

The Daily Tar Heel

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Sunday, October 15, 1933

Action Wanted!

Recently an editorial appeared on this page advocating special days for mid-term exams. Nothing has been done about it, as has been the case many times in the past. Very often criticisms have appeared in the TAR HEEL and not nearly as many of them have been destructive in nature as our critics would have one believe. But nine times out of ten the suggestions die here where they were born because people feel that "they would have been pretty good if some one had put them across."

We don't know who it is that is supposed to put things across on this campus, but we do know that we can become the agency through which the proper group is stirred into action. In this case the TAR HEEL firmly believes that it is asking for the same thing that the entire student body is asking for, namely a fair chance for every man on every important examination.

We shall not review the problem this time. The entire case was previously presented fully and capably. But we do ask for action, and will continue to do so until action is secured. Mid-terms are almost here; so there is no time to be lost. We call upon the administration to provide special days for mid-term exams this quarter, or to tell us and the rest of the student body why such a plan is impractical. And we call on the members of the student council, individually and collectively, to see that this request is acted on with dispatch.

We are not trying to force the issue. All we want to do is to further the interest of the student body as a whole, and we believe that in advocating this measure we are doing just that.—J.B.L.

Let Us Not Hate

There is a growing antipathy on this campus toward the Germans. The German military plans, which it is rumored, include war in the near future, are the basis of much criticism.

One person, in fact, was so unwise as to call the Germans "ferce, ruthless, Huns, led by an Attila, more terrible than he who swept over Europe fifteen hundred years ago.

Has he, have those others who are so prone to criticize, forgotten how America got into the World war sixteen years ago? Has he forgotten the Belgian women who are supposed to have been ravished? Has he forgotten the children whose limbs were alleged to have been torn from their bodies by the bloodthirsty animals who were Germans? Has he forgotten that the peaceful tranquility is supposed to have been disturbed by a nation, which since it lost the war, must take the entire blame for its starting? Has he forgotten that the world believed these stories which were later proved worthless lies, shameless propaganda to lure an unsuspecting nation into a war in which it had no interest? Does he, and do his substantiators, know that German mothers, and German sons, and German peacelovers were told the same stories about us, about the horrible "Frogs," and the lascivious English soldiers?

War, the scourge that has partially depopulated our nation's every generation in the memory of man, is largely a product of these lies,

this hating which is fed by the ones to whom the war is profit.

May we be so bold as to state that some of our best friends are dwellers in this "merciless Hun country," and that they never seem to have exhibited any of the traits accredited to them.

Let us not start hating. When we begin to believe statements the like of the one we have mentioned, we will have undone the work of peacelovers the world over, for unjustified hating does not listen to reason. If we make an effort to understand the reasons underlying the actions of these seemingly bellicose nations, we will have done much to further an understanding, and a sympathy that will eventually outlaw war. Is that not what we want?—W.H.W.

Philosophy For Ph.D.'s

The upper rungs of the cultural ladder are becoming seriously crowded because of the continuance of this—(you've heard of it?)—depression. Those ethereal heights into the realm of "Doctor-dom" so commonly reached by many in the days of prosperity are becoming so trod by weary feet that the very basal structure is weakening.

That is always the way. When the crowd begins to pass over, the structure will either break from the strain of being over crowded, or it must be strengthened and re-inforced.

This is not saying that it is not a very courageous act on the part of the would-be-climbers. When the atmosphere below has become stifling it shows great determination for an individual to labor still harder up the same ladder, reaching a height from which the fall, if the experiment is not successful will be still more disastrous than from a lower level.

The most important element of this general cry of "Go up, young man, go up!" is the care that these ascending novitiates by some practical method keep their feet on the ground. After all, no matter how high the ladder, the ground is still the reality, and one must not climb so high that he loses sight of terra firma.

The world of reality is the support on which the ladder of learning is based, and those who thirst for knowledge should ascend the ladder with the idea of reaching a level the better to view and understand the world of reality. These hopefuls should not be susceptible to dizziness so that they dare not look down and must perforce keep their heads in the clouds, becoming blinded by the haze of learning pro learning.

This great ladder must be strengthened by practicality and usefulness, and then the strain of many feet will not be felt. Its purpose will be sure and sound, and those who seek will find firm standing room from which to dabble their fingers in the blue, and from which they may dare to glance downwards toward the earth and intelligently estimate the true relation of the earth—the earthy and the scholarly blue.—J.M.V.H.

A MOVING TRIBUTE

To the Editor of the Tar Heel:

As one who came to this University only a few years ago, I wish to pay brief tribute to the memory of Dr. Eugene C. Branson and of Professor Walter D. Toy. Very soon after my arrival I came to know these men. Each in his way made me feel that he was my friend. In a rare and beautiful sense each became a rich experience in my life. The evenings or afternoons I spent in their homes or the passing conversations I had with them on the campus helped me to realize in large part wherein lies the essential greatness of this University.

Dr. Branson embodied the best of native tradition and culture. He combined in his life and work an interpretation of the old South, a reshaping of the transitional South, and a vision of the new South that stirred one with an eager desire to make it a reality. Directly or indirectly his influence is felt in every rural community in the United States. In this University, in this state, and throughout the entire South he was a powerful force for liberalism.

To know Professor Toy was, in the fine Shakespearean sense, a gracious thing. He exemplified the best in the humanities. Urbane, a lover of the comedy of life, sensitive to its amenities, and kindly without sentimentalism, he illustrated the art of harmonious daily living. A University, a student body, a faculty with Professor Toy in their midst could never entirely lose consciousness of the essential place that beauty and things of the spirit have in life.

In their personal charm, their combination of gracious sweetness and manly strength, their self-effacing modesty, and the simplicity and integrity of their lives they are a quiet rebuke to our turbulent, noisy years. And in memory they will continue to be an inspiration to those who hope and believe a better and saner civilization possible in the future. In an authentic sense these men epitomized for me the essence of the liberalism and culture of this University. I am happy to have known them as friends during the past three years.

GEORGE R. COFFMAN

THE THEATRE

By Bob Barne

It is with a good deal of hesitation that I say that Laurence Clarke's presentation of Ibsen's "Ghosts" was a dismal disappointment. The effect of this disappointment was heightened by the fact that the play like a wounded bird climbed to climaxes only to have them precipitated by some disturbance either within the cast or in the audience. The play seemed more than once almost to break into a blaze of dramatic brilliance, but never quite did.

The first disappointment of the evening and one which continued to rob the audience of the smoothness and power in the play that they expected occurred when it was announced that Bram Nossen would not take the part of Pastor Manders. Curtis Cooksey who replaced Nossen found it necessary to read his part throughout the play. Although Donaldson's voice and manner was extremely effective he often mistook his cues and the audience heard speeches broken, distorted, and mumbled. Then, Memorial hall's acoustics were particularly bad Friday night and the actors, accustomed to presenting the play, perhaps, in smaller theatres, failed to project their voices in such a way as to be heard beyond the first dozen rows. The ushers too, feeling that the student body had a right to see the play conducted late comes to their seats long after the curtain had been raised. Shirt-sleeved college boys seized upon the most inconsequential lines to laugh at. They laughed uproariously when Borgny Hammer clasped her head in anguish and shook a cloud of powder into the footlights. As the end of the first act approached dozens of voices were murmuring, "Shall we wait until the first act is over or go now... Let's go... My Lord, this is terrible... I can't hear a thing, let's scam." The audience was not entirely responsible for the poor effect of the play, nor was the cast, but a combination of circumstances made it extremely difficult for anyone ever to feel the complete spell of Ibsen's power.

In spite of Ibsen's reputation for structural strength in his plays, "Ghosts" fails to drive ahead, to catch hold of its theme and sweep it along with action, until the very end of the first act. But from that point the action of the play gathers momentum and intensity until at the conclusion of the play the action of the play, the remorse and torment of the actors, becomes so violent as to be almost unbearable. Though the central thesis of this thesis play is a dated one, one which hardly excites us today, there is a deeper thesis which is timeless. During the second act Mrs. Alving utters a cry for truth, for brave, unconstrained truth which is the cry of all Mrs. Alvings in all time. The "ghosts" motive which weaves in and out of the play symbolizes the chilling, binding,

paralyzing force of fears and ideals and conventions. Throughout the play the conflict is between the liberating force of truth and the inhibiting, poisoning force of these ghosts.

For its atmospheric effect Borgny Hammer's slightly Swedish accent was extremely valuable. Her restraint during the first and second acts was moderated by moments of great emotional fervor. Her interpretation of Mrs. Alving was true and perceiving and her execution of this interpretation possessed great polish and strength. Robert Donaldson's execution of Oswald Alving was subject to some criticism. He tended at moments to rob his part of its dignity, caricature his emotions, and substitute paths for the tragic quality of his plight. These faults of characterization arise, however, out of the almost insuperable difficulties of a too-quick transition, rather than from poor histrionics.

Jacob Engstrand, played by Sidney Smith, suggested the effect that might be produced if a Shakespearean character slipped into an O'Neill play. He is both simpler and more complex than any of the other characters. He is apparently motivated

ed by surface emotions and designs and yet there is an underlying pattern of perceptions and cunning which is there but never quite palpable. Sidney Smith gave his character a vitality and body interesting and authentic. Regina Engstrand is certainly Ibsen's worst characterization in this play, but Borgny Noreen played this part with such nicety as to give her character fine depth and vigor.

Senate Lists Bills For Next Meeting

At its meeting Tuesday night the Dialectic Senate will discuss the following bills: Resolved: That the Dialectic Senate go on record as favoring a special schedule for mid-term examinations; Resolved: That the fraternity rushing period should be extended; Resolved: That the book exchange should be investigated to determine the extent of its profit; and Resolved: That the University laundry prices are exorbitant. The new members will be initiated at this meeting.

The observatory at Mills college has a telescope named "Rachel."

—Mills College Weekly

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