

Penn State Collegian

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Managing Editor This Issue: L. Miltner
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1928

ANOTHER MILESTONE

In a little more than thirty years Penn State fraternities have developed from one or two tottering societies with a handful of men to a group of fifty organizations involving more than fifteen hundred students. Sunday, the longest milestone in the history of Penn State fraternities will have been reached.

Penn State's first interfraternity conference is indeed a praiseworthy event. Co-operation should be the keynote. Pledges should participate because they will be afforded an insight into the significance of fraternities on the Penn State campus. Active members should co-operate because it is upon them that the future prosperity of Penn State fraternities depend.

To the four visiting celebrities Penn State extends a welcome and sincerely hopes that they may aid in solving its fraternity problems.

H. E. H.

A STEP TOWARD SAFETY

Invariably, snow makes its appearance. At this time of the year snow rarely fails to pay its respects to the Penn State campus. It was a trifle delinquent in spreading itself about the grounds this winter, but probably there was a very good meteorological reason, known only to the select few, for the tardy arrival.

With the snow, unfortunately, comes Penn State's most enthusiastically practiced outdoor sport, sliding. The front campus sidewalks provide an excellent foundation for the sloping glassy layers that annually cover them. The slides are the basis for much comedy when the "unbalanced" begin a perilous descent that sometimes ends in a tragedy.

Penn State's winter sports amusements may be all right for the sprightly freshman or even the laughter-loving upperclassman—not to mention the romanticist. On the serious side it is hardly appreciated by students and professors trying to reach class before the final toll of the bell or plying homeward to the satisfying tinkle of the dinner gong. To the ones just mentioned, who probably constitute the majority, the slippery slide is a bugbear. More than one student and faculty member has encountered his match when he tried his skill against the more subtle purpose of the ice.

We recommend that while the ice and snow are here, gravel or sand—both inexpensive commodities—be applied to the slides. When the evidences of winter depart, it would not be a bad idea for someone to ridge the concrete as has been done elsewhere in town. Or there is even a possibility of constructing a hand-rail on either side of each sidewalk. Any one of these improvements would serve to remedy the present inconvenient and dangerous situation.

H. P. M.

FUTILE PROTESTS

Protests against final examinations again reach their semi-annual peaks as the semester draws to a close. Probably no denunciation of these final tests (if they may be called such) is so condemning as "they're a nuisance."

It has been said that "the final examination is a device for aiding the instructor in discovering what a certain student has accomplished in the course and whether a passing grade is deserved." Few will disagree over this definition of "final examinations" but discussion will arise over the results achieved. It has always been maintained, even from pedagogical sources, that final examinations fail to accomplish their avowed purpose.

Final examinations are the remnants of an old-fashioned school of education. They are undesirable

because they are conducive to "cranning for the final" instead of daily efficiency in class work. They are unfair because a student's knowledge of a subject cannot be justly determined by the ability to answer a few questions on certain phases of the topic. Since final tests induce "cranning" and since the amount of knowledge acquired through "cranning" is relatively small and retained but a short time, a substitute should be found. Reviews of the course to be compiled in special reports is one suggestion. These are another. But whatever substitute may take the place of final examinations, it is certain that a method embodying a more enlightened system will be the result.

H. E. H.

PENN STATE AND JOURNALISM

That Penn State is rapidly forging to the front ranks occupied by the foremost schools of newspaper work is indicated by the figures recently issued by the Department of Journalism. Insignificant as the present courses may seem, however, the number of students studying journalism here triples those in any other institution in the state. Already Penn State has advanced to thirteenth in enrollment in a list of more than two hundred colleges and universities in the United States.

But Penn State is designed to progress even further. With a larger faculty and the necessary equipment, a School of Journalism will gradually evolve with the growth of the College. But not even such development will denote the limits of journalistic activity at Penn State. The entire state of Pennsylvania will in due time turn to the college as a center for newspaper publishers and editors.

It is indeed surprising that the state of Pennsylvania which ranks second in the United States in the number of its newspapers and publications has not designated a center of journalistic activity. Although the various newspaper officials of this state are represented in the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers Association and again in sectional organizations, no one city or institution has become the mecca of the profession. This is the position to which Penn State aspires.

In the middle and far west, associations comprising newspapers of several states have organized with some school of journalism as the guiding body. Pennsylvania is already divided into sectional newspaper associations, Penn State could very easily assume the role of journalistic leadership. However, this requires facilities which are now lacking.

Six courses in journalism are offered at present. In September four courses, which have never before been taught in Pennsylvania, will be added to the list. The present staff of instructors is to be commended for its endeavors in advancing the status of journalism at Penn State.

H. E. H.

The Bullosopher's Chair

Session One

Smithers: I observe, my dear Bullosopher, that you are still about. Yet you look worried. On closer examination I find that your ears are unwashed—

"Yes, Smithers, I'm a member, but keep it quiet. I'm worried too, naturally. I'm looking for an intelligent senior—

Smithers: You ought to find him easily.

"It's not as easy as you imagine. And in the light of the rumor that more students are getting A's in English and that more are studying Greek, it is strange that the task is so difficult. But you will grant, I hope, that either rumor is a fact, has little significance as far as intelligence is concerned. The interest in Greek, I take as a passing fad, co-incidental with "The Private Life of Helen of Troy." For you honest-to-goodness typical student cares no more for Greek than does his history instructor or his mathematics professor. His mind is too stuffed with educational doses to be interested in anything remotely resembling learning. Talk Greek to him and he will ask you what good it will do him. And of course, the question is unanswerable. Greek culture might make a gentleman of him, but he is interested neither in gentlemanliness, nor in culture. He has found that those above him have neither quality and seem to get along surprisingly well without such stimulus he has seen, in brief that it pays to be a member of the Board of Trustees rather than of the Faculty.

Smithers: But you are talking of your typical student?

Smithers:—You mean the exceptional student.

"Well, I mean the student who is not quite like his comrades. You can call him exceptional if you wish. But the point I wish to make is that the exceptional student here—the one who gets an A in English, to identify him—is very likely to get a D at some other college."

Smithers: Stop! Stop right there, Bullosopher! My loyalty to Penn State—to the old Blue and White—to Old Main!

"Hah! I see, Smithers, that you are one of those belittling individuals who believes that the way to improve a college is to abolish the dumb, to get more buildings, and to hope that the rest will mysteriously take care of itself. Indeed, the number who think that brilliant scholarship will follow the abolition of the mail schedule is by no means a small one. But this sort of brilliance can be matched daily and even exceeded in any English classroom. There you will find any number of people who see life steadily and see it whole, quoting the line with a perceptible brightening of the eyes and there too, are young voices who juxtapose unimpeachable arguments with phrases that indicate something or other about profuse strains of uncondemned air. But by and large, Smithers, these people are no students at all. They are just a bunch. When someone makes a blunder they go on singly and paternally, and sometimes even break out in actual laughter. I find too, that their wits, odd as it may seem, are duplicated among certain of their instructors. I recall one professor in particular, Smithers, who makes queer noises in his throat and glares daggers every time the Education School is mentioned, and yet he himself uses precisely the same methods he pretends to detect. He who objects is promptly declared a young intellectual or a Mencksen whose concert is above routine work. And yet, Smithers, ten years of such treatment, much less one semester, would scarcely permit a student to look the Carnegie Library in the face.

Session Two

"Smithers, I have a brand new charge against finals. Smithers: You are not going to complain about the carpenters repairing chairs in Old Chapel while examinations were in progress?"

"No. I am complaining about the paint fumes in the Bull Pen and the fact that all the windows were closed during examinations.

Smithers: Justifiable complaint! Now I know why that girl fainted during the examination period.

The Music Lover

The first local appearance of the Penn State Glee Club last Friday evening was another evidence of a major sort for the fine ensemble tuning being done by Director Grant. From the rise of the baton for the first number, Buck's "To the Field, to the Hunt," till the ringing applause that greeted the finished performance of Hammond's "Lochinvar" the singing students gave an absolutely first-class program.

There is a stirring masculine quality about a genuine college glee club that has an irresistible appeal for everybody. When this is joined to artistic shown in accurate pitch, fine sense of modulation, and capability to render a great variety of songs, there is a club of the highest quality, one that shows not only talent but excellent training. The Penn State group showed both in large measure Friday.

Stirring was the opening number by Buck, lyric and lovely the Sullivan "The Long Day Closes," snappy and jolly the "Goldens," "Madama Juants," and romantically entrancing the fine ballad by Hammond that catches so beautifully the spirit of St. Walter and the border.

Speaking of Sullivan and the Glee Club, one is minded to express the hope that we shall have before long another campus revival of Gilbert and Sullivan opera. The "Pinafoie" of the spring of 1924 was an unvaried delight; surely it is not too soon to hope for another—perhaps the Pilates, or perhaps Pinafoie again. What can surpass Gilbert and Sullivan, anyhow. And the boys could do it, with so much fun for them and for all of us!

The quality of college male quartet could only be natural—funny and clowny if natural, but not over-acted and stilted and therefore ridiculous and not natural—how fine it would be. We have had quartets on this campus that pulled naturally together and whose humor was spontaneous and real. The efforts of the foursome Friday night in the way of "teutonic" were anything but convincing.

We are not speaking now of their singing—possibly that was better than it seemed; in any case we were too much vexed by their antics and too little diverted by the sameness of their selections to be impressed by any tone they may have had. And it is not high time that college audiences be spared such vapidity as Ender's "Daniel."

The incidental features of the concert were so delightful as to merit another description than "teutonic." We apologize, we shall call them "marvelous extraneous." If a finer voice than Ada Rothig's has been developed and enjoyed in this community during the last decade, we know nothing of it. Her clear, free singing, her enunciation, her presence, and her tone and range, all left one breathless after her own songs. (We wish she would

not sing French until she has practiced it in its native land.) The rendition of the song from Carmen—an extremely difficult song it is, too—was, we hasten to add, a beautiful musical performance.

But when Miss Romig gave us that ringing Italian Street Song of Herbert's, with the whole fine crew of youths backing her literally and vocally, and while her voice lifted and swung through their deeper tones but always clearly heard, until finally it soared bell-like and pure up and up and over all the masculine might—well, we had a thrill of musical joy running up our spine that just made our hair stand on end. It was superb.

The main solo and duets were a pleasing diversion. Miss Gerbrecht is a multi-talented and a lady; her gentle grace and pleasing stage presence harmonized with or rather were part of the facile art she displayed. Why Mr. Housler, who is not a bad musician (it that be the word) insists on drawing attention from his music to his collegiate wiggle is something of us might ask himself in vain. It is time, we think, to straighten up and be vetebrate in our stage music. After all, there is only one Paul Whiteman—and he's plenty!

To return to the Club itself, we should like to speak one word for the person usually omitted from all musical criticisms, we mean the accompanist. The high quality of Miss Grant's playing and her perfect sense of the proper place of the piano in the whole performance proves by its very unobtrusiveness how fine and capable her work is, and we would not stop without saying so. For the Club itself and its Director, after such an evening's treat, we wish the success that we know they richly deserve.

"Dragons At Play" Is Mad Faculty Frolic

(Continued from first page)

Their English co-workers, applauded incessantly until the performers consented to an encore. (There was waiting and gnashing of teeth.)

Freshman Deceives Teachers
Robert Thasler, slight-of-hand freshman, then stepped forth to deceive his awe-stricken audience with magic inticacies. Temporarily tak-

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ing the post of his instructors at the head of the class, Thrasher exhorted disappearing wares, completely foiling the unimpeachable onlookers, whereupon an impromptu committee met to nullify three below grades.

During the multiplication of coins, Poppy West, he of the red cravats and Oxford bags, was seen to reveal the simple solution of the trick to his partner, Van Sant. Following this Thrasher requested two gentlemen (gentlemen, mind you) to come to the front to verify his next act of card magic. Necks craned and searched for the courageous ones who might have the temerity to answer the call. Finally, Charlie Stoddart and Johnny Law stumbled to the fore amid the jeers and hisses of a simple audience.

Five Flying Fools
Next on the bill was a series of solemn musical efforts by a quintet including Poppy West, Van Sant, Pierce, Johnston and another unknown. Their choir-like music did not meet with the approval of the audience, as was demonstrated by the uned tones that persisted among the listeners until the quintet of would-be singers deserted the platform.

What was supposed to be the crowning event of the evening followed

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