

# The Hilltop

Plain Living and High Thinking

Published by the Students of Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, North Carolina.

Member

Associated Collegiate Press

MEMBER

North Carolina Collegiate Press Association

Entered as second-class matter February 20, 1926, at the Postoffice at Mars Hill, North Carolina, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Published semi-monthly during the college year.

Subscription Rate ..... Year \$1.00

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Volume XXIII January 15, 1949 Number 7

## Another Year, Another Chance

The beginning of January brings with it not only the beginning of a new year and the end of an old one but new experiences, new friends, new joys, and new sorrows, and a chance to discard the old experiences and habits which we have not found profitable and helpful during the past year. For some of us the new year will be just another year in which we will go on in approximately the same way that we always have, but to others this year will be the beginning of something different and entirely new.

We cannot always tell at the beginning of each year just exactly what the year will hold in store for us, but we can in some ways determine whether it will be a prosperous year or a year which we will not feel benefited from when it comes to an end. Perhaps it is not necessary for us to sit down and make a list of resolutions we want to follow during 1949, but maybe it would be beneficial to take a little while off from studying and think about the mistakes we made during 1948 and how we can improve ourselves from them. First, of course, we want to ask ourselves, Have I devoted enough of my time to God? Have I stopped long enough to thank Him for what He has given me this year and to talk with Him when things went wrong. Another important question is: Have I spent as much time as I should on my studies? It is hard at times to concentrate on books when there is a good show on, or the newest issue of a magazine is tempting you from the side of your desk, but still do you remember the chemistry test you would have passed if you had spent another thirty minutes looking over your notes or that fifteen minutes would have made a "B" on if you had taken fifteen minutes to read over it and catch those misspelled words? It is the little things that count, and we do not realize that fact until we get to the end and look back. Let's stop and think and visualize the future as we go through this new year.

## The Inside Story

Getting out a newspaper is no picnic. If we print jokes, people say we are silly. If we don't, they say we are too serious. If we stick to the office all day, we ought to be out hunting material. If we go out and try to hustle, we ought to be on the job in the office. If we don't print contributions, we don't appreciate genius; if we do print them, the paper is full of junk.

If we edit the other fellow's write-up, we're too critical; if we don't, we're asleep. If we clip things from other newspapers, we're too lazy to write them ourselves. If we don't print them, we're stuck on our own stuff.

Now, likely as not some guy will say we swiped this from some other newspaper. We did.

(From the George Washington University Hatchet, who swiped it from the Miami U. Hurricane, who swiped it from the U. of Houston Cougar, who swiped it from the Daily Texan, who swiped it from the SMU Campus, who swiped it from the Texas A & M Battalion, who probably swiped it from someone else.)

## Down in the Valley Shows the Results of Co-operation

The opening performance of "Down in the Valley," presented here Friday, January 7, proved its merit by the tremendous ovation which it received from an enthusiastic audience. This was the first of two performances of Kurt Weill's much-talked-about folk opera. It was also the southern premiere.

The entire performance was produced with especially good coordination among cast, chorus, and orchestra. William Stapleton, of Charlotte, whose excellent baritone voice is already well-known at Mars Hill, surprised his audience by singing the role of the leader, a rustic mountain preacher, with the ease of a born actor. Dean Minton, of North Wilkesboro, singing the role of Brack Weaver, also displayed unusually good acting ability combined with excellent singing. Margaret Lee of Mars Hill played the part of Jennie Parsons with almost as much ease as a professional. Her voice, although soft, seemed to be exactly in character with the role of the sweet, young girl she represented.

However, the performance could not have been the success it was if it had not had the co-operation of a fine supporting cast, including Willard Callis, of South Hill, Va.; John Andrews, Ayden; Jack Coffey, Granite Falls; Thomas Tobey, Salem, Va.; Laurene Ransome, Enfield; and Beulah White, Appomattox, Va.

The chorus was composed of thirty voices chosen from all the musical organizations on the campus. It seemed to be what a choral director might term "near perfect." Indeed there were very few spots where the chorus was not perfect in its entrance timing.

One of the main points of the opera was the spectacular lighting effects which electrician Charles Brown devised. With a purple light shadowing Brack Weaver on the gallows, a reddish-orange glow highlighting the chorus kneeling at the front of the stage, and a pale blue light accentuating Jennie Parsons sitting on the cabin porch, the opera's final scene was a fitting climax to an enjoyable evening.

The eighteen piece orchestra, under the expert direction of Mr. James Hall, provided music equal to the occasion. Emphasizing the theme song, "Down In The Valley," the orchestra drew in the ballad themes of "The Lonesome Dove," "Hop Up, My Ladies," "The Little Black Train," and "Sourwood Mountain."

Miss Imogene Cowan, who staged the show, is to be complimented on the excellent sets which she and her stage crew built.

The primary weakness of the production, the necessity for removing certain parts of the set from the stage during the actual performance, is perhaps not the fault of those presenting the opera. The fault no doubt lies with those who wrote the original script.

## Clouds

Betty Ferrell

I gazed one day  
 Toward the sky at the azure clouds.  
 They seemed to be figures of men  
 Who died long years ago—  
 Noble men of towering strength,  
 Who had perished for truth and peace.

## A Moonlight Night

Walter P. Smith

Weird darkness fills the night.  
 Over the waves there streams no light;  
 Till far out in the watery deep  
 An amber moon awakes from sleep  
 To spread its beaming shafts.  
 The ocean seems to speak in merry laughs.  
 The waves all run and dance along.  
 They sing a happy little song.  
 The moonlight dances to and fro  
 Across the singing waters as they go.  
 The waves are breaking softly on the sands,  
 While still the moon throws out its magic hands.

## Students Unable to Return

We are sorry to hear that several students were unable to return to school after the holidays. Lorraene Bennett has undergone an operation on her knee. Bettie Ruth Hunt is ill at her home in Asheville with pneumonia and pleurisy. Ethel and Elsie Edwards were seriously injured in an automobile accident near their home in Whitehead, N. C., but Elsie is expected to return to school in the near future, Betty Priest has undergone an appendectomy. We hope that all these students will be back with us in the near future.

## Letter from England

Mrs. R. L. Moore received the following letter in a Christmas greeting from Berta Leigh Holland. Believing that many Mars Hillians would be interested in hearing from Miss Holland, she graciously permitted the Hilltop to publish it.

2 Ferndere Road,  
 Withington, Manchester, 20  
 England.

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Moore:

I'm sure you are puzzled by the address on this card. Yes, I am spending the year in England on the English-American teacher Exchange plan. We (112) left New York on July 24, 1948, arriving in Plymouth, England 8 days later. We are enjoying our stay here very much and find the English people very hospitable. Some 50 of us will spend our Christmas holidays in Switzerland, and our Easter holidays in France and Rome. The spring vacation (Feb. 28) will be in Holland. Of course, the entire year is seemingly a dream and next August 4, I suppose I shall wake up. We are booking our return on the Queen Elizabeth.

My best wishes to you for a very happy Christmas.

Berta Leigh Holland,  
 Class '27.

## Impromptu

Now that Christmas is over, maybe the MHC students can really settle down and study for the exams they have all been so eagerly looking forward to—that is if some of them can stop dreaming of their holiday joy long enough to get their books open to study. Christmas vacation really did things for some people. How about it Jim Troxler? It did you good, didn't it? It also seemed to have done marvelous things for Betty Price, Beverly Cline, Iris Baldwin, and June McCracken, by the look of stars in their eyes and rings on their certain fingers. George May says that he had such a good time at home that he had to come back to the routine of school life to get rested. Must have been an interesting vacation, George! Walter Smith claims that he lost his one arm only during the holidays. He's wondering why he couldn't have made out as well as Polly Patton did. Some people have all the luck, don't they Walter. What's this rumor going around about Willie Baskett spending all of his time in Charlotte during the holidays? How do you do it, Dackie?

We surely are going to miss Bill Smith, Margaret Howell, Frank Yandell, and the other students who will graduate soon. It won't be exactly the same place without them—especially to Margaret Lee, we imagine.

Miss Cowan certainly spent the Christmas holiday in an interesting way—she made thirty men's mustaches.

Margaret Strickland has decided that the time has finally come to decide among her S.P.'s. We wonder what will happen now.

The following poem, "Homesickness," is dedicated to all those who wish they were THERE.

I wish I was where I ain't  
 But since I ain't where I wish I was  
 I'll stay where I wish I wasn't  
 'Till I go where I wish I was,  
 But ain't.

Of all the stories told about the Christmas holidays, Spence Thornton's just about takes the cake. It seems he and a date went possum hunting with thirteen couples. If it had been anyone else, he would have kept up with the others, but Spence, being Spence, got lost. For the rest of the narration talk to him. Second floor Huffman girls have been complaining about numerous visitors on their hall. Last Sunday they complained bitterly over a mysterious, tall, dark, handsome???? man?????. Don't worry girls, it won't happen again. The boys on the first floor of Treat recently gave a birthday party for Clyde Polk. When called on to make a speech, Clyde, in a beautiful Louisiana brogue, drawled "Wal, I'll be dog-gone."

## Recompense

Katherine Philips

My lover did not mean to hurt me,  
 He loved me long, was kind and true, you see;  
 But his heart's still young and would be free:  
 I bade him go—adventure seek,  
 And softly prayed he'd come again to me.  
 But if he found a rose of fairer hue  
 I ask no pity when the day is through.  
 My heart will still be rich  
 When my eyes no longer see,  
 For once he loved me with fidelity.