

The Daily Tar Heel



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Tuesday, January 21, 1930

The Flunking Question

Predigested doses of knowledge, as administered by pedantic professors to lethargic students in the average American institution of higher learning, are seldom productive of real education. This is merely an ancient truism stated verbosely, but its application to numerous college generations has not diminished its force. For four years and more the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the ages may be poured upon a man in an euphonious and uninterrupted stream, without "adding one cubit to his mental stature."

The predominance of uneducated college graduates is attributable in large measure to the undergraduate attitude. Most students regard a college career as a glorious vacation, a week-end extended over four years. If the undergraduate would regard his academic career as a job and not a vacation he would come much closer to securing his money's worth from his father's investment. The student of average intellect who works on his courses for forty hours each week, including classes, has sufficient time for recreation and limited outside activities; in all probability he has better than a C average at the end of each quarter and a genuine education at the end of his academic career.

President Chase addressed the freshmen in chapel recently upon habits of study, urging them to use the reading rooms of the library when dormitory conditions are not conducive to study. His remarks are especially appropriate, since the quarter is now well underway and resolutions concerning industry and application are now meeting their first severe tests.

A recent investigation of the extent to which the library is being utilized as a place for study produced interesting results. Although it was ascertained that the study halls on the first floor are reasonably well filled at all times with those using the specialized reference books there, the main reading room on the second floor was discovered to be almost vacant throughout a considerable portion of the day and evening.

In this main reading room

there are 350 seats in comfortable and pleasant surroundings. A check on the readers in this room throughout December, when studying reached a high water mark because of the proximity of examinations, revealed that the average number of occupants during the evening was 60. Another check made since the opening of the winter quarter shows that this average has dropped to about 50. At the present time less than 17 per cent of the available seating capacity in the main reading room is being used.

Thus it is seen that space is always available in the library for those who desire a quiet, comfortable place in which to study. An hour or two spent in the library every night might enable the undergraduate to make the knowledge spread out before him in classes of his own, instead of uncomfortably coasting through college upon his instructors' frenzied efforts to turn out a class not consisting entirely of flunks.

America, The Beautiful

Ever since the day of the Boston tea party, when the slumbering independence of our ancestors began to awaken and cast off the yoke of the mother country, America has fostered the growth of a national spirit seeing its expression in thousands of gaudy, glittering parades, in countless pompous, eloquently stupid speeches by "100 per cent American" politicians; a spirit that urges great applause whenever the flag is displayed, and that makes anyone who considers himself proud of the supposed distinction of being an American boast of the country's many magnificent features, her freedom, her independence, her limitless opportunities for success and happiness, America, "the greatest spot on God's green earth," and so on, *ad infinitum*. Pride in our country seems to be a religion; from the cradle, the average American is taught to regard himself as so much better off than a person of any other nationality that he finally comes to regard other peoples with a faint air of patronizing condescension.

This loyalty to one's *Vaterland* would be splendid and worthy of the highest commendation were it only intelligent and reasonable. Instead it is a spirit founded on an intolerance, based in turn on a lack of courage to face the facts. Rather than face deplorable situations in our country and admitting them to be disgraceful features, we choose to ignore them deliberately and heap anathema upon "debunkers" whose eyes, not being blinded by this pitifully shallow "patriotism," cut beneath the hypocritical sham of the American attitude to make caustic and bitter wounds on our vanity.

Worst of all these wounds hurt because they are true. Far from being the great, noble, the magnificent America of the "100 per cent American's" faith and the European peasant's dream, America is a struggling baby giant, arrogant, ribald, shamefully hypocritical, flamboyantly gaudy, young, and, in spite of the sophistication of its metropolitan centers, to a certain extent raw. Many typically American gestures and actions are absurd in their inconsistency. We blindly make ourselves a choice laughing stock by our naive censorship of books and periodicals considered lewd by a customs official or a municipal censor,—yet these books and publications can always be obtained no matter how thoroughly banned; and any number of filthy burlesques, smutty revues, and obscene plays run merrily along, occasionally playing a

game of hide-and-seek with the grave board of censors or the Watch and Ward society. We pass the prohibition law and at an enormous expense establish enforcement corps which seem to be about as effectual as sieves; liquor, this time of a corrosive variety, apparently flows as much as ever. And instead of making an earnest effort to enforce the amendment, things continue to run along in a characteristically slipshod fashion, and our meager respect for law is diminished to almost none at all. This is a republic supposedly based on a democracy where the voice of the people controls,—yet the people of Chicago revealed their intelligent use of the Franchise by putting in Big Bill Thompson's administration, and worse, by leaving it there.

This enumeration of absurd incongruities and ridiculous vices on the part of Uncle Sam (better Uncle Sham) could be continued indefinitely. But it would be futile. Journalists are constantly parading before the apathetic eyes of the public the weaknesses and faults of the nation,—but nothing seems to be done. Novelists reveal to us the grossly predominating materialism of our country, our universal lack of culture and background, our small town bigotry and our preposterous hypocrisy that fools no one,—and we only rail against them, brand them as traitors, asses, and continue to censor impartially, to buy cheap, rotten magazines in large quantities, and to patronize the bootlegger at the same time we denounce the lawlessness of the nation.—R. H.

World Peace And The Average Man

Whatever the average man manifests in the way of interest in movements to promote international peace is negligible. The diplomats of the world get together quite frequently in formal assemblies to come to "understandings" of each other, and the aftermath of one of these agreements consists largely of a few speeches by men in the public eye and, sometimes, a senatorial resolution. Tete-a-tetes which are held from time to time among diplomats result mostly in newspaper flourishes and editorial comments. To the ordinary citizen such happenings have no meaning at all. What is it to him whether a few men thousands of miles away, certainly having no real power, adopt this plan or not? There is a lack of interest on the part of the average man because his relation to international peace—at least it would seem to him—is too remote to require serious consideration.

An innovation is being made today, however, which will play a large part in bringing the problem at hand closer to the man in the street. Beginning this morning, the people of the world have the opportunity of listening, by radio, to the sessions of the five-power naval parley being held in London. This may mark a new era in the science or art of diplomacy by bringing the constituencies of delegates to international conferences in closer contact with the questions at issue. Sir Philip Gibbs, who sees open diplomacy developing from the closed, will no doubt see this latest turn, broadcasting the sessions, as an even surer sign of open diplomacy.

Word peace can never make headway unless the masses demand it. And the masses will never demand it vigorously until the average man sees his proper relation to it—that is, to efforts to further the proposition. The citizen must, then, be thrown in contact with the things that are happening which might promote peace; his interest must be stimulated. Per-

haps the radio, more than any other device, will prove to be the best means of interesting the ordinary person in efforts to advance international tranquility, thereby promoting the movement to secure peace.

—B. M.

Merely Meandering



john mebane

Certain remarks tinged with caustic irony having come to our ears lately, we have concluded that since our recent column the belief is prevalent that we have lost our faith in women. Not so.

We never had any.

And besides, almost every remark in that column applied with equal force to men. We merely forgot to mention that.

This isn't an apology—precisely. It is an attempt to escape from heads turned aside and noses up. Which are not to our liking.

With an eye keen for detail one may distort almost anything one sees, transform common sights, and plant them in the realm of the grotesque or the ridiculous. Yet, this transformation taxes the imaginative faculties of the average student a bit too strongly. I am talking of the student whose inherent indolence will not give way even for the reward of an excellent bit of entertainment. The remainder of this column is for those people. There are numerous sights on the campus which are highly amusing in themselves, denying the imagination an opportunity for play. We point out below:

SIGHTS WORTH HEARING AND SEEING

Cy Edson at the Carolina Grill trying to get a sandwich named after him.

Garland McPherson tying up love-letters with a violet ribbon.

Haywood Parker's 12-year-old hat which has been to 14 rifle meets, 114 dates, and in three street brawls.

Prof. Koch reprimanding Dixit for emitting howls of protest during a reading of one of Shakespeare's tragedies.

L. P. Stack trying to persuade himself that he is wrong about something.

Glenn Holder in his usual attitude at the typewriter preparing to write an editorial on "Why I Am Not a Baby Radical" and inventing invectives to toss at the Southern Textile Bulletin writers.

Officer Blake turning his flashlight on a streetlamp to see if it is burning.

Mr. H. M. Jones suggesting gently that his students prepare their lessons a trifle better.

"Vagabond Lover" as it is played by the Buccaneers.

Will Yarborough chasing a fly around in a bowl of soup. (Will isn't in the soup himself—just the fly).

Dean Hibbard leading his class on a tour of the campus in an endeavor to find a classroom, and insisting that even if the classroom isn't found, the observance of nature will improve the students.

M. P. Moorer insisting that he is an Englishman and wearing a monocle to prove it.

A reporter on the staff of The Daily Tar Heel running down a story (which, in turn, is "run down" by everyone who reads it).

Jay Curtis tacking shingles on the roofs of air castles.

The columnist when the alarm clock goes off at seven (?) o'clock.

Readers' Opinions

THE LABOR PROBLEM

Editor Daily Tar Heel:

The problem: Continued strife between labor and capital causes an enormous loss each year to labor, capital and the consuming public.

To find: A solution which will benefit both labor, capital, and the public.

Capital's solution: Abolish unions and establish the open shop. This would abolish waste-strikes and insure a cheap labor supply, resulting in prosperity in industry and more goods at a lower price. However, we must pause to see just to what degree this accomplishes our three-fold purpose. Obviously, Capital and that part of the consuming public not considered as labor benefits by a pure financial gain. However, this solution does not accomplish our ends since the loss of bargaining power to labor is more harmful to this class than their gain in purchasing power due to cheaper commodities.

Labor's solution: Establish strong unions and adopt a closed shop policy. The proponents of this plan claim the resulting increase in the bargaining power given labor, would raise wages and therefore the standard of living level. In order to see just what way this would accomplish our three-fold purpose, we may view the situation in England today, which will serve as a fine example of the labor program brought into effect. Here, we see the powerful unions are unable to raise the standard of living of the laborers, since the more strikes they hold the more they hurt industry and cut off their own income as well as that of capital. As for the consuming public, these general strikes on a large scale are more ruinous to it than any previous situation.

With this knowledge as an hypothesis we are in a better position to arrive at a program which will be the best advantage of the three parties concerned.

The solution suggested: Establish strong labor unions. This will give the laborer the much needed collective bargaining power. Make strikes illegal, and establish a national system of trade commissioners to investigate all disputes between

labor and capital and decide on them in courts established for the purpose. To the average American this radical departure from our existing institutions would seem far too socialistic even for consideration. However, for the benefit of those who are willing to consider it, we will examine the matter further. Generally, after a strike has run long enough to be disastrous to labor as well as capital and has cost the consuming public inestimable financial loss and inconvenience, the average American is only too glad when the government investigation steps in and brings the strike to a close. Why not have the investigation first and avoid this enormous loss? It is generally believed that the thing a company fears most is a government investigation. If this is so, is not this fact all the more reason why there should be an investigation?

Let us close by attempting to discover just to what extent this solution solves our three-fold problem in benefiting labor, capital and the consuming public.

First labor is given collective bargaining power to better its situation, but it is not self-destructive as British labor unions since it is unable to hurt industry through large strikes and in this way cut off its own income. Capital, although it would no longer be able to make unreasonable profits through the exploitation of labor, would more than make up the loss through the general prosperity of industry resulting from lack of strikes. And it is obvious that the consuming public would be the greatest beneficiary of all. No amount of statistical information is necessary to convince one of the tremendous losses it now suffers under what we may term our present strike system. If one is led to believe that the establishment of the above mentioned courts would insure an extra cost which would have to be born by labor and capital, it is probable that on further consideration he would arrive at the conclusion that this cost, however great, would appear insignificant when contrasted with the saving these courts would bring about.

F. C. W.

TODAY--

HELD

OVER

by

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