RELIGION

"IS ORTHODOX RELIGION necessary in order to preserve a well-balanced philosophy of life?" — the nominal subject of Wednesday's Forum meeting — can, we believe, be answered negatively. The discussion held当晚 tremendous interest for Technology men, and while both speakers Wednesday were interesting, neither attacked the topic directly.

Any discussion of the subject depends to a large extent on one's definition of religion. Balliett's book on Social Institutions says: "Religion is the process, more or less rational, by which man organizes his emotional life and its related activities as to give him a sense of security in dealing with the mysterious factors of his social situation."

If this statement is accepted in its strictest sense, our question is answered in the affirmative, by definition. However, the definition probably is meant to, and the usual conception does limit it to certain types of "proceses," represented by what we have called orthodox religion.

A well-balanced philosophy of life would be based, in general, on the ideas of God and immortality. There is no question that a well-balanced philosophy of life can be based on religion, for it has been done, although many other well-balanced philosophies have been far from well-balanced.

But today science and scientific knowledge have reached a level of development and immortality acceptable to many people. Religious leaders must depend on such vague and essentially meaningless concepts as "An eternity of love" or "The wisdom of the universe." If a reluctance to admit complete severance with the old ideas makes people hold on still to some notion of a God, that notion, as Lothrop remarked, is such a complete abstraction that it really has no meaning at all. But what may the non-believer use as the basis for his philosophy of life?

We must recognize that there is a conflict between religion and science, in the broad sense of the terms, despite the wishful claims of religious leaders that they are two separate worlds, not applicable to each other. "Science" is not a body of facts as many assume or would like to believe, it is a way of doing things that work. Anything that works, that "Science" does not mean "scientific knowledge," which is the common explanation, it means "scientific method," which is relatively fixed. As Lothrop pointed out, religion (or God) is also a method of explanation, one of the two principles, the two methods of explanation, are incompatible. And the scientific method is a better one, since it does not depend on rationalizations and wishful thinking. But religion does mean more than explain. It sets up standards, and it helps enforce them. However, our social sciences show that standards, morals, concepts of right and wrong, are not eternal and unchanging. Though we rarely think of our own standards in this light, the "right" ideas, the ideas which are worth for the group to follow, which will make the individual's group, and the individual. For an intelligent person, this knowledge should be and can be a much stronger reason for conforming to the standards than blind religious belief. In brief, then, a "scientific" philosophy of life is one which is based on a scientific understanding of the effects and implications of that philosophy, both on the group and on the individual.

Religion is not necessary for a well-balanced philosophy — science can serve as well or better; the sensible methods of science which we are taught to use in our professional work can apply as well to fields where the rationalized and in many cases meaningless abstractions of religion have formerly been almost unchallenged.

SENIOR CLASS SPIRIT NEEDS ENHANCING

THIS YEAR school should mean more to everyone than just thirty weeks of study. Seniors are aware that our school is almost entirely lacking in class spirit. Certainly many of the advantages of the best college should not be thrown away.

Senior Week has usually been the only really organized function of the entire class with them. A few more similar occasions earlier in the year might lend a hand in unifying the class of 1937 into a whole.

In future years, the new housing facilities may enable the seniors to have frequent meetings and scheduled events. Anything that can be done to foster a better tradition of class spirit is certainly worth thinking about.

WORLD'S FAIR EXHIBIT IS WORTHWHILE

WILL THE CORPORATION undertake to run an exhibit at the New York World's Fair in 1933? The possibilities of an unusual type of publicity for the Institute are such an exhibit hold out.

Presenting Technology to the layman is a difficult problem, as Open House committees in the past have discovered, but the World's Fair is an excellent opportunity for the Institute to present itself to people from all over the country interested in science and education. Many corporations consider Institute graduates a necessary ingredient of themselves, but "Science and Engineering" are not linked up with "Massachusetts Institute of Technology" in the public mind. A carefully prepared exhibit run by several undergraduates or recent graduates could help accomplish this linking.

Letters to the Editor

Gambling

Editor, The Tech:
A "prohibition" problem seems to be rising itself at present in the hobble life. There are several local and national experiment. During the past few weeks there has been an increasing amount of play, particularly in the form of card games.

Although many rules may be broken without notice, I think that infringement of regula- tions of this type has done damage to both players and schools. The eighteenth amend- ment was one of the most manifestly laws ever made and this case is very analogous.

There is no doubt that the legal is an inspired to the regulations and while card playing is definitely frowned on, there is no clue attached to "vicious." There is nothing essentially immoral with gambling and possibly rules are expected to be broken. Public opinions, however, would be definitely opposed to anything of a gambling nature.

At present, round table conferences which are held in open rooms of the school, present a good impression to both the students and outsiders. The administrators should either actively prevent open gambling or set aside certain locations for the games.

Sophomore.