

The Daily Tar Heel

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CITY EDITOR FOR THIS ISSUE: IRVING SUSS

Friday, May 25, 1934

Saluting Our Brain Trustee

THE appointment of Dr. Claudius Temple Murchison Wednesday by President Roosevelt, subject to senatorial ratification, as director of the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce of the United States will, if so confirmed, snatch from our faculty a man of outstanding ability not only as a theoretical economist of the first rank but also as a practical-minded executive. And it is another piece of evidence that the control of the government of this nation is becoming vested in the hands of those individuals whose knowledge of the problems, not political power, is thrusting them into leadership.

It is obvious that Dr. Murchison was considered for the position of importance in Washington due to his capacity to combine practical experience with intelligence in the field of economic theory. When the name of Professor William L. Thorp of Amherst was withdrawn by President Roosevelt from consideration for this position, it was common knowledge that the reason for the decision was that Professor Thorp lacked practical experience. Dr. Murchison, it has been pointed out, was appointed because he was an answer to an effort by the administration to secure a man of Dr. Thorp's economic knowledge with that essential knowledge from experience.

The trend toward governmental control by professors of experience is in direct opposition to the old theory of administration. When President Wilson took the presidential office, it was a malicious "crack" to speak of him as "Professor Wilson late of Princeton." The Brain Trusters that President Roosevelt has gathered around him for advice and planning have proved that men intelligently schooled in practical theory are eminently fitted for the jobs of directing the actions of a nation with the vast national and international interests of America.

While we will be sorry to lose Dr. Murchison—and we feel that the optimism of Senator Josiah Bailey regarding the probability of senatorial confirmation was well-founded—we are proud of him in his achievement. We know that in the administration of his new duties he will continue the outstanding quality of hard work which has characterized and distinguished him as a member of the University faculty.—P.G.H.

Ah-h-h!

A Senior!

SENIORS have at last come into their own—and thank God there are only two and a half weeks left in which they can demonstrate the fact to the rest of the student body! We have reference, of course, to the senior class's crusade to raise the price of cotton and give the Turkish-towel-bath-mat corporations a break. The campus would be intolerable if commencement were not in the offing, promising relief.

For the first time this year, many seniors are being recognized as such by virtue of the caterpillar effect they have assumed. Chests are swelling; heads grow larger; the "holier than thou" air adds to the generally uncomfortable humid atmosphere. The graduating class bears the weight of its own importance bravely, and lets everybody else know it.

Which would all make good editorial copy if it were only true. We don't really begrudge the seniors their sweaters; they deserve something for being able to hang on for four years.—D.B.

Transatlantic hops, says the Greensboro Daily News, are presumably the kind used in the making of beer.

The Forgotten Plan

THE Playmakers' production of experimental plays Tuesday night brought to attention again the fact that that organization is getting away from one of the purposes which the group originally set out to fulfill; one of the Playmakers aims is, or should be, to help young playwrights get a start by writing plays for their own workshop, and aiding these writers to make their plays successful.

The plays Tuesday night were poorly produced. This quality of poorness was due to the short length of time spent on getting the productions into shape. That night, lines were garbled, the sets were inadequate, and the authors of the plays, though they probably would never admit that they felt sick over the way their works were handled, could only sit back and groan at the way most of the plays were practically mutilated.

The answer to the charge that the Playmakers are deviating from their purpose would likely be first that the authors do not get their plays ready to allow time for concentration on the productions; that the productions are purely experimental; that only a rough production is necessary for the author to determine the worth of his work; that other activities of the Playmakers do not allow time enough for real work to be put into experimentals; and that public production, for which time is taken to work out the plays in earnest, is given to those dramas which pass the test of experimentals.

But these answers are not answers: the young playwrights are not treated as they should be. In the first place, why do not the instructors set a deadline by which plays are to be turned in? The writers are allowed to hand in their work whenever it pleases them; if there were a deadline, they could be made to stick to it.

Of course, some idea of a play's quality can be determined from an experimental production, but in most cases, matters like tangled lines, halts and stumblings, and scenery that seems merely to be pasted together detract attention from the play and prevent the application of fair and true criteria by the audience; superficial faults are taken too much into account; and any worth a play may have is usually overlooked when the spectators' attention is drawn away from the play by ridiculous errors that are avoidable.

As for time, why cannot the Playmakers concentrate on the production of their own plays as they do on the plays written by professionals? Each quarter the Playmakers stage a professional play; at this moment they are busy winding up preparations for "Hay Fever." We should not like to see them forego these quarterly productions, but we do think that they should give no more time to them than to a group of new plays. Almost any amateur group can successfully stage a play that has been tried, but how many can successfully produce untried plays—plays that their own members have written?

In the rush of experimentals, often plays worthy of public production are overlooked; the reason for the play's failure may be due to poor acting, poor direction, or a lack of co-operation between actors and directors, and not to the play's lack of worth. And not all experimentals have a chance at public production; those tried out near the end of a quarter get no more than an experimental production. In addition, there is not a bill of new plays every quarter.

The Playmakers, it seems to us, should pause and re-survey their purposes. If they want to be no more than the average college drama group, let them concentrate merely on the production of plays—any plays. But if they want to have standing and prestige as a group which turns out good new plays and good young writers, let them co-operate more heartily with the authors who can prevent the group's being merely average, and show more appreciation for their work.—T.H.W.

Another Side Of Unemployment

LAMAR Stringfield, director of the North Carolina Symphony society, has received \$45,000 for the purpose of organizing and maintaining an orchestra for a period of eight months. This money is being used as an emergency relief fund for needy professional musicians residing in North Carolina.

We have heard this act criticized as a worthless one. Is it so worthless when the cultural interest of the state is sought?

Millions of dollars have been dealt out by the government to pay CWA and FERA workers. These received their pay for the work of rehabilitation which is intended in the interest of the state. Is it not right to see the emergency relief fund turned towards stimulating the musical interests which undoubtedly exist in the state? Most of our northern states have organized symphony orchestras composed of unemployed musicians of their state. Numerous concerts have been given by these orchestras, the admissions charged going to the relief fund. There are hundreds of unemployed professional

musicians throughout the state. We must think of them as well as of the laymen. By charging a price of admission to the concerts that will be given, we can keep up the emergency fund out of which unemployed musicians receive their salaries. In this way, we will know that our money is going to the cultural interests of the state as well as to the material.—K.W.

small talk
By TOM WALKER

A Stopper For the Cynic

COLUMNISTS should be classed as the most unhappy set of people in the world. They must sneak around with super-sharpened ears and eyes, ever wary for the least little slip that some one may make that will furnish copy; when they read, they can't fully enjoy it, for they must be on the lookout for errors that can be called to public attention or commented upon. And after this travail, when they set down their observations upon the Follies and Foibles of the World, no sighs of relief are the columnists'; they must start all over again.

And, pray, for what is this work? After checking up, this member of that unfortunate set has found that only two persons on the campus follow completely through these weekly meanderings; small wonder that Chapel Hill is classed as uncultured and illiterate.

Two and Two Make Five

BETTER than any tale of a cat and a dog living together in amicable relationship is the story told by a sign put up by a near-Raleigh filling station proprietor attempting to attract hungry motorists. The display announces "Home Cooking—New York Chef."

A Hello To Alms

IN LINE with this matter of proposals for the re-allocation of the funds of the Publications Union board, we'd like to suggest a new channel for funds to be expended through—and it's a worthy purpose. We want to see the board set up pensions for ex-editors and ex-managing editors of this publication. Or unemployment insurance anyway. And we've already found one convert to the cause; name's Benny Carr.

Life's Little Mishaps

AT THE baseball game the other day, with the deadline for this column hovering before us like a specter, and lacking material, we strained our eyes and ears, seeking to overhear or see something that we could use; at last we were rewarded—by the auditory route came a bit. As a foul ball sailed over the stands, a gentleman seated near us remarked: "That went near where my car's parked; maybe it broke the windshield." So, after the game, we checked up on the aforesaid windshield, and—you're right—the ball hadn't even come near the car.

It's Not Fun To Be Fooled

WE STAND firmly opposed to any charge that the University is too conservative—that liberalism and freedom of thought are throttled here; and in proof of the fact, we offer as evidence the textbooks of one of our courses. Instead of the ordinary type of text, we use mystery books for this course, and on our word as an old mystery-lover, these books are some of the most baffling we've yet en-

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SPEAKING the CAMPUS MIND

Correcting An Impression

Due to false impressions abroad on the campus concerning my attitude toward Adolf Hitler and his policies, I desire to make a few short statements in the hope that I may clear these up.

As a partisan I am violently opposed to the Hitler regime. As a former German citizen, I cannot blind myself to the good sides of the movement. As a student of human civilization, I try to have an objective attitude.

In my lectures on Hitler and his regime, I have tried to give rather an historical analysis than to pass moral judgment which had to be negative, as it comes from a different conception of life and history than that prevalent in Germany.

In my lectures I have stated that the Hitler movement is at once something very recent and also very old in the history of Germany. There is in it the revolt, despair, and hysteria of a defeated and abused nation, in so far as it resembles the movement of the Maccabees in Jewish history. The Nazi movement is very old in so far as the conflicting forces of western civilization clash again. It is the conception of civilization as inherited from the Roman empire and the conception of civilization that the ancient Germans upheld but never perfected.

Finally, the Hitler movement shows a contrast in the German character itself. It is a victory of Potsdam over Weimar, that is, a victory of the Spartan, militant, ascetic spirit over the Athenian spirit of the beautiful and refined life. I have refused to accept Strachey's definition of Fascism as the last most brutal attempt of dying capitalism to win a last-minute victory as too narrow and dogmatic. The ugly and brutal persecutions in Germany I have in no way excused, though I have stated that many of the cruelty stories as the "Brown Book" and as the American press report them are exaggerations. The Jewish problem can neither be solved by the fantastic racial philosophy of the Nazi and the rough application of their principles nor by the unthinking hatred of New York boycotters of the type of Untermyer. It is a problem that must be worked out by Gentiles and Jews together in a scientific spirit and not by emotional dogmatism.

MENO SPANN

With Contemporaries

The Same Old Story

Announcement from Raleigh is to the effect that bronze markers will be placed upon certain CWA and FERA projects in the state in order that future generations may be apprised of the achievements of these agencies and the contributions which relief funds made, after all, to an advancing civilization. Among the projects to be marked, it is further assured, will be the capital city's own reconstructed, all-weather airport.

Well and good, say we. Any number of truly worth-while achievements, Greensboro's nearly finished recreation center alongside Guilford battleground included, have resulted and are resulting from the outpouring of federal funds, if and since relief is to be put on a material basis, aside from the suffering which

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THE THEATRE

By Virgil J. Lee

Reporters, artists, a pseudo opera-singer and other "floosies;" rich men, poor men, a crazed killer (wearing a Phi Beta key) western settlers and the spirit of Karl Marx met together in character last Tuesday night in the Playmakers theatre with various purposes in mind.

It was a night of "experimentals," meaning in the first place, half-learned lines, in the second place, hurried and makeshift sets, and lastly the usual informal and whimsical introductions by Professor Koch.

The evening was distinguished by four things; a remarkably tolerant and appreciative audience, some mediocre acting, the hot weather, and the inability of the Playmakers staff—including Proff Koch and Sam Selden—to close one of the side entrances before a performance. The plays, all written in the University play-writing courses and produced in a week's time, ranged from melodrama to slapstick.

Don Shoemaker's initial dramatic production, "Back Page" showed an excellent use of innuendo and suspense, and seemed quite authentic in newspaper atmosphere. A fast-moving melodrama, it was often exciting and at all times interesting. Irving Suss, deserting the newspaper racket to play the part of the smooth, well-dressed hammer murderer, demonstrated that he can act modern melodrama as well as Shakespearian comedy. Only his voice reminded one of the "Puck" of last spring. Rene Prud'hommeaux, with the aid of script, gave a spirited and able performance as the hard-boiled city editor.

"The Golden Wedding"—not to be confused with bottled spirits of the same name—lost many of the subtleties of the manuscript through inadequate preparation, the result being lost cues and disconcerting gaps in the performance. Margaret Siceloff, as the petulant and suspicious sister, was quite convincing in an unsympathetic role.

Then came the spirit of Karl Marx. But it was a weak, sickly, half-formed spirit—even the magnificent beard had lost some of the dynamic quality of the original. It was as if the father of modern socialism, peering into the world of men again, had cried out in woeful protest at being exhibited in the Playmakers theatre . . . or perhaps the strange noise was but the faint squeaking of a rafter. Miss Cecilia Allen's play, "Rich Man! Poor Man!"—which embodied the Marxian allusions—showed careful thought and workmanship, but had that tendency which Miss Allen has yet to overcome—the tendency to ramble. Much that was inconsequential to the development of character as well as plot was included, thus weakening the unity and interest of the play.

Peter Hairston, as the wealthy paint manufacturer, exhibited his usual good stage presence and dramatic sense, but was tedious at times, due principally to stilted voice and inadequate conception of the role. Miss Barnett, in the part of the daughter, gave a fairly good—if not an altogether adequate—performance. Foster Fitz-Simons, laboring under the handicap of a poorly written character, emerged none the worse for it all.

The high spot of the bill was reached in the final play of the evening, "When Floosies

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