

Penn State Collegian

Published semi-weekly during the College year by students of the Pennsylvania State College, in the interest of the Students, Faculty, Alumni and Friends of the College.

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TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1921

News editor this issue.....A. G. Pratt

CAN YOU WRITE A SONG?

The Department of Music, of the college, in an effort to stimulate interest in the students and faculty toward a new college song, one that will be more representative of Penn State, is conducting a contest, with a handsome prize as the goal, for this purpose. Penn State has a number of very fine college songs, appropriate during seasons of the year, but not a single one that is known throughout the country, as are some of the famous songs of other colleges. Here is an opportunity to do some great good for the college and its students, and student loyalty should make quite a response to this offer.

Further, we would suggest that we sing more of the college songs than we do. The indoor athletic season at home is practically over, and we believe at the first opportunity when a big mass meeting may be held, the Penn State songs should be given a large share in the program. Also, it is time we were really instituting the time-worn custom with many colleges, of campus singing. There is nothing more beautiful nor more conducive to a firm loyalty to the college than a sentiment such as this, especially at such a place and under such surroundings as these in which our college thrives.

CAN YOU SUGGEST A VIRILE CHANGE?

Student Council's decision of several weeks ago in reference to the Honor System has certainly caused a great amount of discussion on the subject, as already appropriately stated, unquestionably the most healthy sign of activity displayed by the student body toward itself for some time. The COLLEGIAN has been the recipient of a number of letters on the subject as the students have observed, yet a few have come unsigned, and so could not be published. One of these was from "an instructor," who felt that out of this large student body should come some suggestion as to the change in the present system that would improve it. The correspondent also felt that instructors should not act as policemen, suggesting that possibly, in case the proctor system was again taken up, upperclassmen might, for compensation, or in behalf of "college spirit," undertake the task. We sincerely hope that there may be suggested a change that will remedy the present situation, but feel that that change lies in only one direction, the student body itself. Also, we doubt very much if upperclassmen would desire to police examinations any more than instructors care to. The policing principle in the present system is just one of the very factors that is making it a failure. No man will report another. We would have the same evil in another sense.

A correspondent in our last issue informed us that it would be a disgrace to the institution to cast out the present system, but admits that it does not work. He says that in its present condition, which by the way, is the condition in which it has always been, it is a dismal failure, because it permits of a double standard, being in force only during examinations and quizzes and not at any other time. He advocates a change, but like others who do not wish to discard it, fails to state what change would improve it. An honor system, let us again emphasize, does not depend alone upon prescribed rules or regulations, but upon the attitude of the students toward it.

An ideal system presumes that every student is innately honest and that therefore any supervision is unnecessary. In the practical system, supervision is done away with, but knowing that there are always black sheep in the fold, the students are made responsible for checking all dishonesty. There, then lies the difficulty in the matter. If the students will report others who crib, then the system may be called workable, but, inasmuch as past experience has proven conclusively that students will not report others for the simple reason that it is not human nature to do so, therefore that clause in the system is useless. The system is based on student cooperation. That is lacking, has been lacking and to our minds, because of the nature of the system; always will be a missing factor.

Consequently we fail to see any dishonor in abolishing this thing, and feel that a vast wrong would be perpetrated if present conditions were allowed to continue. It is far better to discard a valueless system than to overlook dishonesty.

Y. M. C. A. HOLDING BIG CONFERENCES

(continued from first page)

Baptist Church, Lutheran

J. C. Hoffman, D. D., Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Lutheran church, Specialist in frontier church work.

Methodist.

Rev. C. M. French, well-known rural pastor, has charge of Laymen's work at present, visiting centers for the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He is a brother of Bishop McConnell.

Mr. H. S. French, Department of City Work and Candidate Secretary of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. James H. Lewis, D. D., of the Department of Foreign Personnel, Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Through extensive travel in the interest of the Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. Lewis is well informed of the needs of the church in all foreign fields.

Rev. W. F. Sheldon, D. D., Secretary of the Joint Commission of the Board of Education and the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and is charged with the development of the religious work of the Methodist Church in State and Independent Colleges and Universities.

Rev. John G. Benson, D. D., Pastor

ANOTHER SUGGESTION ON THE HONOR SYSTEM

To the Editor of the Collegian—

During the last two weeks I have been watching the columns of the Collegian with an anxious eye, wondering if any faculty member of this great institution dare uphold an Honor System. At such a critical time in the life of Penn State I am keenly disappointed to hear no word spoken by our faculty members in favor of a System of Honor.

I do not mean our present Honor System in its entirety, but a System of Honor which will extend throughout every day of every semester and into every phase of student and faculty life.

We must admit that the present system has not fulfilled our hopes, but do not forget that it has been a dismal and absolute failure. In the year 1915-1916 we had on our campus a man who could guide student thought and action. That man was "Bill" Wood. He was Captain of the football team, President of the Senior Class and Head of the Y. M. C. A. Under his guidance spirit was high and we can look without fear to the fact that the Ex-aman section, of which I was a member, did observe the Honor System, and I can truly state that the general attitude toward the system at that time was very good. At the present time, however, there is much cheating in the under-classes and in the upper-classes.

Why has Penn State failed in so large a measure in the solution of this most vital problem? The students have failed because they have not had the courage to rise up in their classrooms and take an unflinching stand against the violations of their own Honor Code. They have failed because Proctor System was told at its first class meeting that the Honor System had not been working very well, but their support was earnestly solicited in order to keep it alive. The faculty have failed because their methods in the classrooms have not been in sympathy with the spirit of real Honor System. In many cases these methods have been in direct opposition to that spirit.

The student who dares to stand up for honor in his classroom work will finally grow into the statesman who dares to uphold honor in the affairs of citizenship. The faculty member who fails to fall in line with the spirit of the rules and regulations of the college which he represents, does not deserve to be a member of that faculty. The student who complains that the cheat receives the same diploma as he, and thereby the value of his diploma is decreased, is like the strong man who cowardly allows the unarmed robber to carry away his total possessions and then complains that he is dishonest and goes in need. The student who takes the attitude that every man is inherently dishonest cannot expect the Honor System to be carried out in his classroom.

To consider a man honest and honorable until he is proven dishonest and dishonest is a guiding principle of the Proctor System. This is the foundation upon which any System of Honor must be based. The opposite of this principle is the foundation upon which any Proctor System is based. The Honor System, even if faulty, tends to foster honor as is shown by the increase in cheating from Freshman to Senior class. The Proctor System, on the other hand, tends to increase dishonesty and goes in need. The student who takes the attitude that every man is inherently dishonest cannot expect the Honor System to be carried out in his classroom.

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