

Penn State Collegian

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HONOR SYSTEMATIZED

Among the various colleges of these United States there are honor systems galore—ambitious ones, weakly ones, ineffective ones. Generally speaking, honor systems are of no earthly use, inasmuch as they are merely vague and pleading statements unsupported by authority or sentiment. Yet, they exist, useless nothings that they are, merely because they are custom and tradition—unchallenged probably, because there is too general a feeling that most students live in the proverbial glass house.

Recently, however, the Yale Student Council experimented an honor system which, after investigation, they deemed practically impossible to enforce. Abandoning the task in apparent disgust, the Councilmen made public the reasons for their decision. First of all, they believed that under present conditions, public opinion is not sufficiently active. Secondly, they felt that no students were willing to report violations. Thirdly, they stated that very few consider it necessary openly to discourage offenses, and the consequences were obvious. Finally, it was declared that the occasional reports of cribbing sent in by a member of the faculty based on a comparison of test papers, brought before the councilmen who are not deserving of expulsion or suspension.

Here, in our democratic institution, we have the Penn State Code, one of the honor type which is as ineffective as a general deterrent to cribbing and other forms of dishonesty as any other of its contemporaries, because the majority of students do not swear unswerving allegiance to it. Fair play may be practiced on the athletic field and outside the classroom, but within the classroom it is too often forgotten. Of course, the existence of the Code may be justifiable inasmuch as it is an inducement for honesty, but what proof is there that fair play on the athletic field and outside the classroom would not exist even if there were no such code?

Two outstanding reasons may be attributed to the downfall of the Penn State Code—if its defeat is to be admitted. First of all, it has not the chivalric or romantic background which is such a spiritual aid to honor codes at universities of the South. At such institutions where honor codes are extremely effective and workable to an almost inviolable extent, students endorse them almost unthinkingly. A promise in the aristocratic old South is really an honorable matter taken seriously, and a promise violated is a matter of more grave concern. It is really dishonorable.

In the North, however, students, generally speaking, have no scruples about honor—personal, family, college or otherwise. They have only one end in view—the acquisition of the omnipotent grade, probably the greatest misrepresentation of student ability ever invented—merely another of those necessary evils. Of course, grades are necessary for graduation and the chief aim of the college student is to graduate. He must gain that end regardless of the means.

Any student who will admit his cribbing practices will admit, also, that his ulterior motive was to secure a passing grade, or higher, when, lacking knowledge, he began to tear the awe-inspiring minus sign. Furthermore, he will acknowledge the insignificance of a grade dishonestly acquired, since "quoted material" is merely copied and not learned or absorbed. It would seem that as long as the grade system remains in its frightful capacity it will be an instrument that almost forces students to recognize cribbing as a necessity in many cases. And just so long as the students consider such an invalid practice convenient or necessary, regardless of honor, just so long will honor codes constitute one immense and continuous bedtime story.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VACATION

In less than two weeks most of the students will have shuffled off this mortal coil and embarked on a three-months summer vacation. The lots of some are already cast either by circumstance or by their own choosing. Others, most of us, look forward to the coming vacation as a period of rest and activity, the activity to be determined by whatever opportunity that may fall our way after departure from this campus. We consider vacation a comparatively unimportant period of carefree frivolities between longer periods of texts, blue books, and cramming. We would say, then, that vacation, if not a rose between two thorns, is a period between two nine-months sentences. Not that the exigencies of undergraduate life require us to work our fingers to the bone, but youth is ever seeking a change of scenery. Not everyone considers college vacations as light-

ly as most of us, however, and justly too, because the students, in following his own volition during the summer siesta, will indicate to some extent by the exercise of that volition the amount of common sense and gray matter he possesses. Upon the subject of summer vacations a prominent business man is quoted as saying "Whenever a college man applies to me for a job I never inquire about his scholastic standing. What I want to know is how he spent his summer vacations—three months per annum, and before he gets his degree that amounts to a whole year, the most valuable, I think, of his entire collegiate course. Never again will he have a similar opportunity. If he has wasted it, I know something about him, if not, he has a record worth showing."

"Here's the record of one boy I've just employed. At the end of his freshman year he went one month to a citizen's training camp; after the sophomore year he worked for six weeks with Dr. Grenfell's mission in Labrador, at the close of the junior year he had a month and a half with the Bank's fishing fleet; and after graduation spent July and August with a forestry outfit. All of it was open-air work, putting him in a good physical condition and in touch with all sorts and conditions of men. He used only twenty-six of the forty-eight free weeks at his disposal, but I don't care what he did with the others. Those twenty-six weeks were what I call a 'vacation cum laude.' They give him an unusual equipment for success and I only wish I could find more young men who possess it."

Although the aforementioned business man might have improved his method by including scholastic standing and undergraduate activities in his examination of applicants, he certainly was right in giving the summer vacation more than a passing notice. What most of us demand of a vacation is rest and since change is rest and studying is an indoor activity, the student should spend the summer out of doors.

The student with foresight will plan his vacation before the closing of school if he wishes to get first choice of the summer open air jobs. About the time the students should be doing this planning most of them are swamped by the last minute rush and preparation for finals and consequently they let anything so remote as a summer job slide. And now, though vacation is nigh at hand, no one should despair. There is yet hope. The snap jobs are nearly always the least beneficial, and there is never lack of opportunity for him who really wishes to work.

THRILL FICTION

A statement made recently by a Washington newsdealer gives us pause. According to this vendor of all types of literature, sensational fiction and journalistic products, adventure and cheap fiction stories are the most popular with college students and ninety per cent of these are bought by co-eds. The Confession and True Story type of magazine head the list of this cheap fiction. This assertion is rather difficult to understand and one wonders whether it is universally true throughout colleges today.

Certainly it is not unaccountable that the comparatively uneducated and unenlightened, who have been exposed to nothing better and could not appreciate it if they had the chance, should thrive on a diet of two-bit sensationals (one might say "sensuals" without deviating from the truth). Nor is it impossible that college students should taste of all that the newsstand has to offer. An experience of that sort is broadening. But it is hard to even guess why undergraduates who are at least supposed to be developing a taste in literature should give steady patronage to stories cast from the same mold by uninspired and inferior writers.

No explanation can be offered for such preference for thrill fiction, if the preference does exist. Nevertheless, one thought may be added. Speaking paradoxically, O. O. McIntyre tells that he once saw a Countess scanning the pages of the "Police Gazette" through her lorgnette while her chauffeur was absorbed in "The Atlantic Monthly." One half is always wondering how the other half lives. Why, then, should not one half be curious about the type of literature the other half reads?

The Bullosopher's Chair

"I've decided to write a collegiate love story that is true to life."
Smithers: You're wasting your time. What, for instance, would you find a romantic scene, a sort of trying place, for you collegiate lovers to meet?
"Oh, Smithers! You powers of observation are indeed limited. Where would literary lovers meet, but among the books they love—the library, of course."

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Robert B. Kilborn '28
Collegian Advertising Manager

The interest displayed by the average student in any course is directly proportional to the enthusiasm of the professor who teaches it. I learned this fact my sophomore year in a course in Biological Chemistry taught by Professor R. A. Dutcher, a course which changed my whole attitude on college instruction. Since that time I have judged each subject that I took by the professor who taught it, and the standard of comparison has been the real sincerity of Doctor Dutcher. I regard that particular course as the most valuable one I have taken in college.

Since my sophomore year I have had all manner of subjects but the one that I consider most worthless was a course in Physics taught by a man who is no longer here. Undoubtedly the professor knew the subject well, but there was no personality to the course, if a course can have personality. Everything was too coldly stated to be interesting. The professor was not enthusiastic himself and could not instill enthusiasm into his students. If I were to make a recommendation it would be that no professor be allowed to teach unless he has the power to make his students realize the "personality" of the subject, temporarily at least.

Seniors Offer Varied Graduation Program

(Continued from first page)

Undergraduate activities will make up the greater part of the program during the first two days. The formal academic tributes in honor of the graduating class will be left for the parents of graduates and alumni to attend.

The first event on the five-day program of activities will be a concert in Schwab auditorium next Friday night at eight o'clock by the various College musical organizations. Annual spring house dances will be started later during this evening by the different fraternities. On Saturday afternoon two sports

events will be held, an alumni golf tournament on the College links at one o'clock and a lacrosse engagement between the College varsity and the Onondaga Indians at two-thirty on New Beaver field. At seven o'clock in the evening, the Penn State Theatrons will offer the final showing of "Honesty You" in Schwab auditorium.

In addition to the Baccalaureate sermon, which will be given in the morning, there are several events on the program for Sunday afternoon. A concert by the College military band will be given at three-thirty o'clock on the front campus. At six-thirty o'clock a vesper service will be held in front of Old Main, under the direction of the College Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. This will be followed by a concert at eight o'clock in Schwab auditorium by the Penn State choral club.

Class Day Exercises

Senior class day exercises at nine o'clock Monday morning in Schwab auditorium is the principal event listed for that day. In the afternoon the classes will parade to New Beaver field where stunts of different kinds will be staged. An Alumni-Varsity baseball game will be played the same day. The Penn State Physics plan to assist in the entertainment of Commencement Week patrons by presenting Nugent's "The Poor Nut" at seven o'clock at an evening in Schwab auditorium. A Commencement reception for alumni, faculty, seniors, juniors, candidates for advanced degrees and guests at ten o'clock in the Alumni, followed by a dance lasting until two o'clock in the morning, complete the schedule of events for Tuesday.

Tuesday will be observed as Commencement Day. Focusing in front of the Carnegie library at nine-fifteen o'clock in the morning, the Commencement procession will proceed to the front campus, led by the College band, where the exercises will begin at ten o'clock. Alexander Meiklejohn, a noted educationalist from the University of Wisconsin, has been selected to deliver the Commencement address.

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Trustees Name Wendt President's Assistant

(Continued from first page)

Trustees of the College at the service of the industries of the State.

Improved Instructions
Besides raising the standard of the School of Chemistry and Physics, Dean Wendt improved the caliber of both student instruction and faculty research. The curricula in chemistry, chemical engineering, physics, and pre-medical study have been placed on the most modern basis and scholastic standards have been raised to the highest possible degree. The standards of faculty instruction have been raised to such an extent since Dean Wendt came here, that new appointments must have a doctor's degree to qualify.

Thespians To Present Show Next Saturday

(Continued from first page)

Fraternities desiring tickets in lots should call William E. Hinkle '28, at the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house for reservations. The successful road show produc-

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tion is a satire upon modern society. The setting is a business man's bachelor home on an enchanted island where everyone is compelled to tell the truth unless protected by a charm. A number of rehearsals have been held by the cast in an effort to produce a perfect show for the House Party patrons.



Nittany Theatre

FRIDAY—Cathaum—
Louis Moran, Ned Hamilton in "DON'T MARRY"

FRIDAY—Nittany—
Milton Bills, Doris Kenyon in "THE HAWK'S NEST"

SATURDAY—Cathaum—
Lape Veler, Rod La Rocque in "STAND AND DELIVER"

SATURDAY—Nittany—
"DON'T MARRY"

MONDAY and TUESDAY—
Matinee Monday at 2:00
Buster Keaton, Ernest Torrence in "STEAMBOAT BILL, JR."

TUESDAY—
All Star Cast in "A TRIP IN THE DARK"



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