The Tech

Editorials

Reason For Failure

Vital to the success of any educational program is the ability of its teachers—apart all too often instructors on the college level have neither the interest in teaching nor the ability to present and explain material which can determine the success or failure of education. This problem is perhaps most crucial in a rigorous and demanding technical education.

The freshman year is often one of disappointment and disillusion; as the entering student comes into contact with teachers and other students highly trained and accustomed to secondary school instruction—where teaching is a profession not a sideline—he finds it difficult to learn from men who are scientists and engineers first and instructors only occasionally.

Closely related to the teaching problem is the failure of the registration officer system. Ideally a faculty adviser, the registration officer system is too often based solely upon research, too often the faculty adviser for help, the student becomes resentful of the impersonality of the system, loses some of his desire to learn. It is difficult to blame the registration officer—many cases, he is forced to assume an added responsibility which he neither wants nor is able to perform.

Without Honor

Not unaware of these problems, the great majority of the faculty is continually striving to remedy the situation. They aim, however, faced with a serious obstacle. Each member of the faculty has, of course, only a limited amount of time and any time spent as a registration officer, a faculty resident is, however, faced with a serious obstacle. Each member of the faculty has, of course, only a limited amount of time and any time spent as a registration officer, a faculty resident is, however, faced with a serious obstacle. Each member of the faculty has, of course, only a limited amount of time and any time spent as a registration officer, a faculty resident is, however, faced with a serious obstacle.

The Outside World

There is the wonderful feeling of being wanted. Maybe not by the world at large, but certainly by Industry. They come from all over the country, the inviting personnel men, like the slave merchants of old, to look over and appraise the merchandise. There are interviews every week and the student reluctantly shakes off the habits of four years, and shaves and puts on a tie and a jacket and his best Dale Carnegie manner. The personnel men smile, and talk locations, promotions, salaries, opportunity, glittering awards. Later, over coffee, the seniors sit around and display the previous triumphs: "I have an offer for $420 — he offered me 600... right in California, man!"

Senior time is also a time of occasional soul searching and serious thought. What has one accomplished in college? Why was it worthwhile? What good times have gone and postponed? What has one really gotten out of the Tech experience? The questions and the answers vary with each individual, few remaining the same.

To this senior, the most important and lasting effect of the Institute lies not in the formal and academic knowledge and training acquired. Of course this part of our education is significant, it prepares us for our future careers and studies, and gives us the tools with which to work and create and leave our mark upon the world. But the most important product of our education lies elsewhere, it is intangible, often below the surface of our consciousness, and we will become aware of it only until much later in life. It consists of two parts, we shall call them method and character.

What do we mean by method? We mean that our method of approaching the world has undergone a change. The systematic, logical and disciplined approach to the problems of matter and mind cannot fail to leave a deep and lasting mark on the student. This analytical attitude transcendental, the solution of technical or engineering problems. It becomes applied to any other field or problem we have in fact, be it political, social, human or other. We have learned not to approach a problem energetically or emotionally. The mind has been trained to perform that methodical jump towards initial perspective, and take a good look at the problem. What are the definitions? What are the questions involved? What are the empirical considerations? Is there proof for the assertions involved? Is the question valid and logical? Thus, our whole thought process has become reorganized in our world. So many issues are bocked, so many men act on impulse and passion, so much truth is buried under discursive cover. Our training and method will be an invaluable asset in such a world. We must have and use that tool of reason, for it is still man's best hope for a peaceful, happy and eternal future.

A New Beginning

What do we mean by character? Many of us have come here straight from the comfortable sponging strings of mom, and also from the sweet and related arms of the average high-school with its lack of demands upon the mind, its mental spoon feeding and its failure to develop decentworking habits. For those of us, Tech has been a period of brutal weaning. Suddenly we were on our own. No parents to comfort us. No solicitous school-marm bent over our shoulders and coaxing homework out of our little darlings. Instead, the heavy mantle of responsibility was upon us, and there is only one way to bear it, and that is self discipline and character. Somehow the student learns to forgo attachments if necessary, to open a book out of his own free will, to realize that his future is up to him. If old Kipling were still around, he might have added a few lines to his famous "IF" poems:

IF you have endured the buffets
IF you have suffered through pinnacles
IF you have conquered pressure
IF you have endured common stress
IF you have resisted the pressures
IF you have met and defeated the exams
IF you have stumbled through sleepless nights
IF you have licked frustration and blues
IF you have nourished the banner

THEN you will be Tech-man

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