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EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

THE ROYAL ROAD-BED

IF an innovator suggests a new method of building houses, constructing bridges, or synthesizing a new industrial product, no one becomes particularly wrought up about it. But let someone devise a new theory in education, government, or morals, and the button is pressed which releases a bombardment of criticism from those who have something to lose by the establishment of a new system or from those who are hesitant about experimenting with human beings.

The innovator in the field of the social sciences has met with perhaps more obstacles than experimenters in the physical sciences. Experimentation in education compared with that in other fields has been pitifully small but not without sufficient reason. In the physical sciences when we wish to conduct research, we gather what material is necessary and proceed to twist it, take it in part, or sometimes entirely discard it.

In the human sciences the opposite is true. If research in this field is to be carried on at all it must be completely justified, and care must be taken to insure the essential "intactness" of that part to be treated. Thus it is that in trying to discover how society may be organized to fulfill more adequately the needs and desires of the people, the innovator has met with mass inertia, if not mass antagonism.

Many of the faults of our educational systems have long been recognized. While we regard the changes which have been made in education during the last century as manifestations of progress, they do not blind us to the many errors and inefficiencies of the system.

Perhaps the major difficulty facing a demand for revision is in the form of two questions: "What will be used to replace the old system?" and "Is there any assurance that a new system would be infallible or even an improvement?" One of the main features of the educational system, the final examination, torn to shreds by critics, continues to be the most widely used merely because no adequate substitute has yet been devised.

Harvard University, the University of Chicago, New York University, and many others have experimented and are now experimenting with theories which have but this in common: that they are all applied with much caution and trepidation. Educational research workers must keep in mind that the students with whom they work cannot be discarded when the experiment is concluded. The results need not be great, but must be positive.

Some day the royal road to education may be discovered, and the innovators will lay the road-bed. But the chances are that like most royal roads, it will be paved by a group so large as to make the builders of the Cheops look like a family gathering.

We are not confronted with a great obstacle in educating the genius. His talents prosper for what they are. He would probably survive his youth relatively unharmed by a poor educational system. But if it is ever found possible to develop the little talent which those of us who are not geniuses possess, then civilization can climb to a higher plane.

DISILLUSIONING IDEALISM

TOWNSEND PLAN

AS absent Professor "Bill" Greene would say, the Townsend Plan, she is dead. That, unofficially, is the present status of the California physician's visionary scheme for re-

lieving the needs of helpless old age. The final test of the plan lay in its acceptance by congress; fortunately that body has made clear its attitude toward the Townsend plan by refusing to allow it to come on the floor for a vote.

The deals which led Dr. Townsend to conceive his remarkable plan for old age relief were, without a doubt, very high. The economic reasoning which he and his followers applied to the construction of the plan was, unfortunately, too poorly based to produce a usable result.

The administration's plan for old age relief on the other hand, provides the necessary pensions and is conservatively drawn up on a sound economic basis. Now that the disillusioned followers of Dr. Townsend can no longer help his cause let them turn to the support of a method devised by economic experts which is at least capable of supplying aid to the aged.

THREAT TO CITIES

INDUSTRY DEPARTS

MANY cities of all sizes are beginning to realize now that in their interest definite steps must be taken to check the movement of industries from their present expensive city plants to less expensive locations in the country. The depression has forced many factory owners to study every possible method of cutting costs. Two important items in the operating expenses of a factory are power costs and taxes. As long as they saw no alternative, factory owners paid their share of the ever increasing tax burden.

During the past few years owners have been studying the possibility of moving their plants to the country to take advantage of cheap sites and low taxes. Low cost power developments have accelerated the movement to the country until at present the factory towns are frantically resisting a movement which has already developed an alarming momentum. Just as the workers fought a losing battle against the machine in the industrial revolution, it may now be the plight of the city to see its most valuable elements caught up in a relentless movement of industry to the cheap sites in all sections of the country.

In New England, textile factories have left their former locations in towns to find new sites in the less developed sections of the region. Some companies have moved their factories to cheaper sites in the southern states. Many towns have taken steps to prevent the departure of industries by legislative action.

Every student of engineering and industry should realize the seriousness of the situation from the point of view of the city and should also study the reasons for industry's countryward movement. If the government continues in its program of cheap power development, a rapidly increasing decentralization of industry can be expected. As long as there are real economies to be effected by moving factories from the city to the country, any efforts of the towns to prevent such movement will be futile. It may be that the city will in this case pay the price of progress. Whatever the outcome of the departure of industry from city to country, it is most important that the engineering and business student understand the reasons, and realize that the issue may become one of major importance to the nation.

With The American College Editor

Our National Character

Possibly the greatest criticism one can make of the American people is that they place as the primary aim in life the acquiring of material goods, the hoarding and accumulation of money. During the depression years we told ourselves that we were learning a great lesson about life, that there were more important values than material, and that in the future our emphasis would be placed on more fundamental principles. But even now as we are beginning to emerge from the financial depression we let ourselves drop back into the same old line of thought.

In giving relief we thought we had done enough when we handed out some of the bare necessities of life to the poor. They were given a little money and clothing, but no thought was given to rehabilitating them morally and socially. Now with the government handing out millions to states and cities we find these forms of government thinking of nothing but how they may receive the largest amount for themselves. Little cognizance is taken of the more important responsibilities that a state should assume.

In our universities and colleges the same spirit seems to exist. Each college thinks first not of training in character and mind, but in gathering in the largest amount of material possessions. Larger buildings, big enrollments and rich endowments or appropriations are considered all that matters. Even in the classroom we find instructors valuing a position on the amount of cold cash one can get out of it. Students are taught to enter a certain field of work "because the pay is good."

Many people have been shocked recently at the bold admittance on the part of the governor of Alabama that he is primarily interested in pulling out the big-

American College Editor—Continued

gest possible plum from the national treasury. Money is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end, and the use and value placed on it is an indication of the kind of character we have. And our national character is exceedingly low, judged by such a standard.

This attitude on the part of individuals and of public officials is to be greatly deplored. We need wise leadership in these times, and one place where such leadership would prove greatly effective is in our colleges.

—Crimson-White  
University of Alabama

Reviews and Previews

Now showing at the movies:

Paramount and Fenway—"While the Patient Slept", "Under Pressure".  
Loew's State — "Folies Bergere", "Death Flies East".  
Loew's Orpheum—"After Office Hours."  
Metropolitan—"Ruggles of Red Gap", "La Continental Revue".  
Modern—"Devil Dogs of the Air".  
Fine Arts—"The Wandering Jew."  
Majestic—"Lily of Killarney."

At the Shows:

Plymouth—"Hollywood Holiday."  
Maurice Chevalier at State  
"Folies Bergere" is a lavish picturization of the French musical comedy institution. Being so, it is replete with singing, dancing, and music. Five songs, two of which at least, you'll surely be humming soon, come from the production: "Rhythm of the Rain," "Singing a Happy Song", "Au Revoir L'Amour", "I Was Lucky", and "Folies Bergere". Chevalier does a lively impersonation of an amorous, be-moustached, bemonocled French baron. Merle Oberon and Ann Southern, are prominent in the cast.

"Death Flies East", the companion film, deals with a murder mystery aboard a transcontinental air-liner. Conrad Nagel and Florence Rice are starred.

Charles Laughton, Margo, at Met

If you're looking for a good string of laughs, "Ruggles of Red Gap", with four of screenland's funniest: Charles Laughton, Mary Boland, Charlie Ruggles, and Zasu Pitts, can give them to you. Adapted from Harry Leon Wilson's famous book, the story concerns the adventures of a perfect English butler who is brought to this country by American tourists who win him in a poker game. The butler blossoms forth as a ladies' man to the grand amazement of the citizens in the rural American town of Red Gap.

On the stage is Margo, dancing star of "Crime Without Passion" and "Rhumba" "The Continental Revue."

Majestic Shows Irish Film

"Lily of Killarney", an Irish romance story filmed among the lakes of Killarney opened at the Majestic yesterday. It contains many picturesque scenes of the Emerald Isle, and a number of Irish Folk Songs, with an all-star Irish cast.

Mystery-Comedy at Paramount

Arline MacMahon and Guy Kibbee are gain together as principals in "While the Patient Slept", a mystery-comedy drama which opened yesterday at both the Paramount and Fenway theatres. On the same program is "Under Pressure", co-starring Victor McLaglen and Edmund Lowe, a melodrama of the building of a tunnel far under the East River.

Cagney, O'Brien, at Modern

"Devil Dogs of the Air" gives you a pretty good if somewhat exaggerated idea of life in the Marine flying training schools. James Cagney is the "wise acre" young student, already an experienced pilot, but who joins the Marines for the fun of it, to the constant embarrassment of Pat O'Brien, who knew him when they were kids. Trouble starts when the smart aleck acquires the affections of Margaret Lindsay, Pat's girl friend. The most amusing part of the picture is the "squeaky" laugh of Cagney's.

Orpheum Has Gable and Bennett

"After Office Hours" gives you Clark Gable as the managing editor of a newspaper attempting to solve a hushed society murder by means of his socialite reporter, Constance Bennett. Six more acts of Loew's vaudeville are on the accompanying bill. "Wandering Jew" Continues  
"The Wandering Jew" stays for a second week at the Fine Arts.

THE TECH

Inquires

This column endeavors to solicit student opinion upon selected questions. A reporter interviews students at random, in making his rounds about the Institute. Questions for this column may be submitted by readers. Open Forum comment on any of the answers will be welcomed.

Question for today: "Professor Penfield Roberts recently stated that he does not believe in free public schools and libraries, because a great many people are not educable. What is your opinion of this stand?"

C. Olson Pike, '37, X, 36 Kent Street, Newburyport:

"Granted there are uneducables, but wouldn't it be rather foolish to abolish public schools and libraries, placing the social life and development of the country in jeopardy, and ruining the opportunities of some poor striving individual because of an inferior element?"

Arthur V. Hughes, '37, VI-A, 81 Joy St., Boston:

"The implication is that there is a waste of time and funds on said uneducable people. Undoubtedly the good arising from such institutions sweeps aside any objections on the grounds of waste and futility."

Dominic J. Cestoni, '37, X, 10 Rocky Nook Ter., Boston:

"How are we to find out whether a person is educable or not? We must have a means supplied by the public in order to find this out since about 50% of our educable people are unable to attend private institutions."

Leo J. Goldslag, '35, I, Dormitories:

"I consider Professor Roberts absolutely wrong. Free public schools and libraries are worthwhile even if used to advantage by only a few. The advantages acquired by these few react to the benefit of all."

Robert Y. Jordan, '37, VI-C, Dormitories:

"I am opposed to this idea, because I believe that, regardless of the abuse existing in the systems as they stand today, a great deal of benefit results from them. Probably the solution lies in improving the personnel and management."

Robert L. Kenngott, G, VIII, Newtonville:

"Prof. Roberts' statement has all the earmarks of academic superiority. How can he substantiate the presumption that the masses are not 'educable' when our present society has never really offered them an education? Look to the U. S. S. R., Professor Roberts!"

(Continued on Page 5)  
Inquires



TEA DANCES in the beautiful, spacious Sheraton Room every Saturday afternoon at 4:30, which attract New England's smartest Younger Set. Delicious refreshments are served a la carte, and the price for dancing is only 50c. "Dangerous rhythms" are captivatingly played by the famous Meyer Davis' LeParadis Band with Joe Smith directing!

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