

## Merchants of Light . . .

*We have just fought the most costly war in history, and have won for ourselves greater insecurity than ever before. The answer of every nation to its people can no longer be more material wealth. It must be more brain power to outthink, outplan and outwit the forces of destruction within and without its boundaries. And how have we protected ourselves? By permitting our greatest minds to be so exploited and taken for granted, that in despair and disillusionment they have fled to business, and left our strategic laboratories and our higher instructions of learning to the lame, the halt and the timid.*

Not that business itself has been too farsighted. Its unwillingness to share will yet prove its undoing. The wealth of the country is in large part the increment wheeled out of its best brains. Business itself is a kind of legalized appropriation of the intellectual gains won in colleges and laboratories throughout the nation. In an engaging article written for the *Atlantic Monthly* some years ago. T. Swann Harding cites the example of a young scientist who held a \$3,000 a year fellowship at a large university, a fellowship that included the privilege of working in one of the finest chemical laboratories in America. The stipend was granted by a drug manufacturing concern; the young man was to "potter around with ephedrine."

For three years he potted around, during which time he was visited off and on by the company's technical men. They came merely to look on, ask an occasional question, and "pick up scraps." The scraps they picked up in those three years, Harding points out, were worth a mere \$150,000 to the company.

Today college administrators know these facts better than anyone else in America. They supplied the human materials for the war projects that hastened the end of hostilities. They alone know how many of their best minds have left their classrooms for more lucrative jobs in business. What one science department chairman pointed out at a recent faculty meeting in my own college is true of all higher institutions: "Unless something is done, scholarship (scientific research) will suffer a blow from which it will not recover in a generation." Failure to read these words right may indeed be very costly.

No, business itself has not been too farsighted. If instead of doing the proverbial trembling in its boots about the corruption of American youth by "red" professors it would give these same professors incomes commensurate with their training and worth, there would be far fewer "red" professors. They would be as eager to retain the status quo as business itself. Professors, too, are human. Business should take its time about thinking that over.

*In steel mills, in railroads, in law offices, in button factories, we hire "the best that money can buy." In schools and colleges we hire "the best we can get at the price," and the figure is so low that "the best at the price" often turns out to be at the professional bottom of the heap.*

The young teacher looks around him and discovers that the most effective teachers in his department are less often among the older men (the Ph.D.'s) than among the younger ones, who may not have gone through the "discipline" of the doctoral regimen. He observes that frequently these "undisciplined" men are more abreast of the contemporary world, write better, speak better and think more originally than those who have been conditioned by "higher" research. When, in addition, he learns that with a Ph.D. an instructor can receive as little as \$2,400, and an associate professor frequently no more than \$3,500, the degree has lost all worth of dignity.

Most demoralizing of all, he can think of leading scholars and teachers in America who were without benefit of the doctor's degree—scholars in Shakespeare, and Chaucer, and American culture at Harvard, and Columbia, and Chicago. He remembers that Oxford and Cambridge proudly scorn the doctor's degree, seeming to reserve it almost exclusively for Americans. He recalls that neither the Master of Balliol nor George Saintsbury was handicapped by the lack of a doctorate. He recalls, too, the Society of Fellows that A. Lawrence Lowell founded at Harvard as a protest against the "Ph.D. system"; its members are forbidden to work for the degree. Yet one of them, the young scholar Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., won this year's Pulitzer award in history for his brilliant *Age of Jackson*.

It doesn't add up, however the young college teacher figures it. But the damage has already been done. He is nearing thirty; he has not been able to put aside money to venture a new career. By this time, too, he has acquired a wife and child; so he makes his peace with his job and his responsibilities. And like the philosophy of the common man Santayana talks about, his teaching becomes "an old wife that gives him no pleasure, yet he cannot live without her, and resents any aspersions that strangers may cast on her character."

One exception might be noted. The doctor's degree in science is a much more honest and realistic affair. A thesis need not run into hundreds of pages in which an ounce of fact is assaulted by a ton of footnotes. And once a student has acquired his doctor of science degree he can go into the various commercial laboratories of the country and command a respectable salary for his achievement. In science, only the born teacher or the very timid will prefer the sanctuary of a \$3,000 to \$6,000 position in the average college to an outside laboratory post paying twice as much. Therein lies the real problem for the advancement of science today. Unless universities hold on to those scientists who demand that their salaries match outside offers, a collapse in higher education will precipitate a crisis in the nation's welfare too alarming to contemplate.

L. Ruth Middlebrook  
in *The American Scholar*

## The Battalion

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## Parent's Day Showing . . .

The A. & M. student body can be proud of the showing it made this past week-end for visiting parents.

No doubt many people were pleasantly shocked to find that Aggieiland was not in the midst of a student riot, civil war, or communistic uprising, as many reports have had it.

The Agriculture and Engineering exhibits on AE Day were adequate proof of the fact that students have not been spending all their time plotting to undermine the statutes of the state of Texas. These exhibits should form a graphic sequence to the written fact in the registrar's office. A. & M. students have a higher academic standing today than at any other time in the history of this school!

Coupled with this is the fine performance made by the Cadet Corps on Parent's Day. The traditional customs of pinning flowers on each man of an organization by the C. O.'s Mother and Sweetheart, the presentation of watches to C. O.'s by their "outfits", the Parent's Day Review, the atmosphere of Aggieiland . . . all these add up to one significant fact! A. & M. is still on its feet! Students are attending their classes, studying, and living in an orderly manner. The Cadet Corps has remained a well-disciplined body, the veteran students are still primarily interested in pursuing their studies and getting an education. Through all the turmoil that has resulted from their efforts to remove Gilchrist from the presidency, Aggies have kept their equilibrium.

Parents returning to their homes over the state will probably do much to dispell the popular notion that "Texas A. & M. has gone to the dogs".

Yes, after a bitter setback in A.&M.'s post-war plans, things are definitely looking up.

## Patents of the Week . . .

### Water Shining in Dark Is Next Aid for Navigators

By Science Service

WASHINGTON, May 11—Chemicals that create a bright glow when dropped on water, of great possible usefulness to seamen and trans-ocean flyers, are the subject of a patent just issued here to three chemists working in the laboratories of the Cyanamid Company of New York, Dr. H. T. Lacey, H. E. Millson and F. H. Heiss. Among possible uses are marking the surface for a plane making an emergency night landing at sea, giving a "seamark" for navigational purposes for either ships or planes, and showing the location of lifeboats or liferafts to searching planes in the dark.

### Photo Dye Used to Cure Elephantiasis

A dye used in photography may turn out to be a cure for one of the tropical diseases most dreaded by our forces stationed in the South Pacific during the war—elephantiasis, the repulsive condition sometimes resulting when filariasis, a worm-caused disease, is not treated and becomes chronic.

Cotton rats infested with the worms almost invariably were cured by the dye, Drs. Arnold D. Welch, Lawrence Peters, Ernest Bueding, Arthur Valk, Jr., and Aeme Higashi of Western Reserve School of Medicine reported in the *Journal of Science*.

The dye they used is known as No. 863. It is one of a number of cyanine dyes which the Western Reserve scientists investigated for the Army and the Office of Scientific Research and Development. Cyanine dyes are indispensable in photography as color sensitizers.

No. 863 has now been given to 27 patients at the School of Tropical Medicine, San Juan, Puerto Rico. The drug usually does not cause an immediate disappearance of the worm larvae, so it may be months before blood tests show whether or not the parent worms have been sterilized or killed.

The drug is given by injection into the veins. It has not caused any toxic symptoms other than a passing low blood pressure and rapid heart beat which the doctors say is of no clinical significance. The present studies are being continued under a grant from the U.S. Public Health Service.

### Comet Becvar Heading South

By Science Service

BERKELEY, Calif., — Comet Becvar, discovered just about six weeks ago in the vicinity of the pole star, is rapidly making its way toward the celestial equator. But the comet is getting fainter as it speeds across the sky and now, of the eleventh magnitude, can be seen only with a good telescope.

Since its discovery on March 27 by the keen-eyed Czechoslovakian astronomer, Dr. Antonin Becvar, the comet has raced far from the constellation of Draco, the dragon. When located, Comet Becvar was of the ninth magnitude and had a declination of plus 81 degrees, 47 minutes.

Moving first over to the constellation of Camelopardus, the giraffe, it sped all the way down to the constellation of Gemini, the twins, now visible low in the west. Calculations made by Dr. Leland E. Cunningham of Students' Observatory, University of California, here show that the comet will soon enter the constellation of Orion, the giant hunter.

Throughout the first part of May, Comet Becvar will have a right ascension of six hours, zero to two and a half minutes. On May 3 its declination was 22 degrees, 59 minutes; on May 7, it was at 19 degrees, 47 minutes; on May 11, 17 degrees, 2 minutes. By May 19 the comet will have moved down to 12 degrees, 26 minutes, well on its way to the celestial equator.

## Big Polio Year Is Predicted

By Science Service

CHICAGO, May 14—Another big year is expected this summer by infantile paralysis experts. Without making any specific predictions, they told members of the American College of Physicians that there will probably be a lot of polio in the United States and elsewhere for a number of years to come.

One authority, Dr. Thomas Rivers of the Rockefeller Institute, was quoted as having said that he feels we are in a pandemic. Pandemic is the term scientists use to describe a world-wide epidemic, such as the influenza outbreak of 1917-1918.

During the last four years there has been the largest total number of cases of polio in the United States in the history of the nation, Dr. Edward A. Piszczek of Chicago reported.

The increase is not just a matter of more accurate reporting. Doctors actually are seeing more cases, Dr. Piszczek said. The virus germ that causes infantile paralysis has grown more virulent. Until it begins to lose some of its virulence, we shall go on having lots of polio cases every year, the authorities believe. Since the beginning of this year 33 states have reported more polio than for the same time last year. Authorities are watching with special concern increases in some states which for the past four of five years have had very little polio.

Doctors are also getting better results in treating polio, though there still are no "miracle drugs" for the disease.

Over 6,000 veterans declared eligible for hospitalization by Veterans Administration during February were emergency cases.

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**STUDENT FLORAL CONCESSION**

## Faires to Speak At Minneapolis Meeting

V. M. Faires, head of the department of management engineering and a nationally-recognized authority on thermodynamics, has been named a speaker for the convention of the American Society for Engineering Education, to be held June 18-21 at Minneapolis.

He will speak before the heat-power group of the mechanical engineering section on the desirable sequence of heat-power courses in a college curriculum, citing results of streamlining these courses at A. & M.

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