

THE TWIG

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We Set It Aside

Ever since the Student Legislature, which was held last fall in the State Capitol building, a few Meredith students have been trying to instill in other students and those concerned, an interest in debating. Those who attended the legislative meeting realized very much their inadequacy of knowledge and ability to participate intelligently in the discussion of the various problems which came up before the two houses at this student meeting.

We feel that Miss Bailey's talk to the members of the Phi society did much to create a desire in those attending to really do something about debating at Meredith.

And another big step in the direction of stimulating interest on the campus would be to sponsor some debating meets. This week we were given an opportunity to sponsor a neighboring college with its opponent in a meet. But the invitation was turned down for the simple reason that we are having a week of deeper spiritual thinking, and it might be that some of us would neglect this meeting which is held immediately after dinner, therefore the time element was not part of the refusal, in order that we might attend the debate. And what of it? Why wouldn't we be justified in missing just one of the spiritual meetings, if we felt we couldn't attend both, in order to broaden our outlook in other directions? That is what is the matter with most of us now — we have one-sided personalities and one-way conversations. It is not as if we did not have the opportunity of attending the religious talks every day in the week, twice a day, besides personal conferences. And just because I favor our sponsoring the debate does not mean that I am not in favor of the religious meeting. That is not the point. Everyone who wanted to attend both meetings or either meeting, would do so whether they were scheduled for the same night or not. And it would not be the first time we had two things to attend on the same night.

You may say that it is probable we will get another opportunity. No doubt we may, and again we may not, but we ought to take our opportunity when we have it within reach, and they don't come every day. Whereas, we are supposed to think spiritually every day, whether we have a week set aside or not. If you haven't been thinking spiritually a good many of the days this year, you will more than likely find it a hard task to begin next week.

We have the materials with which to be a progressive college, but we are not making good use of them.

Education for the Few

James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, stated that it is "highly probable that a diminution of the total number of students in the universities of this country is highly desirable." This statement was motivated by the unemployment situation among university men. In reducing the number of university students he advocates that only the more capable applicants be admitted to Harvard, and that the expenses of a limited number of competent students who do not have sufficient funds be paid. This would necessitate an increase in the Harvard endowment which is now \$141,000,000.

It is evident that President Conant is of the opinion that only a limited number should be allowed the privilege of an education. This is in opposition to the democratic view which is supposed to be representative of our country: that every boy and girl is entitled to an education. While it is an impossibility for every boy or girl to have a college education, they should get as much as is offered in the public schools, and the curriculum of the public schools should be made more technical, giving an opportunity to those who cannot continue their education a means of earning a living more easily.

If admission to colleges were restricted to those who do exceptional work, we would be barring from the professions men and women who might prove to be among the most efficient if given a chance. The basis on which the selection would be made is not mentioned but it is certain that high school records alone are not sufficient. Those who make good scholastic records in high school do not always do outstanding and sometimes not even average work in college, and on the other hand there are those who were only average students in high school and are among the first to receive honors in college.

Our system is far from ideal, but it would be still further if we refused to keep the way open for competition in "all higher planes of human achievement. Therefore, educational institutions are debtors to brighter and duller, the slow and the fast. Let us recall that Louis Pasteur's first efforts for a college education were a failure. One of the latest to write of him says: "Brilliant as is the record of those accomplishments, his biography is not the story of a genius or a prodigy. It is the story of a plodder who was always outdistanced in his school work by the bright boys of the class. It is the old story of the tortoise and the hare."

The Passive Youth

I was very much impressed by an editorial which appeared in a recent issue of the *Raleigh News and Observer* commenting on the fact that there are people in every generation who think that the young are merely "dancing the world to perdition." The editorial continued with the statement that the probable truth of both the past and the present, so far as youth is concerned was better stated by Dr. Alexander G. Ruthven, president of the University of Michigan, who asserts that "one of the serious problems we have to face is the conservative thinking of our students. Somehow we must shock them out of the rut in which most of them are traveling today, and prepare them to keep up with social trends in a changing world."

The dancing youth or the radical youth are not the ones to be feared, continued the editorial. Those to be feared are the "solemn, marching, accepting, amenable young who march in the various shirt movements and devote their youth to old violence, old brutality, to the old insensitive and unimaginative attitudes and activities which they accept without questioning from their elders who are by no means necessarily wise or good merely because they are old."

The truth of this statement is one we must face. Look at the young people about you. How many of them are really forming any ideas about the situations going on about them every day, and how many of them are just willing to sit back and take what is handed to them, and they may not even do that. They are the drawbacks to progressive enterprises; we cannot go forward without thinkers. Even conservative thinking is better than none, and I am afraid there are only too many who do none at all.

Instruction In Marriage

With increasing popularity, courses in marriage are being installed in the institutions of higher learning in the United States at the request of students. The University of North Carolina offers such a course and students at N. C. State College are now petitioning for a similar one to be included in the State College curriculum.

Perhaps your first reaction to this innovation is that it is a humorous situation. Whoever heard of being educated to marry? But if you give the matter serious consideration you will realize the importance of being educated to marry as well as being educated to earn a living by another means. While we are gradually relinquishing the idea that the woman's place is in the home alone, people are still getting married. And they are not making as great a success of staying married as they used to or it may be that it is just easier to get out of a difficult situation than in earlier times. However, no really thinking person can but admit the value of acquainting persons with the problems of marital life through educational channels. Granted that experience is a teacher, it is not always a good one. Since a large number of high school students marry it would not be a bad idea to introduce a course of this type in the secondary schools.

Although it may be the primary purpose of the Home Economics Department to train students to teach its principles, it also instructs them in the art of managing a home, but there is no single course offered which would be available to students in other departments desiring such information. Would it be possible to install a course in marriage here similar to those offered in other colleges? Is it not our desire to keep Meredith a progressive college?

Dot's Dashes

By DOT LOWDERMILK

I do believe I've acquired about two more readers since the first appearance of this column, because at least five girls told me they missed it the last time THE TWIG came out. That is indeed gratifying! Perhaps I'll have ten by the time school is out in June.

I've been dashing around all morning trying to convince Mrs. Marsh and "Critic" that I should not go on campus for choir cuts. But I'm afraid that as a politician I'd make a good stenographer! Seems that the latest fad is to be on campus, what with 119 going on after the holidays and 93 going on this week. Don't feel bad if they won't let YOU go on with the rest of the girls. Maybe you'll have a chance later.

Founders' Day was a tremendous success, according to all re-

OPEN FORUM

DEAR EDITOR:

I guess the Open Forum is as good a place as any to make an appeal for a better standard of scholarship among our girls at Meredith. With a whole new semester before us, and any necessary adjustments made by this time, it looks as if we could all bring our grades up with a little steady work and not too great an effort. I realize that we have a very good percentage of honor students, perhaps more than the average college, but I also realize that at the same time we have a rising number of failures. This latter fact is due to several forces—inadequate preparation, laziness sometimes, indifference, and often just thoughtlessness. In any event, there is room for great improvement, and I believe it should be the duty and pleasure of every Meredith girl to do her part in this attempt, which is both for her improvement and for that of the college. After all, the chief object of a college education is to fit oneself to meet the problems of life, an aim which can be achieved only when there is a conscious effort on the part of the student to put her best into her work and get the most possible out of it. Lots of things are really fascinating when you get down to them. Try it and see, and see also if you don't find yourself learning a great deal more with less worry.

Sincerely yours,
 JEAN LIGHTFOOT.

ports. I think all of us are proud of having lived in Stringfield Hall after hearing Dr. Spillman's address. Did you hear the alumnae broadcast? In my opinion, the highlight of the program was Miss Ida's little speech. Incidentally, when she first came in the broadcasting studio she remarked to some of the girls that it surely was a spooky place.

The Student Government reception was quite a colorful affair, with all the fair damsels coming down the line beaming with pride as they introduced the handsome young men who followed them. If YOU went, I'm sure you never thought of your name being any one of the ten that you were probably called while going through the line. Margaret Love introduced one boy as "Mr. Williams," and I knew all the time his name was "Mr. Hicks." We laughed about the way everyone was getting the names mixed and started talking about other things. Then when I started to introduce him to Maxine all I could think of to call him was "Mr. Williams," and I've known him for three years! I think the girls enjoyed patting their feet to the "Dipsy Doodle" more than any other number that the orchestra played. "Bob White," and "Bel Mir Bist Du Schon" or "My Dear Missed the Train" or what have you were also quite popular.

Dashes: A freshman received as a gift a scarf on which was pictured the Big Apple. The name of the dance was also there in capital letters. Her father, a minister, noticed the capital letters and inquired as to what that was on the scarf. The freshman immediately replied, "Fruit, Daddy, fruit!" . . . Did you gals hear about Dr. Lane winning a carton of Coca-Cola which are given away each morning on Singin' Sam's program? I wonder what HER health chart looks like now! . . . And I hear that Miss Little has begun negotiations for getting her sociology class in the penitentiary—I think, maybe, they're just going over to look around, though.

Here's something I heard at a Scotch party the other night: A Scotchman had to send a telegram, and not wishing to spend more money than necessary, he wrote like this:

"Bruises hurt erased afford erected analysis hurt too infectious dead." Ten words.

The Scotchman who received it immediately decided it was:

"Bruce is hurt. He raced a Ford. He wrecked it, and Alice is hurt, too. In fact, she's dead." Nineteen words.

FEBRUARY 14th

By SADIE MASSEY



As We Go Out To Teach

By ELIZABETH HENLEY

I expect that when we, the members of this year's graduating class, were little girls in the primary grades, nearly all of us had visions of ourselves as future school teachers. We knew then how to teach school. Many of us even knew exactly what dresses and hats we should wear in the classroom and how we should do our hair. I know I did. I intended to have a yellow pleated skirt and a bright red blouse and wear my hair in big puffs on each side of my head.

As we went on through high school, many of us lost our ambition to teach school; but many of us kept it, and the visions we had of ourselves as school teachers changed. We saw ourselves as teachers of Latin, geometry, or biology instead of first or second grade teachers. And the dresses we then planned to have when we became independent were a little more subdued in style and color than those we had earlier wished to own, and our hair was to be bobbed and permanented.

But now the scene has changed again. For those of us who have tried to prepare ourselves to be teachers, the time to begin is alarmingly near at hand. We are not now so sure of how to teach, and we cannot stop to plan our wardrobes, or to give our hair a second thought. Of course we hope we will look all right in the classroom; but the question is, What on earth will become of us and of the pupils when we are the teachers? In the past few months many questions have come to us as prospective teachers which demand at least some tentative answers before we can formulate anything of a teaching policy to work on until experience in teaching shall have simplified the way a little. Among these questions are: (1) In what terms shall we define success? (2) How does the teaching profession rank? (3) What are our specific obligations as teachers? (4) How best can we discharge these obligations?

These and many related problems have come to us in, or as outgrowths of, our courses in educational theory. We have gathered many valuable ideas about them in these class discussions, as well as from other sources, one of the most fertile of which has been a close scrutiny of our own teachers, past and present, to discover how they as teachers affected us as pupils. Many of these have made indelible impressions upon our minds. Some of them we remember for contributions of lasting value which they have furnished for the culture of our minds or the formation of our characters. Others whom we would forget, if we could, we cannot help remembering as retarding forces in our lives. Perhaps these reminiscences of the influences which were brought to bear in our own plastic years should be the most restraining and at the same time the most stimulating consideration before us at the present time, because it is inevitable that, if we teach school, hundreds of students like ourselves will live to look at

us just as we now look upon our own teachers, either to bless or to curse our influence upon their lives.

Thus we see that the job we have hoped to secure is far more than a chance to work and make a living; it is decidedly a social affair with tremendous social responsibilities, but at the same time pregnant with great potentialities. And this realization has much to do with the answers we make to these questions.

In our first problem, "In what terms shall we define our success?" there are certain inescapable factors such as salaries and, later, professional prestige, which, of course must enter into our conclusion. However, viewed in terms of our real duty, we see that these factors are subordinate to our proper function as teachers of the boys and girls who will make up the society of tomorrow.

Much is being said about the rank of school teaching as a profession. We read that teaching ranks very high in one country, while it ranks comparatively low in another. I once heard a young teacher say that "teachers simply do not count in the communities in which they serve." This statement sounded unfair, and I was quite upset by it until I began to analyze the situation. Now it looks to me as if the issue of how highly the teacher is rated in the community depends largely upon what sort of teacher and what kind of person she is. One glance at history is enough to prove that many of the world's greatest men have been teachers. Socrates, Plato, Mohammed, Moses, and Jesus—these and many lesser teachers who were above or outside of class distinctions have forever dignified the act of teaching. Is it not up to the teachers in a changed civilization to dignify the profession of teaching?

Any attempt to analyze the obligation of the kind of teacher we should like to be brings almost staggering revelations. There seem to have been so many sides to all the finest teachers we have had ourselves. I suppose anyone would name as the first requirement of a good teacher, intellectual qualifications, of which the most important phase is knowledge of and ability to teach her own subject. This, of course, is fundamental; however, I have had several teachers who qualified excellently in this respect, but who seemed utterly lacking in knowledge of and appreciation for anything outside of their own specialties and who, being largely ignorant of the values of other fields, took it upon themselves to speak debasingly of them before students. The best teachers I have ever had continuously correlated their own with other fields, and thus brought out a joint appreciation. Thus, far from detracting from the subject in hand, they enriched it immeasurably.

Just as important as the act and method of imparting information, is the encouragement and guidance of independent and critical thinking. If we might in the

lower levels of education, where most of us will be at first, plant the seeds of thought along with the seeds of knowledge, so that the two might grow side by side, a new idea would be less like a dagger to our pupils when they meet the currents of thought about them in college and in later life. It would then be easier for them to analyze and evaluate former convictions without losing their guiding loyalties.

In thinking over ways of meeting these obligations, we have mentioned some of the fundamentals of the teacher's preparation, namely: (1) a thorough working knowledge of her own subject; (2) versatility in other fields, and (3) those qualities of mind which tend to stimulate in her pupils the development of habits of critical and abstract thinking. There remains yet to be discussed a very important factor of the teacher's preparation, namely, a knowledge of her psychological relationship with her pupils. This element has perhaps received less than its proper share of attention in the study of problems of learning up until recent times. We cannot here go into this matter at length; but I think we should bear in mind the fact that even the smallest friction between teacher and pupil, if not wisely attended to, may develop into an antagonism which so affects the pupil's state of mind that it is practically impossible for him to profit by the instruction of the given teacher. A look back at some of our own teachers is enough to furnish instances in which even the most brilliant of them have lost hold of their students by a habit of doing or saying some petty or offensive thing in order to gratify their desire to "come back at" one of their pupils. High school and college students are acute readers of character. If their teachers are transparent persons, or even if they are not, no one is quicker to see through them than are the young people who sit before them every day, and a little fault looks greater to them in an otherwise great teacher than it does in a less outstanding one. We who are still in school are aware that students are seldom as generous in their construction of a teacher's fault as they are keen in detecting it. While in a way this situation looks a bit unfair to the teacher, still the fact of it is one we cannot help facing, unless we are willing to sacrifice all of the moral and much of the intellectual influence which we might otherwise exercise over our pupils.

Though we are now wholly lacking in the experience which alone can make perfect in teaching subjects, it may still be true that we are now in a better position to understand some aspects of the teacher-pupil relationship than we will ever be again, by virtue of the fact that while we are trying to change our viewpoint to that of the teacher, we are not yet removed from the attitudes and sympathies that pervade campus life. Perhaps now, before we have come in contact with the thousand petty worries of the classroom, is the best time of all for us to see a vision of teachers as custodians in society of culture and character.