

Open Letters.

The STATE COLLEGIAN invites letters, but the publication of a communication does not necessarily imply the endorsement of the sentiments contained therein. As a guarantee of good faith, the writer's name must be signed, but will not be printed if so desired.

Editor State Collegian :

There has been some discussion of late concerning the adoption of the honor system in examinations. That something should be done is evident. The writer does not believe that State is much, if any, worse off than other colleges as regards unfairness in work. There are some institutions where cheating is not existent and that without having any so-called honor system or a network of sentinels. It would be necessary merely for the students to relegate cribbing to the same class with tale-bearing and stealing, and the evil, as far as nineteen out of twenty cases are concerned, would be eliminated. These men would need no honor system. The others would not be entitled to it. Observer.

I have noticed an open letter on the honor system containing a number of statements which I think are very radical and far fetched. I feel that the writer of this letter does not understand exactly what is meant by the honor system. He asks, "Are our students not honorable men?" I would say that there are enough honest men in our student body to term it an honorable body of men. We must admit, however, that there have been, and we believe that there are at the present time, some dishonest students in State. The hawk-like watching of the present system has done nothing toward the abolishment of the dishonesty and it is for this reason that we believe some new system should be adopted.

The writer claims that every man who clamors for the honor system is dishonest. This statement is very absurd in that he classes all re-

formers as dishonest cheats. Are we to infer that all students who advocate a remedy to abolish cheating in examinations are themselves dishonest? I ask the reader to think over this matter and conclude for himself whether or not the above statement is absurd.

"Colleges maintaining their honor systems do but proclaim their weakness; that they have within them an evil which they are unable to control." It does proclaim that the students will not stand for any dishonesty; that under the present system the existing weakness is not controlled and that some new system must be adopted, and that very soon, by means of which the weakness will be controlled.

Under the honor system the student will be placed on his own responsibility to maintain his good name and good standing among his fellow students. It means that every student is responsible for the honesty of his fellow classmates. To be fair to each other and to build up a good moral character in all, college men should favor the honor system, and it should be adopted at State.

The present system is very unfair to the honest student in that the dishonest student, provided he is not caught cheating, can finish with the better average. It is also unfair to the dishonest student in that he forgets he has an honor of his own to maintain. It tends to develop a shrewdness in dishonesty which will lead men to dishonesty in later years when they will depend upon their shrewdness to protect them. The honor system will develop moral character where the present system develops shrewdness.

I, as an alumnus of the Pennsylvania State College, have written this letter in order that the student body may have a different conception of the honor system than that which might be taken from the open letter referred to above. H.

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