

The Daily Tar Heel



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Thursday, April 3, 1936

The "Anti-Religious" Campaign in Russia

During the past few weeks the campaign of protest against reported anti-religious "atrocities" in Russia has gained considerable momentum, and at present it seems to have assumed world proportions. But many thoughtful persons, including some of the most prominent leaders in the Christian church, have expressed the opinion that the protest movement is a colossal mistake.

A statement issued several weeks ago by Bishop Nikolai of the Russian Orthodox church was the inception of the protest movement. He declared that the Russian government was waging an anti-religious campaign, and that several members of the clergy had been tortured and murdered. In an interview with a representative of the Manchester (England) *Guardian* about two weeks ago, however, he admitted that the atrocities he mentioned had occurred in 1918, and there was no evidence that they had been committed by the soviet government. On the contrary, a mob had murdered the men during the Russian civil war.

Rev. Donald Grant, general secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, returned to England a few days ago after a visit of three weeks to Russia. He reported that the soviets were conducting an anti-religious campaign, but that he had come across nothing that could be described as an atrocity. The campaign has been conducted for the past ten years, according to the minister. It is carried on chiefly by propaganda, of which the Anti-Religious museum is an example. It contains exhibits illustrating the Darwinian theory of evolution and so forth; while lecturers discuss and demolish certain beliefs of the orthodox church-beliefs, for the most part, not held by educated Christians in other countries.

Mr. Grant was in close touch with several Christian people in Russia, people who knew the religious and political situation very well, and were themselves bearing the brunt of the anti-religious campaign. He reports that they believe that protests to the Russian government from people in other countries would be quite ineffectual, and would only increase the spirit of fear. The only thing that outsiders can do, according to these Russian Christians, is to persuade their countries to recognize the soviet government.

Personally, we believe that the protest campaign is ill-advised at the present time. The anti-religious movement in Russia was initiated as a protest against the repressive policies of a church which imposed harsh restrictions upon the lower classes, and extorted money from them which they could ill afford. It is significant that the two great capitalistic nations, Great Britain and the United States, are the promulgators of the protest campaign, and there are many indications that it is directed against the soviet system for political rather than religious reasons. We hold no brief for the soviet system as such, but we do not believe that it should be attacked under the hypocritical garb of a religious protest.

According to what appears to be reliable evidence, the protest campaign is not based upon facts accurately ascertained. It has already stirred up passions and fears both in and out of Russia, and it is likely to prevent a calm and intelligent consideration of the situation. Obviously the effects of the protest campaign are primarily political, whatever its aims may be. At any rate, it cannot be accepted at face value by thoughtful observers.

The Savage Tendency in Modern Education

In the current issue of *Scribner's* magazine there appears an article by a prominent English educator on both the savage and civilized phases of modern education. This article, in addition to stressing the inadequacy of our schooling methods when it comes to imparting knowledge, discusses the more physical side of youth's education.

By the physical side is meant the anachronistic tendencies still latent among undergraduates, here and in England, to haze and to indulge in tests of strength and "courage" of a particularly violent sort. While hazing is slowly dying out, in the more civilized institutions at least, a virulent expression of the other tendency is still very much in evidence, among the students of this country, in the initiation rites of fraternities and similar organizations.

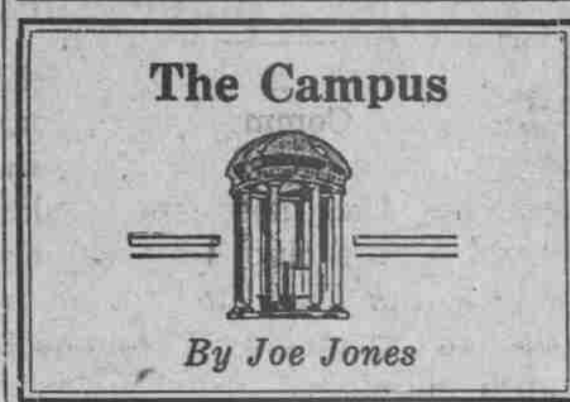
Much of this horseplay which fraternity men seem to consider necessary for the neophyte to pass through, before he becomes a full-fledged "brother," is of an amusing and harmless sort. But even the harmless kind has a ready facility for degenerating into practices seriously dangerous. Human ingenuity can conceive of extraordinary feats for victims to perform, feats which often bespeak the savage impulse in mankind that has never been well buried. In the article referred to the author calls to mind a certain sorority in a well known institution whose idea of the proper ceremony for initiation was to keep a girl, clad only in the thinnest apparel, confined for an hour to a room, the temperature of which was zero.

Examples of the unnecessary roughness and risk of many fraternity and sorority initiations can be mentioned indefinitely. There was the case of the boy killed by a live wire while under-

going initiation at a leading southern university. Such cases are unpleasant but very evident reminders of the inhumane streak still preserved in human nature, in spite of all the efforts of civilization.

Another characteristic of the same brutal and unnecessary species of humor is exemplified by the vulgarity often attendant upon the "sacred" rites. Rotten egg throwing, the enforced singing of bawdy songs in public, and numerous other actions, many of them unprintable and all of them severely censurable, — to all this must the victim submit.

When the brutal and the violent is removed from the sporadic fun occasioned by fraternity horseplay every one concerned will benefit, and the general atmosphere of college life will be more wholesome.—R. H.



By Joe Jones

Have you ever heard of Jete, who is a pot-walloper in the Graduate Club kitchen? He is a dwarf, but his heart is big. The top of his head is bald and black and shiny. His grin, and he grins easily, discloses teeth which appear white between such dark lips. His arms, shoulders, and his hairy chest are bravely muscled, and he can carry heavy loads on his back. Coming down the basement steps and through the low doorway with a great bag of meal on his back he is like some quaint gnome bearing loot into his enchanted cavern. He never comes in with the groceries on his shoulders but that I peep at him from the corner of my eye and remind myself to hunt up a fairy book and reacquaint myself with dwarfs and goblins.

Poor Jete must all his days forego the pleasure of books, for he can neither read nor write. He is able to recognize a can of salmon only if it has the picture of a fish on the outside, or a can of peas if their likeness is on the wrapper, but all unilluminated tinned goods are a mystery to him until he can lay hands on a can-opener.

An inveterate cigarette bummer, Jete has been very unfortunate in that four of his eight waiters at the Graduate Club are non-smokers. It was at first a bitter blow for him, but he now consoles his smoke appetite at the expense of Generous Jim, the baker's boy, who daily visits the kitchen. I have promised to bring him a cigar wrapped in silver foil, and I really intend to do so, but somehow I never think of it when I am down town. Only yesterday he asked me about it again.

Jete likes to borrow dimes and forget it. One day he inquired about my financial health, and I, happening to be flush with a laundry refund, said quite readily, "How much do you want, Jete?" He was so heartened by my manner that he couldn't resist the temptation to try to raise me above the usual dime. He said that he needed fifteen cents, and added quickly that he really ought to ask me for a quarter, but that he reckoned twenty cents would do.

As a builder of air castles, Jeter, for that is his real name, is somewhat like the young wastrel in Professor Green's *No 'Count Boy*. He will elaborate about things he wants us to do together some day, but nothing ever comes of it. Last fall he was forever telling me about a place not far from Chapel Hill where there were plenty of rabbits. He promised

to take me there and show me some good hunting, but when Saturday came Jete would always have some excuse for not going. Just before spring holidays he got me wrought up with stories of a fine fishing place he knew 'way up Morgan Creek. I agreed to stay on the Hill a day and try it out with him, but he didn't show up—said his wife was sick, I believe. I wonder if he really does know of a fish hole up Morgan Creek.

I wish Jete and I had gone fishing together that day. I should like to sit and talk with him on the creek bank. I don't believe we'd get a nibble, but I like to think that Jete would have something interesting to say, there in the spring sunshine, something he hasn't said in the kitchen. But perhaps I would be disappointed. Perhaps he would inquire about the cigar wrapped in silver foil.

Lenten Season Daily Devotion

Thursday, April 3.—Topic for the day: "The Evil of Brooding." (Read Phillipians 2:12-18). Key verse: "Work out your own salvation."

Meditation: Work it out! Brooding over trouble is the surest way to hatch a new brood of troubles, or to speed growth in the existing brood. We can rear troubles as we can rear children and chickens. Attention enough will make bugaboos out of bagatelles. Trouble dies only of neglect and inattention due to preoccupation with constructive activity. Courage to keep a helpful task helps one gain the mastery over trouble and to keep it from building a nest in one's mind. Work is one of God's handmaids.

Prayer: O thou, who dost lift up the heavy hearts of men, keep us from vain and wasteful brooding over our troubles and losses. May we hear the bidding of good cheer and have the grace to keep our minds at peace amid all the labors and conflicts of our lives. Amen.

There have always been flappers. They have always been scolded. And 99 per cent of them become lovely, wholesome women. We wonder why there is so much scolding in the world. The young folks always turn out well. And nearly every obnoxious condition soon blows over. We believe humanity criticizes itself too much.—*Atchison Globe*.

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