

A Record of Continuous News Service For 49 Years



Official News Organ of the Undergraduates of M. I. T.

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TURGID TRANSITION

THAT a new idea in the publishing of a year-book is rare and much sought-after by most managing boards is an admitted fact. It is with much interest, therefore, that the student body pursues rumors to the effect that Technique this year is to exceed that of recent years in length and breadth.

A college yearbook is more the property of the student body than any other publication of the institution. It is the almanac, the retrospective catalogue, of the undergraduate activities during the school year, and that it be uniform is of especial importance.

Admittedly, the present size of Technique is not standard, yet this publication long ago created its own standard, and will do well to follow a tradition of its own making. It is absurd to consider departing from the present size, primarily because it has so long been published in its present form, and secondarily because there seems to be no practical excuse for increasing the volume's total displacement.

SEVEN USEFUL DOLLARS

AS HAS been its function in past years, the Budget Committee has published its "Financial Report of the Undergraduate Activities", for the school year 1929-1930. The primary purpose of such a report is to bring to the student body definite knowledge as to the financial control of these activities, or more concisely, to show to what ends the \$7.00 undergraduate dues obtained from each student is expended.

The fact that these financial matters are handled exclusively by the undergraduates themselves is one which permits a plaudit. At the majority of colleges and universities in the United States, the money matters are left to the Faculty committees, whose duty is to apportion funds as they see fit, regardless of general student opinion.

In consideration of these facts, it is only proper that every Institute undergraduate should avail himself of a copy of this report at the Information Office. The authentic records of the expenditures and receipts of every sport and activity at Technology should be a matter of interest to everyone associated with the school.

The Budget Committee, and its Chairman, Robert S. Backus '31, is to be congratulated upon its work. Facing a decrease in the amount available for allotment over the preceding year, since a smaller student body makes for smaller receipts from undergraduate dues, the ultimate doling out of funds has been successfully and satisfactorily managed, with no deficit to show on its own account.

BOOK LIST

SOCIAL CONTROL OF THE MENTALLY DEFICIENT, by Stanley P. Davies; Thomas Y. Crowell Company. \$3.00.

Up to the Nineteenth Century, the mental defective was regarded either as a saint, inspired with the word of God, or as a devil, "filled with Satan," but never as an object for educational or medical treatment.

From the discovery that the feeble minded are a social and medical problem, Dr. Davies proceeds to a discussion of their control by such methods as segregation and sterilization. Personally Dr. Davies is opposed to sterilization on the grounds that it does not reduce the number of mental defectives sufficiently to justify its practise.

Two chapters of the book are devoted to a presentation of the bulk of varying opinion regarding the transmissibility of mental defect and the eugenics movement in this country. Present day doubts present a sharp contrast to the former certainty on the subject of heredity which led scientists to say that "we are dealing with a condition of mind which is transmitted as regularly and as surely as color of hair or eyes."

If Dr. Davies is to be congratulated upon anything, it is his attempt to do away with several misconceptions broadcast by popular writers. The first of these mistaken notions regards the fertility of the feeble-minded. They do not reproduce at a much more rapid rate than normal stocks and there is no danger that this differential birth rate will overwhelm civilization.

The book assumes no previous knowledge on the subject and is never too deep or too technical for the ordinary layman. It can hardly be called comprehensive, yet it touches upon many subjects and for those who desire more detailed information there is an extensive bibliography at the end of every chapter.

—D. R.

Boundaries of The United States Show Many Strange Eccentricities

Lack of Geographical Data By Treaty Makers Results In Corrections

(Continued from Page One) ical curiosity that a glance at the map will show no one could have foreseen, and that would be inexplicable without some knowledge of the steps in the process by which it was brought about."

Balboa Misnames Pacific When Balboa first gazed upon the Pacific Ocean in 1513 he saw it as a place where the shore line runs nearly east and west and accordingly called it Mal Del Sur (south sea). That is why the Virginia charter of 1609 included an area extending west to the "South Sea."

When the words "southern gentleman" are mentioned to the average person he probably vaguely thinks of the Mason-Dixon line though just where that is he is not sure. This boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania was run by two famous English mathematicians in 1763-1767. Their work was stopped by Indians, but they had run from the Delaware River to a point about 30 miles beyond the northwest corner of Maryland.

Boundary Disputed 200 Years

For more than 200 years, the east-west part of the boundary between Massachusetts and Rhode Island was a matter of dispute that in some respects was the most remarkable boundary question with which this country has had to deal. Twice the question went to the Supreme Court of the United States, and in one of these suits Daniel Webster and Rufus Choate were employed as counsel for Massachusetts.

Another question about boundary lines arose after the purchase from Russia in 1867 for \$7,200,000 of the then called "Seward's Folly" described as good only for polar bears to live in. The polar bears soon began to feel crowded however, as the vast mineral wealth of Alaska was discovered and a rush to develop the country began.

Parts of Alaska Unexplored Alaska is by far our largest possession, covering 586,400 square miles. A few isolated sections in the northern part are at present among the few

unexplored regions on the face of the earth. If this country, together with the Aleutian Islands, were superimposed on the United States in true north-south position so as to touch the Canadian border a short distance west of the Lake of the Woods, it would reach the Atlantic Ocean near the line between Georgia and South Carolina, cross the Mexican boundary in southwestern New Mexico, and touch the Pacific Ocean in Southern California.

An account of these facts and many more is given in considerable detail in the Geological Survey Bulletin 217, entitled "Boundaries, areas, geographical centers, and altitudes of the United States and the several States with a brief record of important changes in their territory and government." It also includes extracts from many of the treaties by which the boundaries were established, a map showing routes of the principal explorers from 1501 to 1844 and many general statistics relating to the United States.

WITH THE AMERICAN COLLEGE EDITORS

Contrary to usual belief, fraternities are slowly fostering a spirit of scholastic progress. The average moving-citizen would be surprised to learn that instead of existing for merely social purposes, the better fraternities are attempting to develop into academic strongholds.

Evidences of this modern trend is found in the efforts of fraternities at Colby to raise their scholarship. No longer are activities the sole criterion to judge a fraternity. A fraternity must have at least a fair scholastic standing to maintain its prestige on the campus, and to maintain its national standing among other fraternities.

There are many methods being employed to raise fraternity scholarship, but the best known and most successful are selective rushing and an organized study hall system with fraternity tutors. Both are practiced at Colby to some extent, but seldom with the thoroughness and system that the seriousness of the subject demands.

The merits of selective rushing are evident. Let a fraternity confine itself to the rushing of men well qualified to assume the academic work of the college, and notice the difference in the scholastic standing of that fraternity four years hence. There will also be a correlation between scholarship and campus prestige.

Lately the practice of fraternity tutors has been introduced. The national fraternity that pioneered in this field has raised its scholarship from a poor position to a relatively high one. Brothers in the faculty have offered their services and their respective courses while active members of the fraternity who are capable also assist.

It is unnecessary to comment on the value of this work. There is no doubt that as college men begin to realize why they are in college, they will begin to work of their own accord. This realization often comes too late, and the fraternity which employs no methods to improve and raise its scholarship standing soon finds itself in a rut.

—Colby "Echo."

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