EDUCATIONAL COMMENT
OREGON STUDENTS MAKE REPORT

On their own initiative a group of students at the University of Oregon have completed a report on the status of intellectual life on the campus, reports the New Student. The committee was headed by Edward Miller, editor of the Daily Emerald, which sponsored the work. A student questionnaire and discussion with the faculty and leading students elicited the data upon which it is based.

Much attention was paid to admission requirements in the report. This is a sore point in state higher education, obliged as the university is to accept almost indiscriminately those who knock at its doors.

The following description of conditions on the Oregon campus is a part of the report:

“Turning now to conditions as we find them at Oregon, the committee believes that the University of Oregon is today a good, average, commonplace, unobtrusive member of the family of state universities in the efficiency with which it educates its students, neither particularly good, nor particularly bad. We believe that the University of Oregon is suffering from ailments characteristic of the large mass of American colleges, but while misery loves company, the defects of any one educational institution are not the less serious by virtue of their widespread prevalence.

“We believe, quite frankly, that the university atmosphere is not intellectually vitalizing; that scholarship, the essence of education, is not the coveted goal of the mass of students.

“We believe that the widespread diffusion of interest which prevails among a majority of the students is a factor which tends to lower the scholastic achievements of the average student. We are convinced that far too much time and energy is spent in the distractions of student activities and in the whirl of collegiate social life, and that as a result there is insufficient opportunity for constant concentration on genuine intellectual activity.

“We believe that the standard of excellence established within the student body has been set too low, and that it tends to emphasize qualities in the individual which are intrinsically of secondary importance. We believe an ‘intellectual boycott’ which would make the student who merely gets by both uncomfortable and unpopular is decidedly lacking at the university.

“We believe on the other hand that there exists on the campus a distinct tendency to overemphasize grades. The grade sheet and indeed the entire mechanical measurement of intellectual accomplishment has thrown the emphasis upon the means rather than upon the result. We believe that any changes in policy which will focus attention upon the accomplishment rather than the measurement will be well justified.”

Following is an outline summary of the content of the student report:

I. Base Premises of Report
1. Not every student should attend an institution of higher learning.
2. All capable persons with honest intent should be permitted to attend.
3. Education should build up vigorous mental habits in students.

II. Present Situation
1. Student awakening comes too late.
2. Unworthy student allowed to remain in University.
3. Too much emphasis placed on grades.
4. High school training unsatisfactory.
5. Scholastic condition non-existent.
6. University curricula not correlated.
7. Widespread use of stereotyped methods of instruction.

III. Proposed Changes in Entrance and Grading
1. Prevent unfit from entering University.
   a. Permit student to enter upon recommendation of principal and on grade average.
   b. Permit unrecommended students to take entrance examination.
2. Methods of removing unfit who have entered.
   a. Require definite measure of accomplishment under point system.

IV. Proposal for Freshman College
1. Secure instructors who have wide range of interests.
2. Offer required parallel survey courses in world history and literature, and the sciences.
4. Provide for personal contact between advisers and students.

V. Installation of Honor Group for Upperclassmen
1. Division into two groups.
   a. Grade group with present system of instruction.
   b. Honor group with privileges.
2. No grade system.
3. Optional class and conference attendance.

VI. Faculty Reforms
1. Less inbreeding.
2. Division of teaching and research.
3. Payment of adequate salaries and granting of privileges.
4. Secure tenure of office.
5. More attention to conferences.
6. Admission of students to faculty meetings.

The University of Oregon has published the student report in pamphlet form.

GEORGIA IN LINE
The policy of owning and publishing its own state journal has just been adopted by the Georgia Education Association. The Georgia Education Journal is the name of the new magazine, which will be published at Macon. Its predecessor was called Home, School, and Community and was issued from Atlanta. The executive secretary of the Georgia Association is Kyle T. Alfriend.

ON CANOE-PADDLING BY PROXY
You can give a child nothing that he can keep. All that is truly his is a part of him. Such power as he possesses grows out of himself and the growth of that power is purely his own affair. You can inspire it, you can guide it, but you cannot give it to him. As he is to stand out a man, so must he be born again, and under his own power.

We who have suffered our own growing grieve to see a child agonizing to emerge into life, and often we make the mistake of trying to save him the cost of his soul. We do the hard lessons; we step in between him and the consequence of his conduct; we give him the money he should have earned; we pity him openly when we should have called on his courage and faith. When he fails, we blame him—this child we cheated of his strength.

"What can I do with him? I have given everything to that child and he gives nothing. He is lazy and wasteful. If I try to get him to work, he falls ill. If I try to teach him how to be well, he is rebellious and ill-tempered; if I try to talk to him he
closes his ears. And I did everything for that child."

Everything but stand by and let him have the training life demanded. You can start your acorn in the hot-house, but you must plant the young oak on the hillside so that the mother of us all may weather it into experience and strength."—Angel Patri, in McCall's Magazine.

A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION WHICH IS SCIENTIFICALLY SOUND

A six-year elementary school should be organized to take care of all the fundamental training of pupils. Following this should be a secondary school six years in length covering what is now covered in the ordinary high school and in the first two years of college. At the end of these twelve years the pupil's general education should be measurably completed and he should be equipped with the mathematics and languages and elementary science necessary to prepare him for specialized study. At eighteen years of age instead of twenty, he ought to be ready for the advanced professional training which must now wait until he is twenty-two. The six-year secondary school which is thus proposed should not only train its pupils in general lines; it should also select its pupils for various types of advanced work. Thus it should deliver to the professional schools a group of students especially equipped for advanced study.

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BOOKS

ONE APPROACH TO LITERATURE


The modern writer of fiction usually invents his plots, but the theme of any story is very, very old. If literature is to reflect life, its numbers must often flow

For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
And still oftener must it deal with

Familiar matter of today,
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again.

And since

Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing........

it follows that the number of themes of human life is decidedly small, though an infinite number of special plots and situations may be devised to illustrate them.

In attempting to guide the modern student of literature, authors and teachers divide the great writings of the world according to nations, periods, and literary types. We have, then, the literature of Greece, of Rome, of France, of England, of America, for examples; and in the literature of England alone there are twelve or fifteen periods or ages. Moreover, in the writings of a given nation are found numerous examples of such well-defined poetic types as the epic, the lyric, and the drama, and such familiar prose forms as the essay, the short story, the novel, and others. But these ways of classifying selections leave out of account a very vital principle of relationship, namely, similarity of theme. Works of a particular period may be very unlike in subject matter and spirit, and even two sonnets, or odes, or elegies, or essays, or stories may resemble each other only in certain more or less technical aspects; but identity or even fairly close similarity of theme suggests very near kinship.

Ample recognition of this principle of classification is given in a recently published book, Literary Contrasts, by the late Professor C. Alphonso Smith, who until his death in 1924 was head of the Department of English of the United States Naval