

The Daily Tar Heel

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Offices on the second floor of the Graham Memorial Building.

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Wednesday, March 30, 1932

The State College Inquisition Rolls On

(Continued from first page)

ernment, better education, and liberality should be fit cause for the removal of any college president in the nation.

Even as the American Association of College Professors and other national university organizations have censured President Brooks for his action against Dr. Taylor, all that he can expect to accrue from his latest and most noble gesture is further distrust for his administration, his institution, and a widespread amusement upon the part of college student bodies and administrations.

There has this day been forwarded to all the college dailies, and college news organizations in North America news in detail of this latest monument in the already outstanding administration of President E. C. Brooks of the State College of the Greater University of North Carolina.

The Steam Roller Method of Education

During the last few months the student body has manifested in speech and in writing a feeling of discontent with the system of compulsory class attendance under which it is forced to labor. Considering the stringency of the laws and the utter disregard for student opinions with which they were enacted it is surprising indeed that the protests have been so mild. Cowed by the steam roller methods which put such laws into operation, the student body evidently feels itself incapable of successfully struggling against a force so overwhelming and ruthless.

There is every reason for a healthy resentment of this compulsory attendance. In precedent the University has none of the outstanding colleges of the nation. In forcing the student to attend classes the University is presupposing an undergraduate of high school calibre, unwilling and unfit to conduct with wisdom or maturity the pursuit of his or her studies. The man or woman who comes to college has completed all compulsory education that the law requires and is presumed to be motivated by a real desire for advanced study. To dictate to

such a student and treat him as a child is to insult his ability and question the sincerity of his desire for higher education.

Furthermore by thus forcing attendance the college degrades the spirit and the ideals of a University training. A degree is or was at least something to be sought after and not something to be forced down the throat of every one who evinces any feeble interest in a college curriculum. By so doing the authorities are debasing the value and merit of the degree and placing the cause of higher education in a most humiliating role.

Perhaps all these objections might be overlooked if compulsory attendance had yielded any of the results hoped and promised for it. But alas this is not the case. The results of the last quarter show more failures than at any time within the last four or five years of our history. Foisted upon a helpless student body against their will, unprecedented by the example of any outstanding school, diametrically opposed to the justly celebrated spirit of liberalism, that has marked Carolina in the past and lastly a dismal failure it is impossible and inexcusable to retain such a law. Protest has up to the present time seemed unavailing. We must throw ourselves once more upon the mercy of the powers that be, hoping that in their wisdom they will relieve us of an intolerable, unfair, and fruitless affliction.—J.F.A.

Supposedly Worthwhile Organizations

Argument at its best is merely the statement of truths which of their own character carry weight. It is only when doubt enters the mind of the proponent of an idea that he need resort to thundering phraseology and overemphatic vituperation. Some slothful thought has been given to the matter of the multiplicity of organizations on the Hill. They are all wonderful, some affirm; others, that they are entirely superfluous. Both sides have their cases.

The "club" has its justification in that it provides an opportunity for intimate and organized companionship. If the club is organized for the purpose of discussing foreign affairs then this club has the advantage of this common ground of interest. Amphoteroben, the Di and Phi, Epsilon Phi Delta, the Polity Forum, the International Relations Club, and others are admirable efforts to stimulate and direct serious thinking. Another justification (?) is that a man can be rated by the number of clubs he is elected to. Still another, the existence of many clubs presages the creation of many presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, and so forth. This training in leadership is valuable. These points are the main planks of the clubman's case.

But enough has been said against these organizations to reveal a rather strong feeling that they and other organizations are superfluous.

One group of clubs which no one tries to justify intelligently is that to which the Bulls, Sheiks, and "13" Club belong. These clubs do nothing, represent nothing, and are expensive. Their initiations are childish, tiresome, and irritating. They are "rah rah" without having any of the vividness of "rah rah"-ness at its best (or worst). All in all, they are, on a presumably serious campus, superfluous.

Another group of organizations, that to which Epsilon Phi Delta and the like belong, are supposedly serious, forward-looking groups of thinking men. But why so many of them? As it is there is an almost exact duplication of membership in

these clubs. So it works out that Jim James or Alex Alexander pays his ten dollar (more or less) fees to one, two, three, ad infinitum, treasuries so that he will have the chance to discuss the sales tax and the Chinese situation once, twice, three times, in different rooms but with the same men. This would be laughable if it weren't such a real problem.

The "activity" consideration, that is, joining one group after another in order to get some of that evanescent prestige which comes with lots of activities, is anything but a laudable one. For it places a premium on panhandles and relegates achievement of the real sort to a secondary and inconspicuous position.

An integration of all these so-called thoughtful groups, a re-scaling of the financial structures, deletion of the "rah rah" stuff, and an emphasis on the supreme importance of sincere and thorough thought and activity—this is the ideal.—R.W.B.

Eddie Cantor For President!

After eight months of exposure to the ballyhoo of some six or seven presidential candidates, THE DAILY TAR HEEL has finally given up the ghost and announced its own presidential preferences with thought in mind to banish forever from the public eye the present array of anxious politicians now clamoring for the nomination. With meticulous foresight and no little amount of private investigation, this sheet now goes on record as supporting Eddie Cantor for president, Ben Bernie for vice-president, and Walter Winchell as speaker of the house. These nominations are made with several important points in mind. First, the election of these men would end their radio wise cracks, a public blessing in itself. Second, there would be much more pleasure in blaming national catastrophes on Cantor, if for no other reason than to hear his rejoinders. Third, the mentality of the chief executive and his staff is perpetually in question; here there would be no question, but a universal conviction instead. Fourth, the time spent in listening to speeches against the repeal of prohibition could be devoted to a session of Winchell's choice dirt.

Above we have enumerated only four of many points in the favor of this governmental combine. One of its redeeming features would be the provision of a vice president who could play a clarinet and a president with a sense of humor; but even that would not be enough to insure our proposed administration of enough votes to swing the country. Obviously the strength of the candidates must be matched by a stalwart platform of sufficient proposition to restore the country again to prosperity and crooked bankers. If we consented to support the Cantor party, the planks in their political promises would have to include: Immediate and unconditional return of the Lindbergh baby; the adoption of a prohibition law; suppression of Ogden Nash verse and Will Rogers' "Letters of a Self-Made Diplomat to Senator Borah." These would be but a few examples of social and political reforms effected by our administration once that it was in office. So let us return the tar to the people; vote for THE TAR HEEL'S candidates and make America safe for democracy!—D.C.S.

Advocating The Sales Tax

The imposition of additional taxation by the federal government is apparently necessary. Granted that fact, its consequences must be faced, and however disagreeable the burden of additional taxes may be, they ought to be regarded as obliga-

tory and as a duty of citizenship. Any attempt by a people possessing universal suffrage to evade the responsibility for evils and errors committed or permitted or inevitable is hardly commendable, although changes and readjustment and improvement in our present financial and economic systems are worthwhile objects, while a desire to eliminate hard times is naturally excusable.

From the standpoint of practical economics the proposed sales tax may be unwise, as in serving perhaps to reduce purchasing power; from the standpoint of the actual condition of the people it may be oppressive; from the standpoint of civic and political theory, nevertheless, it is a just measure. It is a tax on consumption and will fall on all classes in proportion to their consumption, if not to their wealth. A policy of penalizing to a greater extent than is done at present that wealth which the government has permitted and even encouraged is neither logical nor just. Wealth ought to be either eliminated, and socialism avowedly and definitely adopted, or else allowed to bear no more than (or not excessively more than) its just share.

All this, to repeat, is submitted from the standpoint of theory. In actuality, the poor may be unable or woefully ill-fitted to bear any of the additional taxes, and the rich may be quite capable of bearing all. As far as abstract justice is concerned, however, the American people have stumbled or let themselves be led into the presidential morass, and ought to face the consequences.—K.P.Y.

With Contemporaries

College Journalists

A perusal of college newspapers of many different schools over a period of time would show that the student editor frequently falls prey to a feeling of futility. He learns that a reformer is never liked whether his reform is successful or a failure. He finds that he has a rapid turnover of friendships.

He becomes aware of those mighty barriers—the smaller mossybacked administrative and faculty interests. He frequently is outlawed by the thick-skulled and the brothers of his fraternity. He knows that few care or will long remember his work. He expects his intentions to be misinterpreted, no matter how obvious the motivation for his acts may be.

He feels like tossing in the towels fifty times in as many days. He says: "What's the use?" The minute he gives in to his own inclinations for peace, he places himself beneath the sod. If he stops and looks over his problems and troubles in a quizzical fashion, he feels the old animosity stir within him and realizes what a life it would be if someone wouldn't disagree and there were nothing to fight about.

There need be no envy of those college editors who are flag pole sitters for two semesters and permit the rest of the world and even the campus to go by without molestation. The boys who really have the fun are those who never know how long they will have their scalps, who laugh and defy the bigots and motheaten vested interests, who openly flaunt the epithets which have been written for them in advance, and who take matters seriously without becoming overly serious. There is an art in raising the hornets and doing it so well that they have no comeback.

Most of the esteem accorded the active college editor is

worth considerably less than the hatred he gathers. He usually has a few staunch friends who are large enough to overlook his hastiness, a faux pas now and then, the seemingly inane and meaningless news or editorials he sometimes prints, and his somewhat blind adherence to his own peculiar code.

One consolation, however makes up for the lost peace and sleek contentment. The adversities of one who can openly differ are far more desirable than the dull rote of living which attends the college editor upon whom all blessings flow because every Tom, Dick and Harry, large and small, has a mortgage on his soul. Then, too, he always reaches the point where he realizes that his most important issues and bad setbacks will make excellent material for smiles within another decade.—Daily Illini.

Letting Off Steam

College editors this year are coming in for a goodly share of notoriety . . . Northwestern is only one instance. Reed Harris' sensational charges against football at Columbia last fall started the parade and other editors have followed him since, usually to the loss of their positions.

In every college and university there are those who would, if they dared, muzzle the publications existing there and conduct them to their own satisfaction. Such people regard collegiate opinion as juvenile, and hold that every modern educational institution is little more than a "hot-bed of radicalism."

There are bounds of decency and good taste, beyond which no editor, collegiate or otherwise, should be permitted to step. Other than that, however, the faculty-meddler ought to maintain a hands-off policy. While the pen may be mightier than the sword, most people would rather have a few drops of ink between their shoulder blades than a knife between their ribs. Letting off excess steam via the printed page is, one would think, much to be preferred to noisy and often demagogic demonstrations.—Daily Illini.

"The Intelligent Few"

Writing in the March issue of *Current History*, Mr. Bernard De Voto analyzes the general methods of teaching in American colleges, particularly at Harvard, and comes to the conclusion that there is not enough special attention paid to the "intelligent few."

They are limited, he says, especially by two restrictions. The first is having to take and pass periodic examinations; the second is having to specialize intensely in a single field, such as is required at Princeton under the Four Course Plan. He admits that for the vast majority of students the present system of regular tests and theses is the best, but he urges that more effort be spent upon developing a system of "education for the intelligent few."

Theoretically, Mr. De Voto is undoubtedly right, and few can doubt the value of such ideas, could they be put into effect. But there are on the face of them at least two objections, so strong as to render impracticable the change he suggests.

In the first place, how could the authorities determine who the intelligent few are? Not by tests, for by Mr. De Voto's definition, they are not interested in tests; their minds rise higher. Nor yet by their faces, for often the bright light of intellect is screened by a sour complexion. In fact it seems clear that there could be no way of selecting from a student body the handful who are the true seekers after knowledge, the true thirsters for a liberal education.

In the second place, Mr. De Voto wants special, highly paid, brilliant, teachers for his "few"—the system to be modelled on the Tutorial System at Harvard. This he admits would definitely detract from the personnel of the rest of the faculty for two reasons: first, because the best tutors would have to be given to the "few"; second, because these best tutors would have to be so highly paid as to force the college to economize in its other men. He frankly admits, therefore that he would deprive the vast majority of "average intelligence" for the sake of the "intelligent few."

That there are a few men in every college who should be allowed to do unrestricted independent work is undoubtedly a fact, and when a system can be devised which is more practical than this one of Mr. De Voto's and which will not detract from the quality of the education of the majority of the students, the "intelligent few" may receive the special attention he believes they deserve. But until then, they will perforce have to strain at the leash of intellectual restriction or employ their superior minds to gain more benefit from the "restricted curriculum" than the rest of us can.—Daily Princetonian.

The Examination System

The growth of knowledge has done a great deal of good for the world in general but its effect on the average student has been far from happy. For, as time goes on, the standard of necessary elementary knowledge has an unfortunate knack of rising steadily; in consequence the poor student is required to accumulate yearly a larger store of very detailed and altogether irrelevant facts for the sole purpose of proving to his superiors that he has been learning as much as is postulated by the exigencies of a course, which may require those facts as an important integral part of the course, though they are objectively of minor significance when the student has ceased to specialize in that particular direction.

It is easy to see the reason underlying such a procedure, which is universally recognized as inadequate, but is still adopted as the only known way of rating the intelligence of the individual student and the amount he has learned during the detailed course. In point of fact, few will deny that the dreaded Exam is more often than not a test not of the learners' ability in a broad way but of his ability to tabulate the results of a hurried and altogether frenzied revision of

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It Is Worth Knowing That—

There was a one-way street in Pompeii, the Roman city which was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A. D.

About 30,000,000 pounds of dynamite are used annually in the construction of highways in the United States.

The only vicious serpent found in Great Britain is the adder.

The University of Pennsylvania museum has a backgammon board dating from about 3000 B.C., which was found at Ur of the Chaldees.

It is generally believed that only one of Christ's apostles, John, escaped martyrdom.

The first stretch of concrete highway in the United States was laid at Bellefontaine, Ohio, in 1893.

The Eiffel Tower, Paris, is 1000 feet high.