

The Tar Heel

LEADING SOUTHERN COLLEGE TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER



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Thursday, March 28, 1929

PARAGRAPHS

"One more quarter to pass, one long spring quarter to pass," sing the seniors as they start in on the last lap.

Now that the baseball season is on again, we can soon find out whether baseball rates on a popularity par with football—or with debating!

The rumor from the Playmaker realms that the eternal "Man Who Died At Twelve O'Clock" is to be hauled out on another tour makes us long for a good strong coffin in which to plant the dear but not yet departed dead.

Campus courses, together with springtime sweaters, shirtsleeves, and arboretum strolling, are declared to be in vogue once again.

The Russian concert Tuesday night was none too well attended—possibly because of the rumor that it was this very Russian singer who had taught our own Glee Club to sing!

President Chase Decides To Stay

The most pleasing feature of the spring holidays for hundreds of students, alumni and all others interested in the welfare of the University of North Carolina was the statement that Dr. Chase would remain at the head of the University rather than accept the tempting offer that was made him by the Social Science Research Council.

Immediately after the proposal from the Research Council was made public the entire campus was buzzing over what Dr. Chase would do. The universal sentiment was a desire that he should stay; the question was whether the opportunities at the University in the future could outweigh the attraction of the new offer.

To the casual eye the increased salary might have been the most alluring thing, twenty thousand dollars instead of the ten thousand paid by the University. In addition to that, however, there was the nature of the work, neither so trying nor so discouraging as guiding the policies of a state university, and the liberal retiring allowance—which is certainly an inducement to be considered.

With such prospects weighing down the Research Council side of the scales, there must have been even weightier reasons for the president's welcome decision to stay. It is here at the University that he has won his high reputation as an educator. During the last ten years the University and its president have advanced together, each contributing to the well-earned fame of the other. Now they stand together, the foremost university of the New South and its progressive leader, Harry Woodburn Chase. Regardless of the attractions other places have for him, we believe that Dr. Chase's interests are here and we hope that he will continue to remain here with them.

The prestige North Carolina has gained through her university in the past decade has been due in large part to the successful management of President Chase. He has built it up from a good school to a better one, from a respected educational institution to an admired one, from a university known to the citizens of its own state to a university widely known and highly regarded throughout the country. And in accomplish-

ment of this achievement he must necessarily have formed an attachment for his handiwork which will be conducive to holding him with it for years to come. He has watched its growth up to this point, has tended it carefully and anxiously and has now rendered his decision to stick with it in the future.

"Skipper" Weaver Decides To Leave

Obituaries are commonly printed when people pass on. Professor Paul J. Weaver is passing on in another sense, but there is no cause for heavy black type and psalm-singing. Professor Weaver, after more than ten years of service in the University of North Carolina, is leaving. He has accepted a position as Head of the Department of Music at Cornell University.

"Skipper" Weaver has been known for a long time as one of the most enthusiastic men on the faculty. It is no small achievement to be and remain enthusiastic as a teacher over a long period. Apparently the Skipper is in love with his work. He has undertaken it that way, and in consequence the results are noteworthy.

Outstanding among his achievements at Carolina is the Glee Club. Just an ordinary collegiate warbling club when he arrived, he has made it one of the best and most serious of the college Glee Clubs in the South. He has raised the quality of the music, and he has given the people of the state something more than mere transient entertainment when he took his group on its yearly tours among them. He is a second vice-president of the Music Supervisor's National Conference, holding that position since 1926. He is editor of the Nationally known *Music Supervisor's Journal*. And he has been a leading spirit in the annual presentations of the Wigwag and Masque Club.

The "Skipper" has decided, then, to leave. He has done much for the music-lovers of the University and the state of North Carolina. The TAR HEEL takes this opportunity of wishing him every success in his new work. —H. J. G.

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DR. CHASE WILL STAY

The announcement that Dr. H. W. Chase will not retire from the Presidency of the University of North Carolina to accept a position as director of the Social Science Research Council with headquarters in New York at a salary double that he is now receiving with a liberal retirement allowance, will give pleasure to North Carolinians.

In so doing, Dr. Chase foregoes what must have been a temptation and a sore temptation. Doubtless, he would decline without hesitation offers in which increased salary alone were involved. But here was an offer to engage in a work of a highly pleasing character, with the future carefully provided for and at the end old age in peace and plenty.

He turned his back upon it and gripped more firmly the reins of the State University in the direction of a task in which he has been highly successful but one in which the rewards—the monetary rewards, at least—will never be commensurate with the service rendered. It is a task, moreover, which makes a constantly increasing demand upon one who, like Dr. Chase, is conscious of its requirements. Nobody probably more than Dr. Chase is responsible for the quickening of University life and opportunity, and his sphere of activity, by his own initiative, will be expanding yearly. Unquestionably, there will be difficulties and disappointments and frustrations, as well as achievement.

But here, he said by his refusal of this tempting offer, is his work and here will he stay.

North Carolina and her university are to be congratulated on the decision.—News and Observer.

Highsmith to Talk To Medical Society

Dr. J. F. Highsmith, well known surgeon of Fayetteville, North Carolina, will deliver a lecture before the Whitehead Medical Society in Caldwell Hall at 7:30 P. M., on Saturday, March 30, on some phases of his work in surgery. A definite announcement of his subject will be made later.

Open Forum

THE CAMPUS HAWK

Without going to the trouble of collecting statistics I will venture to guess that the most unpopular course on the campus is Freshman Math—the required language running it a close second. Normally the aversion to these courses has an easy explanation: students do not like to work, and both languages and mathematics require definite effort. And if we admit that Americans as a whole are not linguistically inclined these two points are probably sufficient to account for the aversion to languages. But what about math? Can the students' distaste for work account for all of the great hatred that centers around the freshman course?

We cannot say that this subject, like so many classical studies, has served its usefulness and that its continuance at this date is inopportune. Our present civilization is tied together by chains of mathematical deduction. No man can hope to understand the basic ideas of today who has no knowledge of mathematics. Once upon a time Pythagoras dreamed of explaining all phenomena in terms of number; the hope was subsequently lost. Today, however, the creations of the mathematicians are the only keys to the enigmas of the world. Those innermost secrets which Nature has so successfully guarded through the ages from prying investigators are slowly being divulged to the symbolic logician of our day. Mathematics is a timely subject. Why, then, the rebellion against Freshman Math?

An introductory course in mathematics presumably introduces a man to mathematics; how idle a thought! One look into the vastness of the field would make any beginner recoil at the very threshold. Fortunately, one comprehensive look is not possible; it takes both time and effort to climb the peaks from whence the views are possible—time and effort necessary to get adjusted to the surroundings. The so much discussed world of reality is found to be little more than a string of differential equations, most of which have no solution; but it takes a certain aptitude and several years of pondering to appreciate a differential question. This means that most men throughout the ages will live their lives without understanding the processes of Nature. The popular belief that a thing is well grasped by man when he can subject it to popular exposition is, I believe, utterly without foundation.

Surely, a freshman course must not attempt to soar too high. If one would browse, however sparingly, in the fertile fields where trod Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Calderon one must first acquire a vocabulary and master the rules of Spanish grammar. So in mathematics: one must not start by rambling. It is essential, for any sort of an appreciation of the field, to become acquainted with and well drilled in the elementary notions of the subject. After mastering the first ground the further road is not impassable for those who feel the urge to proceed. It will be objected to by those who favor the present freshman course that the ideas taught therein are fundamental and not difficult. Quite so. It is a simple matter, say, to differentiate a function: you apply what you are supposed to have learned in algebra to a new process—but what have you? What boots it if you can readily differentiate a function if you do not know what it means to do so? It takes time and some maturity of thought to see the significance of a derivative. This pecking here and there, furthermore, is a very poor preparation for the man who wants to follow up mathematics. It is better, that he should spend the time in acquiring a greater mastery over the more difficult, perhaps, but more elementary algebraic notions.

I believe that every college graduate should know the rudiments of mathematics. The present required course certainly does not give them an available form. In this day when the Science of Education has grown to be such an intricate and inscrutable thing it may be presumptuous of me to advocate a change in a course which, I dare say, receives more attention than any other course on the campus; but I will brave the disapproving frowns long enough to suggest an alternate scheme for presenting Freshman Math.

There should be offered three courses. The first two should follow more or less the semi-classical trigonometry and algebra of other days. The range of notions covered in these two subjects is very limited, but I know none more excellent than these to familiarize the student with the symbols and operations of mathematics; after all, all that follows in mathematics is based on these—the greatest change that comes being in the point of view of the investigator.

These two courses should be followed by a lecture course, given by competent instructors, designed to bring out the cultural value of mathematics. This course should be thoroughly humanized; it should treat the subject historically, present the significant contributions, point out the forms that mathematical investigations may take, show the limitations of the field—in fact, it should be (as it can easily be) one of the most interesting courses in the University.

The majority of students will always be recalcitrant, and any subject that causes them to work will be reviled; but this change will, I believe, help to diminish the hatred which exists for Freshman Math.

J. J. SLADE, JR.

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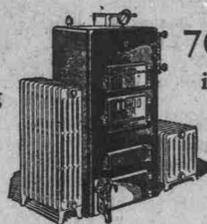
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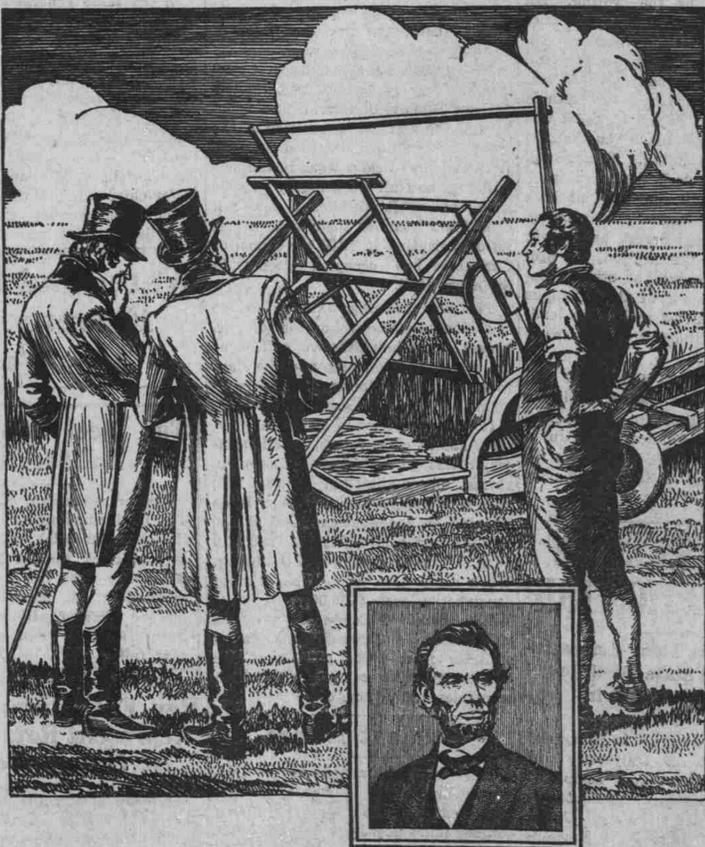


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