

Penn State Collegian

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Wednesday, May 20, 1914

The one thing which distinguishes Government Penn State from most other institutions of a like size and character, the one thing which is both her pride and the source of her strength, is her student government. Many and various are the opinions of college presidents and professors on this subject. To some it sounds good in theory but is impossible in practice; to others, it seems the cause of much that is undesirable and very harmful. Yet here in this college which has ceased to be a small institution, in this college which means so much to us individually and so much to the state and even to the nation, here student government has been tried and has proved an unqualified success.

The success is all the more evident when we look over the past year and note the activities of our various student legislative and administrative bodies. The student tribunal, a new body created to correct the abuses of hazing and to enforce the college customs, has done its work conscientiously and well. The cases brought before it have been judged fairly and the whole purpose and character of the tribunal fulfilled. Perhaps the greatest work accomplished was the revision and interpretations of the college customs, which hitherto have been rather vaguely understood. That the student board is working steadily though quietly has been evident in the ever increasing feeling of friendliness and consideration between the student body and the faculty as well as in the actions of the student council, with which it is most intimately connected. It is to this student board, which has met faithfully, week by week that we owe the extension of our last Christmas vacation, and it is to them that we owe the prompt and wise settlement of matters pertaining to student welfare.

Our athletic standards have been also raised during the term now drawing to a close. The athletic association while not purely an example of student legislation and government, is nevertheless a means of estimating our ideals and the amendments to the constitution of the association, the adoption of a definite system of minor sports insignia, the improved means for selecting major athletic managers and most important of all, the passing of the one-year rule, have all been great strides in the advance-

ment of our college athletics and with them the college itself.

The student council, however, is the body which probably holds the highest place in our minds since it is the one most familiar, the one whose actions we hear of and vote upon. This council is the representative body of the school, the keystone and center of student government. It, with the ratification of the upper classmen, decides all important questions which from time to time naturally arise relative to student government. Two-year men must now have Two-Year Ag, or Two-Year Special on their watch fobs. Various changes have been made in the rules pertaining to the freshman sophomore scraps, all tending to eliminate danger and to make the contests more fair. Last, but by no means least, was the drawing up of an honor system which although defeated, has nevertheless left its impression. The fact that such a system was even suggested is significant of much. It shows a growth and a development in the spirit of the college which makes the efficiency of student government all the more evident. It is, in fact, a sign of the spreading out and widening of that government, since its one aim is to give more power, more responsibility to the students, to develop a greater sense of honor and a greater desire for honesty in them. For this reason, and for this reason alone, the honor system cannot be wholly defeated; sometime in some form, it will be passed because it means so much to the individual and so much to the school.

This, then, is but an imperfect review of the results of our student government for the term now closing. Hazing has been abolished and a just method of punishment revised and definitely stated; our athletics have been advanced by the adoption of the one-year rule and the honor system was defeated by a close vote. Student government is the source of our spirit, of our democracy, and each one of us owes it to himself, to his college, and to all colleges, to make Penn State the working model of a perfected system.

The junior oratorical Oratorical contest is and should Contest be the chief literary event of the year. Since there is increased interest this year in debating and in all forms of literary activities, there is basis for the hope that all questions involving betterment of literary conditions will receive the greatest attention from all. We are, of course, too prone to consider only the athletic side of college activities, but it should be borne in mind that debates and intercollegiate oratorical contests are far more a criterion of the scholastic standing of the college than a football game. Whether or not we are directly concerned or interested in literary activities, should not be the main consideration. We should view all questions of this nature only in the light of the best interests of the college.

The present system of choosing the junior orators consists of selecting the six men in the class having

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the highest marks in English. Since the English work at this college is now about 50 per cent composition and 50 per cent public speaking, this would seem, at first glance, to be a fair estimate of the oratorical ability of the students. However, this system does not take into consideration the fact that the various instructors have different ideas of grading; for example, a number of men may get A's in rhetoric from one teacher, while other instructors believe that very few students deserve 90 per cent on their composition work. This is not, of course, any reflection on the marking system of the English department; it is only the statement of a fact observed by many and this one thing is a very great factor in the elimination of men for the junior contest. Again, participation in college activities often robs men of some of the time needed for preparation in English work. As a result they will get lower marks than other students not engaged in college activities and, although they may be able to make a far better showing as orators than the men selected, they have lost out because of their lower grades.

A much better and fairer plan, it would seem, would be to have the 30 men highest in English work in the class eligible and then have their orations examined by a faculty committee. The twelve orations best as to thought and composition, could then be selected and in a preliminary contest in March or April, six of the orators having the best presentation could be selected to represent the college in the final contest at commencement. More interest in oratorical work could thereby be aroused and a more representative body of orators would bespeak the training given them by the English Department.

The Junior Oratorical Contest should be the goal of all literary efforts. In order that it may become so, let both students and faculty cooperate to secure a contest, in which are entered six men, representative of the best speakers of the college, men trained to the minute by the competition they have undergone, men to whom the winning of the Barlow prize really represents the attainment of the greatest literary honor at State College

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5	3	1			2	4	6
1:00	9:00		Lv NEW YORK Ar		9:18	10:15	7:17
4:18	11:35		Lv PHILADELPHIA Ar		6:23	7:50	4:40
	a. m.						
7:50	3:40		Lv HARRISBURG Ar		2:25	5:15	1:37
7:58	3:00		Lv PITTSBURG Ar		2:15	5:52	
	a. m.						
11:43	7:15		Lv ALTOONA Ar		a. m.	2:52	
	p. m.					11:00	
12:25	8:15		Lv TYRONE Ar		10:25	2:15	
	a. m.					p. m.	
1:10	7:10		Lv WILLIAMSPORT Ar		12:15	2:55	10:56
	p. m.					a. m.	
12:10	8:15		Lv LOCK HAVEN Ar		10:30	2:11	9:36
12:00	10:15	6:30	Lv BELLEFONTE Ar		8:50	12:55	6:00
2:07	10:20	6:35	COLBYVILLE		8:40	12:40	5:50
			MORRIS				5:47
2:12		6:38	STEVENS				5:43
2:17		6:43	HUNTERS PARK				5:40
2:21		6:46	PILMORIS				5:35
2:25		6:50	BRIDGWAY				5:30
2:32		6:55	WADDLES				5:25
2:35		7:00	AR KRUMRINE Lv				5:20
2:50		7:12	STATE COLLEGE				5:07
3:10		7:35					
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