BRIDGE THE GAP

between instructor and student

Better closer and closer, and closer, and the inclination toward trying to learn all about the courses in the last week, or the last night before the examination is strongly indicated in the large number of students who keep up in classes, or who are merely too busy to come to school.

For a few, the reason for late hours and worried looks may be their laziness throughout the term, or their natural showiness in picking up the examination subject. In many cases, however, the fault goes back not to the student, but to the instructor.

At this time of year, there are entirely too many amiable professors to trust the faces of students. Perhaps their course was entirely made up of theory, and it is discovered that the examination will be entirely based on applications, for which the involved calculation necessary to derive the formulas is no help. Or, perhaps the course was merely laboratory work, and for the dependency on memorizing definitions and nomenclature hastily mumbled in preparatory lectures.

It can be emphasized too often that good notes are the best books, but they do not necessarily mean that the students understand the subject they are studying. It does follow, either, that if all of the facts and formulas are written on the board and derived by the lecturer they will be remembered and comprehended. If there were time in the curriculum for severe contemplation of the facts as they are observed, one could understand why some lecturers run through their derivations and discussions as though they were in a hurry to get through and refuse to save any time for discussion of the principles and their application.

Too often students are rebelled at asking questions merely because the subject has been fully explained in a lecture weeks or months before. Such an attitude does not help any one when he probably would save time to give the instructor an opportunity to make the student think, it is wasted. He probably knows the formulas well enough, but wants to find out if he is applying it correctly.

At this time of the year, some go to colleges instead of studying books by themselves revives about the fact that books cannot answer questions or clarify an explanation if it happens to be too complicated for one or more students to understand.

There is absolutely nothing gained from attending classes under a real live teacher if all one gets is cold notes.