

The Hilltop

"Plain Living and High Thinking"

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Success Or Failure—Which?

The inevitable season is here again. That inescapable time which pursues the Christmas holidays as conscientiously as a well-wound alarm clock. A large part of the student body awaits hopefully the miracle that has never happened—the painless blotting out of a week so unnecessary. Another group will take a deep breath, plunge into Chaucer's tales or the French Revolution, and with loud assertions deny that the longest days come in June. Perhaps you don't come in either class. You are lucky. You are definitely uncatalogued.

The characteristic words of this established period of modern history are just now coming to the front in their full meaning. Often repeated, they will even more often be the subject of deep reflection. These words—failure, success. No student has ever been completely oblivious to them, for they, in turn, must characterize each everyday action. But it is now that some permanent record is to be made; careless or thoughtful work can be summarized by one of the two expressions.

With failures comes the limitless supply of excuses. Did you ever see a school-boy tumble on the cement without stooping immediately to rebuckle the strap of his skates? Thus, one in disappointment and disillusionment, each one seeks to satisfy himself on his own inability to control circumstances. Someone has said effectively, "Life's shortcomings would be bitter indeed if we could not find excuses for them outside of ourselves."

But far in the lead will be that antonymous thought—"success." This can be a time of rejoicing, and to many it will represent the satisfactory completion of tasks well done. As hearts fill with pride it may be well to remember who has contributed to our success. As we so easily excuse ourselves and readily share our failures, let us not place too firmly the credit for success upon our own frail attempts. From the same wise man, "And so for life's successes—it is wholesome to remember how many of them are due to a fortunate position and the proper tools."

—S. G.

Empty Phrases

A man once desired to be able to read the minds of the people he met. He searched the world over, but all the wise men left him just short of the real secret. Finally one of the wisest of the men told him that the way to the mind was through conversation.

Do you always say what you really mean and feel? All during the holidays did we say things because they were nice or did we really mean them? This is a speaking world. Means of communications have made such great improvements that everyone and anyone can speak and be heard around the world. This is truly a great opportunity, but we must first decide whether when our time comes to speak we will just talk or we will really say something. It is easy to mumble a few meaningless phrases that bear no feeling but merely suit the occasion. We are afraid to think—and after thinking dare to say what we feel deep down inside the "Inner man." It is not being done these days and we are afraid of criticism if we start something. This attitude is becoming universal. The truth is a stranger who is often turned away to make room for words that will help us to keep our friends, live a peaceful life, and keep us from having to think. We have used these beautiful phrases so often that although they have become the proper things to say, they have been emptied of meaning and sincerity. It is easy just to say things, but when we start talking about things of dearness to our hearts we often substitute "meaningless phrases" for things that we really mean. During the coming year let us stop shooting Ferdinand and think. It is a new experience for us, but if we think before we speak we will have no use for empty phrases. We will say something that will shake the minds of others into activity.

—G. D.

C-I Sponsor



Miss Elsie Rose Dons, physical education director, is an indispensable member of the faculty. Besides being sponsor of the W.A.A. and co-sponsor of the HILLTOP and the German Club, she finds numerous other opportunities for service to the student body.

Dear Lady

If absence makes the heart grow fonder,
Then every minute you're down yonder
So stacks affection ('tain't no joke)
There's almost none for other folk.
Sometimes I think of you in bed
With pills and capsules at your head
Thermometers too, unrelenting—
And then I sadly sigh, lamenting.
But after I have thought on these,
I think of Aristophanes.
(Now Aristoph is my horned toad
Which in far distant Texas grew,
And which was murdered, stuffed, and sewed
For being such a charming toad.)
Long years have passed, decades perhaps,
Since his assassination;
Yet till eternity he'll be
In incapacitation.
Now when I sanely meditate
Upon my toad and you,
I'm glad you're not done up for good
But only have the flu.

The New Year

By John Foster West

I salute you, though you are newer
Than the minute I thought of you,
You laughing, young, change wooer.
When tonight your trumpet blew
I opened my eyes in wonder,
For out of your cheerful thunder
Was a promise, far down under,
Of a quieter year in view.
I wonder, as the old year dies,
If he regrets within his heart
The torture and the wistful cries
Of which he was the careless start.
Does this old traitor, wretched thief,
His fire and famine, war bemoan?
Is Time's red reaper a relief,
As you ascend his gory throne?

Freshmen Plan Junior-Senior

The C-I Class, under the capable leadership of its fine officers, are looking forward to one of the main events of the year—the Junior-Senior.

This year's freshmen class has shown more spirit than those of preceding years, and the student body is anxiously awaiting the climax of their reign.

Campus Personals

D. C. Martin has returned to the campus following several weeks of illness at his home in Asheville. Anne Harrison is unable to return to school this semester. Returning to the campus late because of illness were Agnes Buxton of Westboro, Mass., Carol Vick of Rochester, N. Y., Dorothy Reeves of Pilot Mt., Margie McMillan of Sparta, N. C., Warren Saunders of Wilmington, and Madge Allen of Forest City. To these who have had sorrow in their families recently we wish to extend our deepest sympathies; James Dendy, on the death of his grandmother; Mrs. Vann, on the death of her sister; and Mr. Lee, on the death of his mother. The excellent work of Miss Huff as librarian is being continued by Miss Church, who has been taking post graduate work at the University of North Carolina. Familiar faces seen on our campus recently were those of Louise Wall and Helen Trentham, who spent the holidays here in their home town, and of Lillian Montgomery, Iris Melton, Imogene Brown, and Tommy Evans, who paid short visits to their Alma Mater.

Religious Meditation

By Harold McCroskey

Have you ever taken checks to the bank for deposit? If you have, you have no doubt noticed the eyes of the bank teller as he takes the first look at the check. Strange as it may appear, he seems to have no interest in the amount of money involved. His eyes always fall on the name of the bank on which the check is drawn, and the signature. There is something suggestive here for us as Christians. As followers of Jesus we do business every day with God's Bank. Is His promise, "I promise to pay," worthy of our consideration? A banking law is never to allow checks to accumulate. It is best to deposit them immediately. Why can we not exercise the same spirit of wisdom with God's great and precious promises? His bank is open night and day. Every check or promise bears the signature of the Savior who died to redeem us. God's promises cover every phase of life; they reach on through time and eternity. He is willing to fulfill His promises and all we have to do is deposit our checks by praying. Let us take our checks to God's storehouse and make our deposit.

Oh, New Year, blond child that you are,
Does treachery lurk beneath your smile?
Is there yet left a higher star?
I drink in hope, you laughing child.

C-I Sponsor



Mr. John L. Johnson, teacher of biology and advisor for LAUREL staff, is among faculty favorites. He is liked not only by the students in his department and those with whom he works in extracurricular activities, but everyone on the campus.

Bits by a Book Worm

By William J. Clark, Jr.

"The Best British Short Stories of 1940" by Edward J. O'Brien

In the compilation of his "Best Short Stories of 1940" Edward J. O'Brien read 8000 stories in a year and is said to have examined now more than 200,000. By many he is considered to be the world's most authority on the short story.

The book under discussion is an excellent example of the ability to give us a well-anced dist. This volume contains mystery, romance, comedy, pathos—everything makes for good, wholesome reading. It is an edition typically English writing of the present trend.

Our chief objection to the stories is that they are typical British. Many of them contain the stodgy pointlessness typifies the English short story. The very first, "The Fish Boat", by Martin Armstrong, an example of this. It is interesting and without intrusion. Not all of them, however, of this calibre. "Violet", Howard Spring, which appeared in *Red Book Magazine* is one of the better type. It is written and highly interesting. It is a tale of English small girl at the beginning of the present war.

There is one attribute of stories for which we should be thankful. Unlike many others by contemporary writers, they do not dwell on the sordid of the present day conflict.

In "The Best British Short Stories" O'Brien has brought together the very best of present day English short stories. We stop to think of conditions there we realize that this probably be the last of this kind of work coming to us for some time.

Many of these stories have appeared in print here in America. Among them are "His Fortieth Birthday," by O. Beachcroft in *Story*.

"I Am Waiting," by Christopher Isherwood in *The New Yorker*.

"First Confession," by F. (Continued on page 4)