

The Daily Tar Heel



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Tuesday, May 6, 1930

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

There is no more justification for being a chaplain in the army or navy than there is for being a chaplain in a speakeasy.—Rev. Peter Ainsley.

Judging From The Results

The social activities of the past week-end have been classed as entirely successful. However one may judge the success or failure of a social affair, we believe that all will agree as to the success of the entertainment of the last few days.

The entire plan was conceived early during the winter quarter and was tried as an experiment by the organizations staging the series of dances. It is likely that the plan will be continued with additional affairs added each year. If the success of this year's "Spring Frolic" is used as a gauge of what future affairs will be, we favor it wholeheartedly.

Not only did the dances serve as a pleasant interlude for the work between mid-terms and final exams, but it also added what Carolina has long needed—a more definite arrangement of spring dances.

Here we have the German Club and various organizations to give dances. But there is little orderliness to any dances given with the exception of the German Club affairs. No one denies that such an affair each spring shortly after mid-terms would aid in placing the social activities for the year on a more definite basis. While not being afflicted with jazz-mania still we willingly join in the chorus, "On with the dance."

Experimental Education—A Total Failure?

An announcement has just been made by President Glenn Frank of the University of Wisconsin to the effect that the experimental college of that institution will be closed the first of

June. This statement came as a tremendous blow to those who believe in the virtues of experimental education as practiced at Wisconsin. The opponents of this type of educational method no doubt feel a certain vindication in Wisconsin's failure, if it is a failure.

Under the tutelage of Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn, philosopher and educator, students studied with a philosophical attitude. They tried to study life as a whole. Optional attendance, no examinations in our meaning of the term, and weekly seminars were features of the college. These features gave students many liberties, of course, and placed students upon their own initiative. Students were responsible for their work to no faculty member but to themselves. But the experimental college has failed, the cause attributed by President Frank being "internal friction," whatever that may mean.

Rollins College, which has been the co-leader with Wisconsin in the field of this new education, now has a greater task ahead. Upon that institution now rests the responsibility of proving the practicability of the methods which the experimental educators have innovated. It is a difficult undertaking for it has the appearance of being more theoretical than practiceable, whether or not such is the case. If Rollins fails, then it would seem that there is such a thing as too much freedom for the student.

We hope, however, that because certain elements of the new education seem undesirable, educators will not view the entire undertaking as a failure. The placing of students upon individual initiative, the significant thing about this new kind of education, it seems to us, needs much more emphasis by our educators than has heretofore been given.

"Thorns and Orange Blossoms"

The famous "Imperial Stock Company" deserves great praise for its recent production "Thorns and Orange Blossoms." It certainly showed the high calibre of professional acting of which the members of the company are so proud, and did not even "bring the blush of shame to anyone's cheek." But in a more serious vein, the play and the inter-acts provided an evening's entertainment the equal of which has not been seen in Chapel Hill in a long time. The play pictured in a most amusing and pleasant way the very sophisticated melodrama of the '90's. The audiences entered easily into the spirit of the play and responded to its type of humor and sentimentality. Especially on the first night it "followed its natural instincts to reward villainy with disapprobation and to applaud virtue in distress."

The members of the faculty and their friends who produced the play are due much credit for the pleasurable evenings, they gave us and for the service they have done for charity in Orange County. We encourage them to produce more of this work which we are sure gave them as much pleasure as it did to us.

Bob House, comedian of the "Imperial Stock Company," wants it announced that he appreciates the tremendous applause he received upon each of his appearances on the stage. He knew the public had as much confidence in him as he did in himself. Mr. MacMillan declares he is very much alive and in the best of health despite his supposed murder which occurred both Friday and Saturday evenings. Dr. McKie is very much worried over a certain question, and says that his ability and lawful right as a

preacher does not extend beyond the stage. Although he is accustomed to take ministerial parts in plays, his work does not give him the right to perform any particular services in actual life which might run in competition to the usual duties of Chapel Hill preachers.

All in all, the production of "Thorns and Orange Blossoms" provided excellent entertainment both for the audiences and the participants, was a good service in behalf of the poor of Orange county, and was another triumph for Mr. Green and Mr. Steele in the Little Theater Movement. —A. V. L.

Readers' Opinions

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

It has been rumored, and from very reliable sources, that the University is facing a financial crisis. The news has reached the writers that the administrative officials have been called upon to reduce the present clerical forces and equipment expenses to the minimum. It is also hinted that a cut in the salaries of the faculty might become necessary.

It is a regrettable situation since the University has just started towards the heights to which those who love it and support it have been wishing to see it attain. It has won national recognition and is conceded to be one of the foremost institutions of learning in the south. To halt our present progressive program would be to destroy in a very short time what it has taken years of toil, patience and money to build.

There are already to those who are intimately connected with the University, evidences of the slowing up of our progress. Already, we have witnessed the departure of some of our most eminent professors who have found better positions elsewhere. This comes as a blow to the school. These men will be sorely missed, and it will take years to replace them. Can we be so inconsiderate of our future and the youth of North Carolina as to not awaken to these facts and try by every conceivable means to remedy this situation which imperils the future welfare of our state.

In casting about for an immediate means of relief, we find that it is impossible to legislate for an increase in the existing tax rate under our present economical conditions. Then we examine the items of expense of the University for the purpose of detecting some possible place where the expense may be reduced at the injury to all concerned. We find that the University spends several thousands of dollars on entertainment, faculty dinners, commencement programs, and various other forms of social activities which add little to the intellectual attainments.

While these activities are quite important and have a definite value, we cannot compare them with the importance of academic work. We would suggest that the expenses be cut in these activities and not in the all important academic departments.

We know that every senior looks forward with pride, hope and longing to the day on which he will receive his or her diploma. This day is usually one of pomp and celebrity. Although this adds nothing to his general knowledge or education it gives him a few hours of pleasure at the expense of the school.

We believe that there are few seniors at the University who would not be willing to sacrifice a few moments of pleasure in order to help their Alma Mater

"Thorns and Orange Blossoms"

(By Robert G. Dawes)

When the firm of Morley and Throckmorton leased the old Rialto Theatre in Hoboken back in 1928, they little "recked" what deeds were to be perpetrated in their names. These gentlemen started the proverbial ball a-rolling, and the passion for Victorian revivals took its place with those for antique furniture and longer skirts.

Chapel Hill was treated to a presentation of the fifty-year old melodrama, "Thorns and Orange Blossoms" Friday and Saturday nights of last week. The local production played to capacity houses both evenings. It is doubtful that the nurturing theatre of the folk drama has ever contained such a riotously appreciative and enthusiastic audience. They came to watch, but remained to cheer. Vociferous, sincere applause, righteousness, sincere applause, righteousness indignantly hisses for the villain, and a constant roar of merriment marked this epochal entertainment from curtain to curtain. Spectators, many of them stolid and staid faculty members, were somewhat hesitant and reticent at first. Inhibitions engendered by the modern theatre prevented them from expressing their real feelings. But some well-placed and competent instigators soon dispelled all tendencies toward self-consciousness, and a splendid and uninhibited time was had by all.

Mr. Robert Sellers, a talented young technician of the professional theatre, imported especially from New York for the production, displayed in his settings a fine conception of the spirit of the Victorian theatre. To anyone conversant with stage history, Mr. Sellers' use of wing-pieces, back-drops, and leaf-borders gave ample testimony of that gentleman's painstaking research and untiring labor. With both settings and costumes of such excellence, the production was virtually assured success from the beginning. Madame Prouty, modiste, designed and executed with consummate artistry the costumes for the female characters, an element which went far to produce the desired atmosphere of the period with such accuracy. The men's costumes and the properties were also more than satisfactory, and gave evidence that those able producers, Messrs Green and Steele, were well acquainted with stage arts and artists when they engaged the various individuals who were responsible for the staging of the play. The appropriate incidental music which added so materially to the flavor of the play, was prepared and rendered under the direction of Mrs. McCall.

And now for the difficult and dangerous part of any criticism: the acting and the direction. The casting was admirable, with strict regard for "type" in the majority of characters. Comparisons are impossible. There was such a wealth of variety in the characterizations and each character so admirably portrayed, that to single out one or two for special commendation would be both fool-hardy and perilous. The gentle love of Violet and Randolph was made pathetically real by Mr. and Mrs. Russell. If the approbation of the audience is a criterion of artistic value the work of the first leading lady was among the finest ever seen on the Playmaker stage. The haughty, fierce movements of Lady Ryvvers were a joy to behold. Tommy Swift and his fas-

to endure and continue its usefulness to the state and nation. To do away entirely with these functions is not our proposal, but to merely cut them to the minimum. —R.W.P. and D.A.K.

cinating Monica, portrayed by Mr. House and Miss Stratton, provided many delightful and humorous moments, while in the field of character parts, Messrs. Potter and McCoy gave to their small but important roles complete understanding and finished performance.

To H. M. Jones must be given much of the credit for the success of the whole enterprise. His villainous villain was a masterpiece. His direction too was, for the most part, exceptionally good, but it is to be feared that because of his proximity to the play, he failed to have always that sense of perspective, so essential to a director. A play of this nature does not need to be burlesqued. Christopher Morley showed his wisdom in playing "After Dark" absolutely "straight," that is, seriously. Mention might be made in this connection of the gospel hymns, which smacked too decidedly of

a Billy Sunday mass meeting. This was a technical error. If authenticity to period is sought after—and, as in this case, followed so closely in costume and scenery—it should certainly be observed in the selection and rendition of church music.

Of gesture and stage movement, the criticism might justly be advanced that both were just a trifle too obvious. There was too much of the "ham" element present. Saturday night saw an improvement in this respect, for the audience called for more serious acting, but the burlesque

(Continued on page four)

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