

## Mediocrity Reigns . . .

We can no longer afford to sit complacently and allow the public schools to remain as they are.

Before long each of us will take our places as leaders of the community in which we live. Some of us will teach the school children, and all of us will be affected directly or indirectly by the type of education being given today.

First, we should consider what the aim of education really is. If the purpose is simply to entertain, then the public schools are doing a fairly adequate job by furnishing sand boxes, bulletin boards and sugar-coated games presumably aimed at enlightening children.

If on the other hand, we decide that the aim of education is to teach, then we should look at our present system of education and begin constructively criticizing and changing it so that it can achieve its purpose.

Today the schools base work on quantity rather than quality. We hear educators brag about the number of school children there are rather than the type of education they are receiving. We hear teachers brag about the number of books their students read rather than the quality of the books being read. Comic books and love magazines still constitute a large part of our contemporary literature.

Each year the high school standards are lowered and the cheating methods of students are improved. Teachers see the lack of honor in the students but they are either indifferent to it or they do not know how to cope with the problem.

When determining the curriculum to be offered students, teachers and educators should first decide what constitutes a good education and then proceed from there. Instead, the planners determine what the students want to know or what they are willing to be subjected to and then offer an inferior program of entertainment rather than education.

Perhaps the most difficult problem that students and educators alike face is indifference in the American people. People who really care or feel deeply about things are not indifferent to what is happening. Only those people who are interested enough to look at educational aims in the public schools are willing to improve the existing conditions. I don't believe anyone can be blind enough to think that schools today are perfect and that they are adequately educating millions of school children.

What is the answer to the problem? First, teachers and educators should re-evaluate the principles of good education and what the educational goals should be. Truth should be basic and not relative as John Dewey advocated.

Second, the curriculum should be based on this good education and lead toward its goals. Finally, the teachers should work toward the goals and toward providing a good education to pupils. Teachers should not be influenced by social pressure. Teachers should stop trying to appease students and begin teaching again on the proper level to promote thinking, understanding and factual knowledge.

Students must be shown that cheating is morally wrong—just like stealing or lying—and that popularity and intellectual ability are not antitheses. Too often today school students brag about not studying; football heroes, usually lacking mental ability, are the school leaders, and the honor students of the schools are made fun of.

Schools have become social institutions rather than instruments of public instruction. The average student is the measure of all things. Mediocrity reigns.

P. C.

## Juniors Display . . .

The next three *Salemites* will be edited by juniors who are in line for editorship of the paper next year. Jean Calhoun will be in charge of the paper next week, Connie Murray on Feb. 27 and Alison Britt on March 6.

Each girl will be given a chance to display her abilities in newspaper work so that the staff will have a definite basis for their vote in the election in March.

The two associate editors, Anne Lowe and Peggy Cheers, were editors last week and today.



## Views On Salem

**Editor's Note:** One of the purposes of this issue of the *Salemite* is to express varying views on education, both in public schools and in college. By exposing Salem students to the differing opinions, the editor hopes that they will examine their own views and even defend them against opposing ones.

Below are two papers on college education written for Miss. Byrd's comp class:

**By R. R. Chambers**

Most men of my age are more concerned with the prospects of becoming a grandfather than with the possibility of earning a college degree.

Why do I want a degree? Frankly, I had no idea when I returned to college for a second try after a twenty year interim between my first and second years of college. I was midway through my second year at Salem before I seriously set about determining just what I wanted to accomplish. My conscience then made it imperative that I appraise the value of a college degree and justify the time and effort necessary to earn it. Being a business man and supposedly practical, I arranged to take a two day aptitude test at the veterans' administration. The tests clearly indicated the direction which my efforts should follow. I settled upon the specific goal of becoming a hospital administrator.

This, I felt, justified my going to college from a practical viewpoint. My increased earning capacity, if I succeed in obtaining the coveted degree, should amply repay my family for my impositions upon them to gain my degree.

In the meantime, something has occurred to me that I had not expected. Our common heritage has come to mean much more to me. History has come alive; it wasn't like that before. I have come to feel that the men who laid the foundations of our national heritage were real human beings just as we are. They had the same day to day problems of living just as we have. They are no longer just names in books. Poems, stories, plays that I had read and supposedly learned before took on a new meaning. I have also learned that life is much more satisfying if one doesn't restrict his time and activities to the pursuit of more and more money. Oh I like money as well as anyone, but a constant

(Continued On Page Four)

## I Am For Public Education

**By Jean DeHart**

I am a teacher in the American public school system. What's more, I'm proud of it. In our country we have schools, facilities, students, and teachers of number and quality unsurpassed in the world. Freedom of speech and of the press are great gifts to the American people, but I can't understand a country that prefers criticism to praise. Caustic articles on our schools can be read in any of the magazines or newspapers. Radio programs discuss the so-called "problems" in our educational system. We are attacked from all

**By Hadwig Stolwitzer**

There could hardly be a greater difference between two schools than between Salem College and the Leopold-Franzens-Universität in Innsbruck, where I studied last year. I was completely bewildered when I arrived at Salem. A bunch of students editing a school newspaper and 18-year old freshmen who were taught English grammar. I had never seen anything like it.

Now I think that Salem College is a good school. The Leopold-Franzens-Universität in my home town is not too bad either. Yet they hardly have one common trait.

A good school, in my mind, is a school which serves well its purpose and teaches its pupils what they need later on in life. Salem College and the university in my home town accordingly are as different as the aims of the people who come to attend them.

At the university in Innsbruck, I, seventeen years old, was attending lectures with bald men who had wedding rings on their fingers—moss-covered heads, as we used to call them, and with old grey-haired ladies. Who would dream of teaching them grammar or giving them a seminar about adjustment to university life?

Of course I did not get any introductory courses to the university either. I did not even hear an introductory speech. We had no welcome prepared for us when we entered the university, but I remember having had a terrible time getting registered.

To Europeans a university is strictly a place for learning. Most of the students know why they are coming, whether it is to get a degree and have better chances in life or whether to obtain more knowledge and education. They also know their responsibility to learn all the material covered. No cut system is necessary. They know what they want to learn and that they want to learn it. And if they do not, they will fail—it is their own affair.

Salem College on the other hand, is a college for girls only and all of them are very young to boot, from seventeen or eighteen years to twenty-one. The question of earning a living through the knowledge they acquire is not so urgent. They need not specialize in one particular field of knowledge and concentrate their studies upon this subject only. Most of them are going to be married anyway and will not have to take a job and if

(Continued On Page Four)



By Connie Murray

Dear Diary,

Today is Friday the 13th, but that doesn't bother me 'cause tomorrow is Valentine's Day! I just know Elmo is going to send something. I had a premonition today that I had a package in the Post Office, so I dashed across the street after my butterfly-catching course. Sure enough, there was a notice of a package. When the postman handed it to me, my hands shook so, I could hardly open the package. Was it a lovely red heart-shaped box or a gift? It was too large to be jewelry. Dear Elmo—he is so thoughtful. Then what to my wondering eyes should appear but two bottles of Vitamin-C pills, two rolls of Hums, and a bottle of Padacol. "Oh, death, where is thy sting!" I found myself in the throes of depression. Then I remembered our chapel speaker: one must dream, dream, and keep dreaming.

But life is not a series of games—it is a serious business. Lately I have been doing a lot of serious thinking, and in the last few weeks I have realized my destiny: I was meant to be a writer. And in order to further manifest my literary abilities, I have decided to write my own Valentine verses this year. And this could easily turn into a lifetime job. I can see it now: my name on the door, the words "literary editor" underneath, and in the corner, "Private." I feel that I was meant to write great things. I guess Milton felt the same way when he wrote "Paradise Lost."

But back to my Valentines. Let's see—should send one to Elmo first.

If I were a vine  
And you were a stump,  
I'd cling to you 'cause  
You're my sugar-lump.

Maybe that's too sentimental. Maybe Elmo would like this better.

I like your hair,  
I like your face,  
I like your body, too;  
I like you sober,  
I like you tight,  
I like you soddy, too.

I guess I'll send both of them to him. And now I must send one to Jacques. (He stood me up three times last month.)

The U. S. is blue  
'Cause Russia is red,  
How do I want you?  
With a hole in your head!

And my favorite professor—the one responsible for my abundant supply of three cuts.—I better make this good, just to show him how talented I am and how he has misjudged me.

If you'll forget my C's and D's,  
To you I'll come upon my knees.  
If you'll give me some B's and A's,  
I'll love you all my live-long days.

Oh, I almost forgot—the sweetheart of Salem. Dr. Gramley is everybody's favorite—it would never do to let this chance go by.

Because you are so very fine,  
We want you for our Valentine.  
We like the way you talk to us;  
We like the way you never fuss.  
We like to see you on the square;  
For us you've always time to spare.  
We like to see you in Main Hall;  
We like to see you play baseball.  
You understand us all so well,  
The thanks we feel we cannot tell.  
And so to you we make this plea,  
Dr. Gramley, will you our Valentine be?

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