goes on here. Who (or where) are the brains of the school? What keeps the Emerald running? What are its editorial policies? What does the staff do?

These are all good questions and anyone knowing the answers should keep their silence or run the risk of being denounced as heretics.

Yesterday we brought a friend of ours, a new student, into the "Shack" about 4 o'clock in the

afternoon. At about 4:15 he broke and ran. I caught him in front of the physical plant, got him calmed down a little and talked him into returning. He came under duress, making some allusions to the fact that such a hole should be entered only while under the soothing influence of the spirits fermenti. Nevertheless, he came.

I first introduced him to Editor Bill Yates who got up from his corner, laid down his crochet needles and affectionately bit our legs. Whimpering slightly he went off to break up a bingo game at the copy desk, claiming, in a flight of wild fancy, that there was a newspaper to be created.

I explained to Bob, our guest, that Bill used to be a competent and able newsman but that his spirit was broken after a week as editor in chief.

From here we went to the advertising section of the rag and

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American AIRPLANES

By TOM MARQUIS

As yet television is still a little remote from the Eugene region. It is a little difficult to realize from such a distance what a hold TV is already exerting in the areas where it operates on a regular program schedule.

It is almost impossible to find a bar in Los Angeles that doesn't have a television set—or so authorities on the subject told me on my recent visit to the big city. Many of the TV channels still beam sports events for a substantial part of their broadcast time, but gradually more imaginative programming is coming into its own. The possibilities of TV as a medium of communication are tremendous.

Besides TV's ability to bring us the great special events of our age, as they are happening, television offers educational organizations a chance to bring actual classroom work right into the home. Lectures, demonstrations, in fact everything which takes place in classrooms of our schools and universities, offers a great range of material which could be adapted to the increased enlightenment of our citizenry.

That TV captures the imagination cannot be denied. While attending the Tournament of Roses I heard one woman say to another: "Cyril got a new television set and he won't even come out of the house for the parade. He wants to see it on TV." The fact that Cyril lived inside the formation

step out on the front porch to see the whole thing, minus crowds and other disturbing business, made no difference where television was concerned.

The wonder of TV has yet to be exploited to the fullest. Here's hoping many of the lessons



Spike Jones

learned by the radio industry won't have to be repeated by television.

* * *

Spike Jones and Company have shifted their "planned chaos" from Friday evenings to Sunday afternoons. This makes no difference to Spike and his boys. They are as big a bunch of rowdies as ever. The "organized pandemonium" supplied by the Slickers originates over CBS every

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