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ARE YOU AWARE OF YOUR WORLD?

In a recent survey of liberal arts colleges, Mr. Harvie Branscomb of Duke University has revealed that the per capita free reading in the average small liberal arts college is but **twelve** books per year. By "free reading" we mean voluntary, non-required reading, which is not to be confused with reserve book reading. Free reading activity is probably the most reliable measure of the self-awakening of a college student. It serves as an indication of his intellectual curiosities, his byroads, his academic influences, and the shifts and emphases of his interests as reflected in reading over a span of four years.

A student who reads but twelve books a year is guilty of a rather miserable performance, despite the fact that this represents the average. In a period of one's life when his learning is supposed to be most concentrated and intense, the reading of twelve books a year is hardly an accomplishment to excite pride or elation.

We are now in the midst of the most tremendous war in history, the outcome of which will affect the future of all of us. The war effort demands the best of everyone. I honestly believe that the great role of college women, in our all-out war effort, is to try to see that all our people comprehend the present conditions and the meaning of total war.

How are we going to do it? We can face the facts. We can read. Magazines are full of significant articles and there are many significant books in our libraries, both those dealing with facts and with the interpretation of facts. We can inform ourselves, so that we can then take the lead in our home communities in seeing that the people are informed.

We can't do it by skipping over articles on war or trying to forget about the war. Never let it be said that college students "don't want to talk about it; they don't want to think about it; they don't even want to read about it."

—M. D. Mc.

I Heard It This Way...

Did you all miss us last week? Wasn't your turkey just a little less interesting because we hadn't commented upon him? Couldn't you honestly say that something was lacking? . . . something nice like, say, the SALEMITE? Never mind! . . . But we did miss YOU!

Things have just been happening too fast and furious for our poor little thick skulls. We rushed away from here Wednesday gripeing because we had to come back for Friday classes. Mr. Weinland had selected that precise day upon which to show up at Bible, please. But despite it all, we exulted in stuffing turkey instead of Spam.

And then sometime or another there was that fabulous meeting of the Legislature. For one solid fifty-six minutes wild shouting went on about going to the movies before exams . . . yea . . . and many were the groans when worn out Legislators listened to Vice-President Struven's announcement in chapel last Tuesday. What they want to know is: why was all that effort wasted if we're going back to exactly what we started with? Aside from that, however, we think that the new legislation is wonderful . . . and our most grateful appreciation goes to them what did it!

After the vacation, our spirits were whisked off from despondency to Joseph Auslander. Was ever there a more truly kind and gentle poet? We personally are all for kidnapping him and hiding him down under something cozy . . . what a refuge in bewilderment he would be!

Then after Auslander came the annual rioting season. Much conflagration was spread abroad . . . much how're-you-voting?-won't-you-have-a-cigarette?-ing was noised about . . . much valuable time was switched from the cramming of history to the rolling up of hair. And now it's over for at least twelve more months . . . whew! But before we forget it, please listen to what we heard that we weren't at all supposed to have heard. It seems that ballot-counter Newman laid a stack of tabulated votes aside to get them out of the way . . . it was then that fix-it-up Watkins raced in, picked up said stack, threw a handful across the table, and cried, "Here're some you haven't counted yet!" The laurels of the evening go to Peggy Somers who, in her usual cool and nonchalant manner, sighed, "Put them down, Charlie . . . we've counted them at LEAST three times already."

Then there was that final battle of the hockey season. The old ladies have done well . . . so, PLEASE, let's let basketball season go by without any sort of remark that will necessitate their going all-out to prove a point again. Merci.

Finally, we want to say to Dr. Rondthaler that simply having him here on the campus again does us more good than any morale builder we can think of. We wish him quickest recovery and bestest love.

In parting may we say that unless life slows down a pace or two, this column will be forced to find a new columnist. Frankly, we can foresee some dire catastrophe bearing down on our upstairs workings . . . Thanksgiving . . . Legislature . . . May Day elections . . . Auslander . . . Borovsky . . . tests . . . tests . . . tests . . . Wheew-w-w-w-w.

Le Coin Francais

Article by M. René Hardré of W. C. U. N. C. M. Hardeés son, Jacques, fought in the Battle of France, was captured by Germans, escaped and returned to the U. S. A. He is now with General DeGaulle's forces in England.

MISE AU POINT

La reconnaissance, par les Etats-Unis et la Grande-Bretagne, de l'amiral Darlan comme administrateur civil et militaire de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Afrique occidentale françaises dût-elle n'être que temporaire, prolonge indûment l'équivoque de régime Pétain et obscurcit une situation que, plusieurs mois auparavant, se trouvait éclaircie à la satisfaction de tous les Français patriotes.

Qu'on ne se figure pas que se soit l'amiral de la Flotte française qui ait réintégré la France dans la guerre contre l'Axe. Il n'a fait que céder à la force et profiter d'une situation que lui offrait l'occasion inespérée de continuer à faire figure de chef et de prolonger en Afrique, pour des fins politiques, l'autorité illusoire du défunt gouvernement de Vichy. Quant à l'Afrique du Nord, l'occupation anglo-américaine en eût tôt ou tard, et sans lui, provoqué la rentrée dans la guerre. Il est vrai que cette rentrée a été brusquée par lui, ce qui a permis aux Alliés de faire immédiatement face aux tentatives italo-allemandes d'occupation de la Tunisie. Mais l'amiral Darlan n'a pu obtenir de la flotte de Toulon qu'elle vint, il y a quinze jours, quand il en était encore temps, se mettre à l'abri dans un port de l'Algérie; mais M. Boisson, gouverneur de l'Afrique occidentale et ami de Darlan, ne s'est déclaré "pour" les Alliés (en mai dernier, il faisait condamner à mort cinq "gaullistes"); il décrète au contraire la neutralité des territoires qu'il administre; mais les condamnations et les exécutions, en France, de patriotes français "de gaullistes" dont le crime était de ne pas accepter l'asservissement de la France, ne sont pas effacées des mémoires; non plus que déclarations publiques, les faits et les gestes des gouvernants de Vichy; non plus que l'empressement de Vichy à livrer sans combat les colonies françaises dont l'Axe avait besoin pour ses conquêtes. Cependant, tandis que les forces françaises enfin libérées se battent furieusement aux côtés des Anglo-Américains en Tunisie, les volontaires du général de Gaulle, qui combattent en Afrique depuis 1940, s'avancent à travers la Lybie et le Fezzan. Il ne sert donc de rien à l'amiral Darlan de préférer, en évoquant le nom de Pétain, que les équivoques voules par Hitler et soigneusement entretenues depuis juin 1940 les "capitulards" de Bordeaux, subsistent toujours et vicient l'atmosphère autour des Nations-Unies. Il ne servira de rien non plus que journalistes, oublieux des révélations du procès de Riom, ressuscitent une "digne" Pétain, comme ils se sont plus à imaginer d'autres énigmes. L'occupation totale, au mépris des termes de l'armistice de juin 1940, et l'agression de Toulon, qui a causé le suicide de la flotte, ont enfin dessillé les yeux des derniers Français qui s'obstinaient dans l'aveuglement; l'esprit de la France Combattante triomphe.

(Etre continué la semaine prochaine)

—AND A MERRY CHRISTMAS, TOO

For our Thanksgiving news we had the "jubilant" reports from Washington that fourteen thousand Germans had been killed on the Russian front, and that fifteen hundred Italians had been "slaughtered." Radios blasted the glad tidings, head-lines sang . . . Everyone sang of the slaughter, but few remembered to sing of victory. We were to be thankful not because we had won, but because we had killed! After one year, of what promises to be a much longer war, our leaders in Washington have forgotten . . . They have forgotten that we are fighting to preserve a way of life, more precious than life itself; they have become shortsighted and bloodthirsty. Lest we too forget, perhaps we had best recount the whys of this war.

Our constitution recognizes that men are personalities, not cattle—and it guarantees liberty and free thinking to each and every man. It is for the preservation of this liberty that we fight totalitarian governments. It is for this that we must kill. We want a government of faith rather than one of force; we want to know, and speak, and write, and LIVE the truth . . . we would be our own censors of what this truth is because we do have faith that it will stand. If we would win the peace, equally as important as winning the war, we had best remember when Washington forgets. We had best remember that we are not fighting young Italian or young German or young Japanese boys, but that we are fighting a force that threatens to destroy our way of life . . . we had best remember the principals set forth in our constitution lest in winning we lose; lest in slaughtering with glee we die.

—M. B.

OPEN FORUM

Dear Editor,

When I came to Salem; I knew that, contrary to many small schools, she had kept abreast of the changing times. Salem's object wasn't to protect Salemites from the outside world; my chosen school, combining tradition and a liberal minded faculty, attempted to produce women who were self-sufficient, and who had the ability to put first things first.

From where I sit, it looks as though neither the faculty nor the students think Salem women are capable of handling cuts.

When I had only been here a short while, my mind jerked to the cuts system and the way it works. In the first place, why don't faculties have cuts, too? Next, if a girl is really college material, should she not know when she has exhausted her cut quota? Is it fair for a Freshman with a B average (who might be re-hashing what she learned in a prep school, incidentally) to take as many cuts as a Senior with the same grade?

To solve this problem partially, I glanced over the cut systems of our fellow schools. At Duke, each student has a stated number of cuts, and her infirmary cuts are included in the number. If she trapes off every week-end, uses her cuts, then piles up in the bed with ailments, she just withdraws from school. She has already missed too many classes to get credit for any of her courses.

At Hollins, however, Juniors and Seniors have unlimited cuts; the Freshmen and Sophomores, a limited number determined by the girl's average.

My plea for Salem then is a combination of the two plans: let the faculty grant upperclassmen a stated number of cuts in which the infirmary cuts are included. As for the underclassmen, let the faculty grant them a limited number, depending upon the student's average.

This is only one plan. If you have others, please submit them.

Sincerely,
—A SALEMITE.