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RANDOM THOUGHTS
 by Doris Burton

Today, in our typing class, which consists of members of the Junior class only, we were given a very rough examination; not a speed test but all written. There were only ten questions but nearly every student in the class needed the full hour period to complete it. As the teacher sat to grade the papers, I saw her glance up at one boy and then, continue writing. Her tenth question, after all the tough ones, was this: "Why do you take typing?" And I later learned that the boy at whom she had glanced had written, "For the lack of sense."

One of the girls had asked her with amazement when the question was written on the "blackboard what on earth she meant. And she replied that she had spent half a year trying to put this subject across, and she was really curious to know just why the majority of the students were taking it. Most of them are very inattentive, they play with the typewriters constantly as if they were some toy which they owned and would like to take apart to see what's inside.

The answer written by that one boy might have a double meaning if one stops to think about it. He might have meant that he took the typing course because he knew how much he needed to learn. Of course, no one interpreted it that way.

But isn't it so true that our choice of words so frequently makes our point obscure? We are misunderstood simply because we

either can't find or don't know the correct word we need to use at the moment. Words have always fascinated me; I can't find enough time to read all the great and beautifully written literary works I'd like, but when I do come across one I've never seen or heard before, out comes the old dictionary, and I try to get its pronunciation and meaning clearly before dismissing it from my mind.

I firmly believe that good grammar and a fairly good vocabulary are indispensable to a young man or woman beginning their lives; does one have to be twenty years older than high school age before they can realize that? It's true enough that I've known business executives who are on the top of the ladder because, fortunately, they were able to memorize certain speeches and deliver them beautifully; but I've never known one of those men (those who were not highly educated) who didn't slip sooner or later, and let the smallness of their actual knowledge show through the veneer.

Vocabulary and grammar and correct diction can be taught in our schools until Hades freezes, but family influence means more than all the "book-learning" our children can get if they go to school for twenty years. You must have known people who attended college for four years and are now earning splendid salaries at some job who can't carry on a decent

conversation. It isn't because those people aren't intelligent and superior at their particular jobs. It's probably because they are smart enough to know that if they did talk much, their waste of all the years, when they should have been losing that old homely manner of speech which they acquired in their childhood, would be too evident. And they've probably been too busy climbing a certain ladder to pay much attention to their grammatical shortcomings.

I wish there were some way to get across to our younger generation the importance of cooperating with their teachers. Those men and women are there to teach them, and for no other reason. And if the Children would only listen throughout the twelve years of schooling that is all most of them will ever get, then that would be all they'd ever need. Because they waste so much of what their teachers are trying to instill in them, because they just aren't interested in certain subjects, some times don't like the teacher, or just aren't given enough incentive by their parents. And believe me, that is the most important thing! It's the responsibility of every parent to insist that his child cooperate with his teacher. And to teach him good behavior at home.

If this is done, there will be a remarkable change in the child, your home, and even in the community in which you live. Children may seem to want complete independence, but they do not, really. They want guidance and a fair understanding of their problems from their parents until such a time when they, of their own accord, feel truly capable of handling their own lives.

There are about 8,760 hours in each year; 2,788 of them are spent sleeping, as the general rule, and 1,440 are spent in school. Do you see now why I say home influence is vital in the education of your children? Remember, the teachers have them such a little while compared to the time they spend under your teachings. Help them, while you have them, to learn how to learn.

-- Overlook On Life --
 By WARREN S. REEVE
 Note: The idea of "Overlook" is taken from the Overlooks provided for viewing panoramas along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

As we near the 21st of December, do we feel like the climber who has got to the highest point in the mountain pass through which he must travel and now is about to start on the downward grade toward the valley that lies on the other side? Here we are coming up to the shortest day of the year! And though it will be a couple of weeks or more before any lengthening will begin, at least the days won't get any shorter from now on!

When summer begins to fade, there are always some who feel sad. And when Nature makes a last fling of a few warm days such as we had last week, we feel like a mother whose boy is about to leave for overseas duty and who when she supposes he had gone finds him turning up again unexpectedly for another three or four days leave before he must embark for other shores. Precious days, but tantalizing, perhaps!

Even though winter is still ahead of us, there is just a bit of comfort in the thought that at least the process of having each day be shorter than the preceding is over. I, too, don't like winter very well. And yet the year that I spent in Puerto Rico where the climate was like that of Florida, I had to admit that I missed something. The rhythm of the northern changes was missing. Nature, while beautiful and comforting, was slightly monotonous. There was no break in the work or in the production of the fields. We grew tomatoes all year round. The red hibiscus never stopped blooming. Fields were rarely bare.

The swing of the seasons that we in the north temperate zone are noticing especially at this time of

year is part of the law of our world. There isn't always a moon in our sky at night. And even when there is, it isn't always full. Day follows night, and night follows day. The movement of the moon establishes our time, it fixes our months, and accounts also for the ebb and flow of the tides.

Our bodies, too, exercise their functions in a rhythm. The heart taps out pulsations that are felt all over the body. Nerves and muscles do their work by alternate contraction and relaxation. Breathing is likewise an alternation of expiration and inspiration.

I am neither an expert in science nor in art, but as an amateur observer, I would venture to say that even in the ultimate reaches of scientific exploration, rhythmic motion is to be observed. These motions get reduced to mathematical formulae; and sometimes we are tempted to think that the ancient Pythagoreans who sought for an esoteric meaning in numbers may not have been so far off the track after all.

The place of rhythm in many of the arts must be obvious to all. Can one be artistic without being rhythmic?

To live our lives healthfully and effectively, we must cooperate with Nature in its rhythmic motion. We must, as it were, get in step with our enjoyment.

Times of tension are to be punctuated with rest. Acute stimulation cannot be tolerated without break.

I once watched a young athlete getting ready for the pole vault. When it was his turn to vault, there was nothing impetuous in his motion. He took his time. He danced gently up and down so as to get his legs and their muscles perfectly supple. He put his arms into an easy, gentle, swinging movement. The whole purpose of these physical maneuvers, I could see, was to attain a perfect balance. Without complete poise of mind and body, he could not utilize every last ounce of his strength and every strategem of his skill for making a good vault. When finally he felt himself set for the effort, he took off with a dash of

speed towards the bar in a rhythm that was at the same time a perfect harmony of every part of him, mind as well as body. To get the most out of himself, whether it be in pole vaulting or in batting at the plate, the intelligent athlete studies his form, practising to eliminate all impeding motions and training himself for quick and powerful thrusts at the timely moment.

All this I see to be a parable of life. We must find out how to live with ourselves as well as with others. We must learn adjustment to the circumstances in which we are placed. Through daily habit and routine we can build a pattern that has a rhythm to it and by keeping in that rhythm we can live successfully. Hostile blows can be taken if we can avoid being thrown off our balance. On balance we can conquer powers far superior to our own, especially if we can strike them when they are out of balance. This is the secret of Japanese Judo. Many a weaker man has won because he made the powers around him, the powers of nature and the powers of God cooperate with him

"Nothing bars a man who goes the way he should go... that way points all the trees along," wrote a very knowing poet.

The coming of winter and the swing of the season remind us thus of the rhythmic law that governs the universe. Let therefore winter bring its blessing. Let the festivities of the Christmas season pour their brightness into our lives. The Lord who made all things beheld His creation and "saw that it was very good."

ROBINSON ON LEES-McRAE DEANS LIST

Ralph Robinson, son of Mr. and Mrs. The Robinson of Burnsville, was named on the Dean's List of Lees-McRae College for the first quarter, it was announced this week by E. L. Lafferty, Dean of the college.

Robinson was one of nine sophomores who qualified for the Dean's List which requires a student to average B or better in each course taken.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I am always glad to get The Record. It has followed me around for several years and I always appreciate getting it, especially the news on the Y. C. I. annual reunion of old school days.

Happy Christmas and New Year to all,

Charles L. Bailey
 Plattsburg, N. Y.

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