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Today's Reflections

Ignorance may be a bliss, but we hardly think so! Contenting himself with the petty, insignificant problems of his own campus, the average American college student, today, quietly proceeds on the local green grass unaware of the thunder that rumbles on the collegiate horizon.

It may be wonderful altruism for a man to spend his entire energy working out the problems of his own school, but he is robbing himself of both genuine pleasure and intellectual development. In Europe the colleges and universities are veritable hot-beds of thought and radicalism. Until Hitler preyed upon the post-war minds of his harassed youths, young Germany boasted an abundance of free and healthy thinkers. The revolutionary movement of 1848 and '49, which held so much promise for Germany and all the world, originated largely with the student body.

But American students remain disinterested! "And so what? American graduates fit into the business world as easily as anyone else, don't they?"

If that is your question, the answer is an emphatic NO! For the son of a present-day capitalist or politician, job-finding and job-keeping are comparatively easy. But for the son of a farmer, a doctor, or a small town merchant, commencement is a dreaded doorway, ushering the collegiate mass into days of job-seeking, disillusionment, and final ambivalence. To those who doubt, we suggest the reading of Albert Halper's "Ice-Cold Turkey", in the October issue of "The National Student Morror."

There are many things that should excite interest among American students today—should but don't. A cross-section of the nation's universities would reveal hundreds of projects and endeavors, yet all would be shown as working without the knowledge of the American student body.

We have plenty of radicalism today, but it is all spent on some infantile purpose—fraternities, class-cutting, honor systems, or hazing. Very little of it is given to the healthy purpose of coordinating America's student body into one mass movement of national endeavor. Movements for such things as peace, prohibition, and Socialism have started on a hundred different campuses, but they have nearly all been short-lived. American students seem to lack the punch!

Here are some things that ought to strike up enthusiasm, whether destructive or constructive, within the heart of every college student in the United States.

The FERA at the present time is employing 45,000 teachers, recently graduated from various colleges. It is also employing 100,000 students on a part-time basis, paying them \$15 a month and exposing them to beneficial influences on their respective campuses.

Student pacifists in various institutions are doing their best to wreck havoc with ROTC organization. Reserve officers are inefficient, and should be the joke of the nation, they claim. They had succeeded well enough in 1930 to exhort the following statement from the Secretary of War: "With all due acknowledgement of the splendid corps of ROTC graduates, it must be recognized that they will require a further period of training on mobilization to fit them for the performance of their duties."

It seems that the Morrill Act has lost its hold.

The National Student Federation of America, founded in 1925, looks forward this year to greater expansion and development than ever before. This organization serves a membership in 120 colleges and universities, conducts national and regional conferences, prints a monthly magazine, conducts a news service, and aims in every way at the development of initiative among young Americans.

The Fish Stripe

This year, for some unaccountable reason or rhyme, there seems to be a tendency among the first year students to attempt to hide from evidently hostile eyes their unfortunate plight by merely turning the left cuff over the little white band—the insignia of the freshman.

So, to you first year cadets (NOT to freshmen) who resort to this crude subterfuge, this is directed as first a bit of friendly advice and second as a warning regarding your future status here at school, the place you will frequent most the next four years.

You are now members of perhaps the most fraternal body of men of its size and kind in the country. Recognize yourselves as such, and appreciate that membership! Your station is such that you are privileged to make yourself known to anyone you choose by a mere hand-clasp and self-introduction. It is your only investment necessary to buy stock in college friendship, the dividends of which you will treasure more and more in years to come. Then, too, because you are freshmen, your responsibilities are few and your restrictions are actually quite unlimited—this to permit you ample opportunity to adapt yourselves to new surroundings, and, consequently, allow you to make your first

year here the most enjoyable IF you so desire. But, unless you allow yourself to understand the symbolism of that thin white band on a dact accordingly your first year, never during the remaining three will you quite be able to appreciate and understand those men who will be underclassmen under you, and you will realize that the muclage binding you to your own classmates is not as strong as it might have been. They went through it, you didn't—so—well, you're just a boy going to school here, being an Aggie wouldn't mean much to you.

Remember, a freshman can always be spotted; no fish stripe is necessary, and it is not for the convenience of the upperclassmen. It's for YOU, freshman; it's your passport to better things. So let it be known, and be proud of what it symbolizes.

Attention Seniors!

In the first issue of the Battalion we encouraged underclassmen to submit themselves to the leadership of the seniors. It was our plea that the seniors would progress little with their plan for better discipline unless juniors, sophomores, and freshman alike plunged themselves wholeheartedly into the program outlined by the cadet officers.

That is still our contention—but far from being the theme of this editorial. We feel that, to date, the slovenliness that exists in the Corps can be blamed on the senior class.

Collars unbuttoned, sleeves rolled up, pockets crammed with pencils, paper, and what-not, dusty shoes, and cordless hats are certainly not attractive. Neither are they regulation. And most certainly they are ill-becoming to seniors!

We do not wish to criticize, or to crusade, but the cadet officers of this college pledged themselves to make this a year of Jam-up militarism—we are simply reminding them. It should be unnecessary to say more.

Young Gentlemen!

Complaint has been registered in several campus circles against the untidy conditions now prevalent in the dormitories.

With the student body crowded to the point of extreme discomfort in an inadequate number of halls, it should be the responsibility of every man to commit himself as much as possible to the task of keeping the dormitories clean and decent. Particular disfavor is at present directed toward the occupants of Mitchell and Leggett, where paper, garbage, and all manner of unsightly trash has been dumped into the indoor courts—daily, it seems, since the beginning of the term.

Someone has said of A and M students: "They are not only young officers, but young gentlemen in training."

LOTS OF BOOKS AND A FEW IDEAS

by
Dr. T. F. Mayo

WHAT IS A DIRTY BOOK?
A dirty book is a book that makes you feel dirty.

It follows that a novel like "A Farewell to Arms," for example, may be dirty for some people and clean for others. Personally, this particular book seems to be the most beautiful love-story ever written in America. Its combination of extreme frankness about sexual matters, and equal candor in the expression of honest tenderness and the comradely affection between two lovers, appeals to me as something that I've always hankered after in books as well as in life: that is, Idealism with a solid basis of realistic Common Sense—in other words: Heads up, but feet on the ground.

I've noticed, however, that some people—some very good people at that—are honestly shocked by "A Farewell to Arms." This means that it made them feel dirty. For these people, then, "A Farewell to Arms" is a dirty book.

Now, the last fifteen years have been especially fertile in "dirty books." That is, in our time writers have dared, for the first time in a hundred years, to call a spade a spade. Their readers, unaccustomed to hearing spades talked of in decent society or to seeing them named in print, have naturally been shocked. The new novels have made thousands of people feel dirty, and so, for thousands of people, the new novels have been dirty.

But the old-timers who cry out against this modern frankness ought to remember that it isn't the moderns who are peculiar about such things. It was the Victorians who were queer in their attitude toward sex—the people of the age which ended about 1910. Every period in the history of the world except the one between 1800 and 1910 has called a spade a spade in all its best books. For a variety of reasons (too complicated to discuss here) our great grandfathers and great grandmothers (Bless their hearts!) "went Victorian" on us. They hushed up all mention of sexual matters and put petticoats on everything—in extreme cases, even on the piano legs!

Well, that was their privilege. But why should we be asked to go on maintaining this same funny attitude toward sex? None of the centuries before the Victorians made any bones about it. Why on earth should the centuries after the Victorians be expected to do so?

(If you don't believe what I say about the pre-Victorian literature, read Fielding's "Tom Jones," written in 1749. By the way, it's a grand novel, too.)

SO WHAT?

Well, just this: Nobody ought to feel dirty. It's bad for you. Therefore, don't read books that make you feel dirty. But try to cultivate a healthy at-

titude toward books that are frank about sex—a more or less adult attitude, if you get what I mean. You are surely past the age of snickering over what's scrawled by bad little boys on the back board fence. Read these frank books, by all means, if someone in whom you have confidence tells you that they are interesting. But try to read them without dwelling too childishly much on the sexy episodes. The author, if he's worth anything at all, never intended that these episodes should overshadow all the rest of the book.

And be frank with yourself about the perfectly natural and healthy curiosity that nearly everybody—especially when he is young—feels about sex. Admit it and try to

Agricultural Experiment Station At Sonora Reports Discovery of Type of Texas Spineless Cactus

By R. E. Storms

Having promised our readers some of the previous findings of the Agricultural Experiment Station, we shall attempt to present it in such a manner as will meet with your approval and, perhaps, enjoyment.

An item of worth discovered at the sub-station in Sonora a year ago should still prove interesting to you. The experiment dealt with spineless cactus, whose technical name is Opuntia (pronounced like o-punch-i-a) Ellisiana.

Quite interesting to us was the background of this Latin term. The word Opuntia was first used in the writings of one of the most laborious students who ever lived, Pliny. The derivation at that time came from Opus, a town in Greece. How this ancient word came to be applied to cactus is a mystery, but here it is.

To take up the experiment, we found out that every ranchman could well afford to have a few acres of spineless cactus, if he could only manage to cut down all his spiny cactus. Stock does so well on cactus and eats it down so close that unless an effort is made, the cattle or sheep will eat all the

satisfy it sensibly—partly with books of a scientific nature which explain such matters, and partly with good modern novels which try to depict the way in which sex works itself out in people's lives.

Here are a few books which the Library can furnish for such reading. (The chances are, some of you have read them already!)

SCIENTIFIC
Poppeno: "Modern Marriage"; Sanger: "Happiness in Marriage"; Russell: "Marriage and Morals" (a cool and honest statement of the radical point of view. You may find, as I did, that you can't agree with all of his ideas.); Havelock Ellis: "The Psychology of Sex" (Pretty heavy, but probably the classic on the subject.); Westermarek: "History of Human Marriage."

NOVELS
Floyd Dell: "Moon Calf" and "The Briary Bush"; Cather: "A Lost Lady"; D. H. Lawrence: "Sons and Lovers"; and a play, O'Neill's "Strange Interlude."
(One last word: Don't overdo it!)

spineless cactus and then start on the spiny cactus. Like some human beings, they keep on even though they see destruction ahead.

The actual experiment that proved the value of spineless cactus was this. Two groups of cattle with fifteen head in each group were put into separate pastures. In one pasture the cattle ate all the spineless cactus they could plus about two pounds of cottonseed cake. In the other the cattle had the cake alone. Both groups had access to adequate winter-pasture vegetation. At the end of thirty days the cactus-eating group had gained fifty-eight pounds per head, while the cake-pasture group had gained only thirty-six pounds per head.

If further interested, you may be pleased to know that spineless cactus can withstand zero temperature without apparent injury and cactus from the first time the first padre saw our great West has been associated with sands and desert. That means the cactus fears drouth very little and will provide a juicy feed during dry winter months.

Schulze to Teach English

Nolan Schulze, graduate of Texas University, was recently engaged to teach English and modern languages at A and M. He is to devote half his time to each subject. At New Braunfels High School, Mr. Schulze instructed in German.

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