

The people on the ship began to get excited, and the commotion spread throughout every deck. I was myself quite glad to be reaching the shore again, after so unpleasant a voyage, and I crowded up to the place where I knew the gang-plank was to be hung. And so, for once in my life, I was the first among the passengers to set foot on shore. It was with a feeling of profoundest relief. But the only part of the whole *voyage en Corse* which I had regretted was the ill-smelling journey to Nice. And at thirty steps from the customs house that odor had gone, and I began already to enhance the passage with a halo of romance! So is it ever, fortunately, that we forget the unpleasant details to let the happy ones dominate our memory.

When I found a hotel capable of sheltering me for the sum which I felt able to afford, I counted up my expenses for the trip—thus far twenty-eight dollars (including the return ticket to Nancy, the boat to and from Corsica, hotels, meals, automobile and train fare on the island, tips, dozens and dozens of postal cards and postage for them, one or two inexpensive objects which I had purchased for souvenirs, and the ten cents which Madame Pasqualaccio had asked for laundering two linen shirts!)

I did not go straight home from Nice, where I stayed two days. I decided to take a few days' leave and go into Italy, *via* Torino. And so I did, returning to Nancy by Modane. But that's another story.

PERRY CORNELL DECHERT

GOING TO FRANCE FOR STUDY

MORE and more the idea is growing that our teachers of French can and ought to study in France. This was the key-note of the meeting of the modern language teachers of Virginia in Richmond last November. We

read that the New York Board of Education recently approved of no fewer than 947 requests for leave of absence for study abroad, and that, of the foreign students at the Sorbonne, about 50 per cent are American. Although not considered university students in France unless already in possession of the Bachelor's degree, 5,000 Americans were reckoned as "serious students" last year in Paris. Ten times this number from our land are residents of that city.

From the Institute of International Education (2 West 45th Street, New York City) may be had valuable information as to available fellowships and other sources of help, financial and general—for instance, through their *Handbook for American Students in France* and their bulletin on *Fellowships and Scholarships Open to American Students for Study in Foreign Countries*.

Most fellowships of this kind are for teachers and other graduate students, but the group of Smith College juniors and the Delaware University group (of undergraduates from more than a score of American colleges and universities) are notable examples of how admirably is working the plan of the "Junior Year Abroad"—in which students with definite programs of study and under suitable supervision achieve such fine results.

The Delaware group had this past year, among its 67 members, 16 to whom the Institute of International Education had awarded \$300 scholarships and four who had won \$1,000 fellowships through that channel. Among the four was Perry Cornell Dechert, of Harrisonburg, who has an article elsewhere in this issue.

Edwin C. Byam, of the University of Delaware, gave, in the *French Review* for February, interesting figures concerning their group of the preceding year.

This also numbered 67, but four withdrew "either voluntarily or involuntarily."

All the rest received credit for the year's work, which ranged from 22½ to 33 semester hours. Of the total number of 299 examinations taken in the Sorbonne *Cours de Civilisation*, those making certificates of A, B, or C grade were 259; those of D grade, 29; those below D (failure), 11.

Of course this was a select group, for it is a common statement that in France the usual percentage of students "received" (passing) is only 35 per cent to 50 per cent.

One of the new centers of interest for our sojourners in Paris is the American House, which has been built during the last two years to afford suitable, beautiful, and well-equipped quarters for about three hundred students within the *Cité Universitaire*. This *Cité* is a tract of about seventy acres on which, in a truly international spirit, more than a dozen different countries have erected dormitories for their students, who have thus contact with one another and close association with French students.

According to the figures given in the *Modern Language Journal* for March, the weekly room-rent for summer students in the American House is from \$5 up, while for winter residents it is as low as \$2.50. Cafeteria meals cost from 20 cents up. These rates, with the fact that university fees are small, are very encouraging.

But the high scholastic standards and the difficulties of orientation must be gravely considered. The professors give a cordial welcome to foreign students, but they also give them "stiff" examinations at the end of their courses. Besides, they leave them to shift for themselves from the beginning—to take the initiative, to select their studies, to find and maintain their place in the educational system as well as their place in the eating and sleeping houses of the great French capital.

Largely for the purpose of aiding in these matters there has been in operation since the World War the American University Union at Paris. From that office, and concerning

it, Dr. Hugh A. Smith writes in the *French Review* for January an article, from which a few of the foregoing facts have been taken.

He says the Union "attempts to combine in one bureau all the services performed by several agencies in an American university, from the Dean's office down to the Bulletin Board for rooming houses." He feelingly describes the wide range of information demanded of the Directors: "It extends from choosing thesis subjects . . . or estimating the amount of credit that any one out of five hundred American colleges might possibly give for a certain course of study in France, down to picking a good, reasonably priced dentist or finding the safest cheap restaurant in Paris."

Dr. Smith urges students from America not to fail to seek the advice of the Union before undertaking the difficult task of orienting themselves in any French school or university. The permanent office is at 173 Boulevard Saint-Germain.

ELIZABETH P. CLEVELAND

FRENCH NOTES

From the Magazines

THE time has come to put an end . . . to the rivalries between Flemish and French, and to settle a question which has been poisoning the atmosphere of Belgium for a generation . . . Unless I am gravely mistaken, we shall witness in the next year or so the final convulsions of this bitter and futile controversy . . . Action and re-action, flux and reflux—such is the history of the two languages in Belgium . . . Successive Belgian governments, having first slipped into the error of Gallicization, now headed toward another error—the error of bilingualism, which consisted in requiring all Belgians exercising any sort of public function to know thoroughly both French

and Flemish. Both these attempts at solution . . . were probably necessary if all thinking Belgians . . . were to be brought to see the need of a third solution, namely, the regional solution, based on the autonomy of Flanders and of Wallonia. . . . Walloons and Flemings should and can come to an understanding. They have been condemned by history, by geography, by economic interest, by a host of sacred memories, to live together. Their country lies at the crossroads of several great civilizations—between ardent France and earnest Germany'. . . . She should be a connecting link between Latin, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon cultures. Glance at the map. Belgium is a corridor, a zone of traffic and transit. This is certainly true as far as merchandise is concerned; it can be true as regards ideas also."

LOUIS PIERARD,
in *Foreign Affairs* for July

"The schoolmaster's problem is to predict future needs and to supply varied needs in one class . . . Here is the solution . . . Let him teach them [his pupils] to speak about anything in general but nothing in particular, in the sure certainty that, once they possess a general power of speech, the technical vocabulary of their own individual activities will come to them without the effort of any teacher. In other words, let him teach an essential and general vocabulary, introducing in the process as few 'specific' words as possible."

MICHAEL WEST, in the
Modern Language Journal for April

"Reading, from the standpoint of the reader, is an instantaneous flashing of the meaning of the sentence read without the intermediary of the mother-tongue . . . [But] the reading 'skill' is best secured through careful study of limited material . . . The knowledge of a foreign language is in inverse ratio to the number of books read in a given time . . . The perusing of count-

less pages just to discover the approximate meaning . . . leads the student into habits of carelessness and slovenliness, and into an unscientific attitude . . . Scholarly habits of precision are too precious to be sacrificed to the modern gods of speed and quantity."

E. B. DE SAUZE,
in the *French Review* for March

Another of the wise sayings of the foregoing writer is "There is immense difference between difficult work and bewildering work." He also warns against too much explanation and re-explanation as "a vicious waste of time." True surely, but the little word "too" is hard to measure exactly.

The award of twenty-five thousand francs for that French book, brought to America in translation, which best illustrates the French cultural ideal—called the *Prix Brentano* because offered yearly by Brentano and Company—went unanimously this year to Jean Giono for his new novel *Colline*, or *The Hill of Destiny*.

The American Library in Paris began a dozen years ago in packing cases of books sent over by the American Library Association for our soldiers in France. After the war this collection was turned over to a new organization which proposed to make from this nucleus a permanent institution. The movement has steadily grown. The library, though it has no building of its own, now shows 45,800 volumes, on steel shelves, at 10 Rue d' Elysée.

It has the three-fold object of serving as a memorial of the American soldiers and as "the recognized center of information about America for Europeans" and also as a sort of international base of "information about books, libraries, and library methods."

At the library, books are free for the use of all comers. They are also sent on long-term loans to libraries anywhere in Europe, and any book about the United States is lent without charge to anyone in Europe who wishes to read it.