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BARDIAN

Vol. 21 No. 3 October 24, 1941

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THE BARDIAN

Volume 21, No. 3

Z-443

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, N. Y., OCTOBER 24, 1941

Eight Pages

Address by President Butler

Reviewed by MARK E. STRAACK

Dr. Nicholas Murrey Butler, President of Columbia University, addressed the college on Monday and it was a tribute to President Butler, and what he stands for, that almost the entire college community were present.

Dr. Butler stated that the present war is a battle against "a blackout of liberties" and that it is up to the youth of this nation to provide the leadership in a new trend towards liberalism and away from depotism.

Although what Dr. Butler said was of importance the actual meaning of his words were overshadowed by the reasons that prompted one of the foremost citizens of the world to state that this is as much our war as anyone's.

He has lived through wars, and their aftermaths, and as a great scholar-statesman, probably one of the greatest living, is well qualified to point out to America's youth that this country has been among the sufferers from this new order and our coming to actual military warfare is not important. What we must fight for, in the opinion of Dr. Butler, is a re-awakening of individual effort, liberty and achievement, and the defeat of the so-called "New Order" which is actually "the oldest order that history records."

Dr. Butler himself is a leader in the movement for ultimate British victory and his years as a great leader must no doubt have compeled him to look at the situation, at it's outset, with a great many more facilities at his disposal than the average to assist him in his decisions. Thus Dr. Butler can make a statement to the effect that the many people in this country who do not believe that anything important is going to come out of the present war do not have any comprehension of what our place in the world today is. He believes that for us to be snug about our position of relative isolation is a fatal mistake and we have a very definite part in the present conflict; for it would be impossible to carry on in a liberal way under the heel of a dictator. In Dr. Butler's opinion one of the most promising signs for eventual freedom of all the peoples of the world are the uprisings in conquered countries that are going on today.

Dr. Butler stated that liberal education is "the knowledge and training which gives to the youth of today and tomorrow an understanding of the meanings and happenings of yesterday," so that today's youth can be better able to lead in the

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The Bardian

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Editorial

We heard somebody say one morning that there was no "college spirit" at Bard. We disagreed immediately, but before we could arrange our reasons for an intelligible way, it was time for our class to start. Since then we have put these thoughts in order, and we still believe that Bard has a "college spirit," but it is not as self-evident as it is at some other colleges, because our own "college spirit" is, by its very nature, a more fundamental part of our academic and social life. Consequently, each of us must examine his own work, its direction and its motivation, in order to analyze what we call "college spirit."

The work that we do at Bard in many cases is not restricted by formal scholastic ideas. There is instead an elastic quality about our methods which you will not find at many other colleges. We think this is a good thing but we are aware of its danger. For it is very easy to lose ourselves in the breadth of our ideas, and, according to our college system we will have no pedantic formulas to fall back on. Therefore we must continually re-define our aims and reconsider our methods, because they are not set down for us in the conventional academic patterns. And when, at last, we have found our direction, we must support it with a firm belief in its validity.

Now, we must look at Bard College as well as our own work from this standpoint, for the freedom and latitude of our system of education is permitted only by our sincere belief in its effectiveness. One of the most important features of Bard is its dependence on the faith of its students and

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Thus Spake Sedgewick

*Sing a song of revolution
A pocket full of wry,
See the student council
Packed and set to fly.
Through the witching hour
Was dancing and revelling.
Isn't that a welcome home
To set before the king?*

We are pleased you didn't take us lying down, we are sorry you didn't let the whole matter lie down. We would have been disappointed had you ignored us, but after three weeks we are disappointed in your persistence in bringing to the surface a situation which is of dubious importance at best, and now well worth being relegated to that limbo which is reserved for those matters not worth getting excited about for more than three days. We regret that the pen had to be met by the sword, but we would like to believe that by now all excess emotion has been successfully released, and that we will all be able to get together again and wonder what the hell is happening to the food in dining commons, why must people commit suicide at four in the morning instead of at some conventional god-fearing hour—is it true that Bard College is being taken over by the flies, and why must the athletic program be conducted midst the wailing breezes of the sewage system?

With fear and trembling in our hearts, we feel forced to register another objection. We object, not to that worthy institution, known as the Institute of Economic Education, but to that underlying current of thought that asked the institute to conduct a poll. We feel that it was unfair to the editors of the BARDIAN to put them on the carpet after two issues of the paper had come off the press. It was unfair because most of the misspent emotion was directed against this column, with which the editors of the BARDIAN do not necessarily agree. Furthermore, it was unfair because the editors of the BARDIAN knew nothing about the poll, which was seemingly, going to contribute toward making a better paper for this college, until the questions asked on the poll had been written, and the matter had evidently been thrashed out on the campus by everyone except the editors of the paper.

We ask you to consider the above seriously, and the following lightly.

Apparently having failed with our recently created department *Blight of the week*, but always eager to please, we embark on our newly created department,

(Continued on page 2)

The Zoo

Pronounced with A Long "U"

ANONYMOUS

It was Spring. It was Sunday, and all the world was veddy-much-alive. Everyone seemed to be doing something—or other. So the Colonel—took Jane—to the zoo. He bought a Bag of peanuts, but ate them all himself—he was like that. Over there, he pointed, was the chacma baboon (pronounced with a long "u") sitting in the fork of a tree masticating on a piece of old fruit—although the baboon hardly called it that himself. Next he brought Jane to the reptile house. There the snakes, not to mention the turtles, were wreathing and writhing: any intelligent snake is capable of doing the same. But some of the less gifted ones were merely gazing at each other. The Colonel explained to Jane that what they were really doing was contemplating—although they hardly called it that among themselves. The Colonel and Jane then sauntered down to where the tremendous animals were kept in cages out o' doors. There were veddy-many-animals and veddy-many-signs and they were all in the same pen together. It was veddy difficult for the Colonel to tell Jane just which belonged to which, or vice-versa as the case might be. He sniffed the air and at the same time looked about him. There in the far corner 'neath the shade of a large geebung. . . . Well, he made up a poem about it. It wasn't an awfully good poem. In the first place he had to change Jane's name to Jane-Lou which wasn't her name at all, and in the second place he never finished it with real words because they were too hard to make rhyme, and in the third place; oh well it had lots of mistakes and I can't list them all. They numbered well into the thousands: and you know that number following the nine hundred and ninety ninth is such a laborious word to pronounce. The poem went like this:

I went to the zoo
With my daughter
Jane-Lou
To see the big cage
Of the tame Caribou.
But the beast,
The stupid thing,
Having nothing to do
simply da ta ta da tad
With you know who.

And so they strolled to where the swans were swimming. Ah grace! Ah beauty! Ah bird of love! Silver bird gliding o'er the black water! The curved neck, the round ripples.—Ah me!

"Don't go near the swans Jane! Those birds are veddy dangerous as history has shown us only too well. I've never told you about Leda and Zeus (with a long "u") have I Jane? Well, when you're older my dear, when you're older."

Around the next bend were—oh!—the elephants! There were six of them and half 'o dozen of the other kind. All were swinging their trunks in a veddy peculiar (pro-

nounced with a long "u" way. The Colonel explained to Jane that Kipling had made an erroneous statement concerning the evolution of the elephant's trunk. He went on to say that back in the days when God was molding all the animals out of clay. . . . He had just finished making the elephants (two of them) and He thought His work was done, but lo—he had a bit-o-mud left over! So he started to make a third elephant, but there really wasn't enough clay for all that. He got only as far as the body, for short legs, and a ridiculously small proboscis. But he thought it would be perfectly permissible to take just a tech of clay off some of the animals lying about. So he took a bit from the temples of both the elephants, they being the nearest at hand, and a pinch off the hind end of the bison, they had all-together too much before! I mean behind and couldn't even sit down. Anyway that is why the bison of today has such a little back and such a big front. When all the bits of mud were gathered together He rolled them into a huge ball and stuck it on the fore end of His third elephant to be — but it didn't look very well — rather a bulbous snout — but it sufficed. Actually it was a product of lack of raw materials; Ersate you might say. However, the other elephants wouldn't stand having that *Thing* called an elephant, so God christened the last of His animals "Hippopotamus" (pronounced as one word). In other words, my dear, the elephant has always had its trunk, for a veddy definite purpose too, you know he has no hands like Daddy, and the hippo, as it has turned out, doesn't want one anyway because he would be continually running-a-ground as they say in the navy.

Well, my dear, it's getting late. You've seen a baboon masticating, snakes contemplating, I'll tell you about the swans when you're older, and elephants swinging their trunks in a veddy peculiar way. It's all due to weather; but you wouldn't understand. Your dear mother is a veddy impatient (although she hardly calls it that herself) woman, so I, that is we had best be getting home now.

Contest

"George Washington's Foreign Policy Today" is the subject of the \$1500 prize essay contest being conducted by Scribner's Commentator magazine, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The first prize is \$1000. There are also prizes of \$200 and \$100, each, and eight \$25 prizes. The contest closes December 1, 1941.

Scribner's Commentator is the national magazine planned and edited solely for the safety and future of America. It is obtainable by subscription only and is not available on newsstands.

Full details of the contest may be obtained by writing to Scribner's Commentator, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. All manuscripts should be addressed: Contest Editor, Scribner's Commentator, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 1)

faculty. The college is not bound down by any strict laws or definitive phrases. It is continually being readapted to fit the needs of the students. Therefore, the only thing which makes the college an effective, functioning unit is our faith in the very fundamental principles of progressive education. The faith is our "college spirit."

There are always some people who can't quite understand this idea. They cannot conceive of "college spirit" as anything so abstract as a "faith." They want to be able to see it in banners and buttons and Freshman caps. They want to be able to shout it in six different cheers, and wear it in big letters across their chests. But it is impossible to buy, manufacture or even steal our "college spirit," however, it is quite possible to ignore or abuse it and in either case it might soon be lost.

It has often been said that it is comparatively simple to tear down a good thing while it is very difficult to correct a bad thing. We believe, that if you think this statement over, you will agree with it. We have a very good "college spirit." We hope it won't be overshadowed by the type of "college spirit" that is all noise and color.

REPRINT OF THE BARDIAN'S POLICY

The BARDIAN has but *one* policy — quality. All *other* policies (policies of the writer or writers of each column) will be found deep within the separate articles — look for them. These latter policies are not *necessarily* ours.

EDITOR.

THUS SPAKE SEDGEWICK

(Continued from page 1)

POLL OF THE WEEK, through who's pillars, we hope to contribute further to the cultural well being of the college. We have chosen for our symposium this week: THE LIBRARY. (Consider the following questions carefully. Answer them in the best English you know, writing on no less than one side of the paper, place them in a stamped self-addressed envelope, and wander vaguely around the campus, wondering what to do with it.)

(1.) Are you aware of the LIBRARY?

- (a) Slightly.
- (b) Not at all.
- (c) Awfully awfully.
- (d)

(2.) Have ever seen the LIBRARY?

- (a) Once when I was lost.
- (b) In a manner of speaking.
- (c) What library?

(3.) How many times have you been in the LIBRARY? (answer only yes or no to this question.)

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.

(4.) Is there anything in the LIBRARY that you think ought to be removed?

- (a) The Librarian.
- (b) Books.
- (c) The Library.

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THE ARTS & SCIENCES

DRAMA

by ALVIN T. SAPINSLEY, JR.

On Friday evening, October 31, the Bard Theatre will present for its first production of the season, the new play, *Yankee Pine*, by Barbara Corcoran. Performances will also be given on Saturday, and Sunday evenings at 8:45.

Yankee Pine deals with a critical situation in American history immediately following the Revolutionary War. The struggle of the impoverished New England farmers to keep their land during a time when the state constitution permitted them to be jailed for debt is here depicted in a treatment that puts a timely emphasis on our tradition of personal liberty and revolt against tyranny, and at the same time tells an exciting story against a background of the turbulent 1780's.

Barbara Corcoran, a graduate of Wellesley College in 1933, has spent four summers with Surrey Players in Surrey and New York; worked as play-reader for the New Theatre League; and written largely, her plays, poems and articles appearing in Cue Magazine, Stage Magazine, and numerous other periodicals. Her play, "From The Drawn Sword" was recently produced by the Ford Hill Forum Players in Boston.

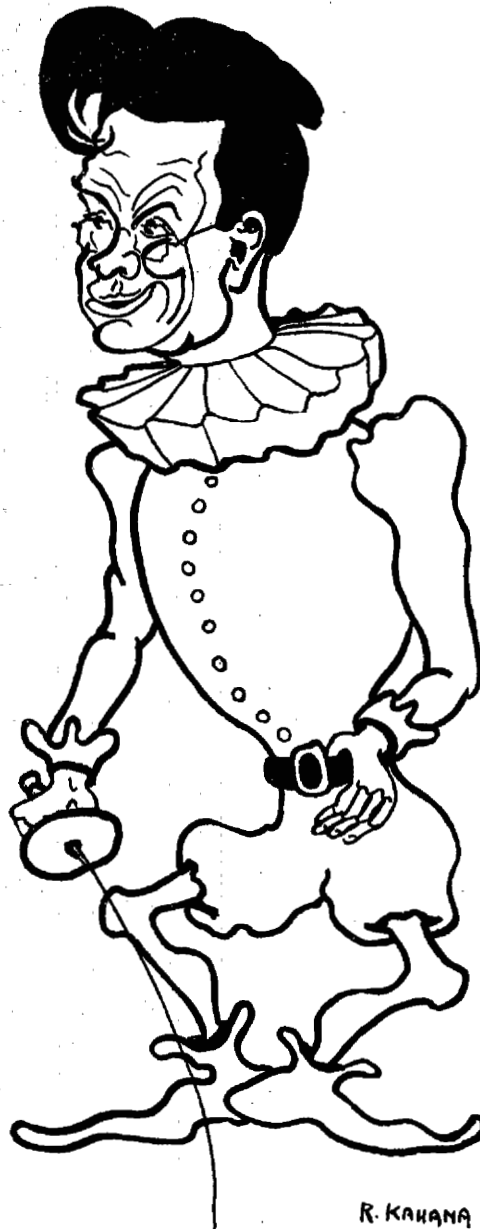
Yankee Pine is being directed by Paul Morrison, settings are by Richard Burns. The cast of fourteen is headed by Katherine Emery, who has played leading roles in numerous New York productions, among them being "The Children's Hour," "As You Like It," "Everywhere I Roam," and "The Three Sisters." She has been heard frequently over the networks in such programs as "The Shadow," "Manhattan at Midnight," and "The Treasury Hour."

The cast also includes Frank Overton, former Bard Student, Jack Lydman, Wesley Philipson, Mary Moore and Tony Hecht.

College Library

In connection with the opening of its new Bardiana Room for special collections, Bard College Library has just received a very valuable gift from Mr. Christian A. Zabriskie, who has already presented to the library many other rarities,—among them some precious Thomas Hardy items.

This latest addition is a set of five original letters by Sir Walter Scott, written in the years 1813-1815. These letters were addressed to a young writer, B. Rotch, who had asked Sir Walter Scott for advice on his own first literary attempts. Added to this set of letters is a manuscript of Rotch's poem, "Almalenza: Or the Heroine of Saragossa," with Walter Scott's marginal criticisms.



"Here will be an old abasing of God's patience and the King's English." *Ibid.*

—Prof. Genzmer.

MUSIC NOTES

by MILLARD WALKER

The musical activities of the college year started in a most auspicious manner on October 6th, by introducing the new members of the music department to our concert audience. The department is indeed fortunate in having a number of advanced instrumentalists whose participation will add to the variety of our programs. Choral singing, too, has rounded the critical corner, and there is a noticeable improvement in the quality of the work of the Glee Club and choir as compared to last year.

An event that should be of interest to the general college community is being planned by the music department for the

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Social Science

by G. J. PELAEZ, JR.

When we view the present and anticipate the future status of both foreign and domestic affairs we cannot help but conclude that the study of Social Sciences is assuming a more increasingly important place in the world's thinking. We are at present in the era of a world in transformation. A world revolution is occurring and we must ready ourselves to take an active part in the molding of this new world. New concepts of history, political theory, and economics are being formed and we in America, particular, have the task before us of reconstructing our social order, of dynamitizing American Democracy, in terms of these new concepts. Our democracy must be maintained but improved; our economy is undergoing and will continue to undergo terrific and fundamental changes; our social order will change sympathetically with the economic system; our concepts of history and politics are changing and will continue to change. The Social Scientist has many days of struggle ahead. He must take the lead in molding and directing the forces that will build a new world order. The theory of democracy must survive but it will never survive in the new order unless drastic changes are made in our outlooks. Democracy will not be saved by a war against a conflicting ideology; it can only be saved from destruction by the application of the new, more liberal concepts to the old, unsolved problems. Alexander Pope once said:

*"O'er forms of government let fools contest,
That which is best administered is best"*

It is the responsibility of the Social Scientist of today and tomorrow to take the lead in making our form of government "that which is best administered." However, the Social Scientist cannot work alone, he must have the cooperation of the general public; the entire population must assume more and more interest in social, political and economic affairs.

Bard offers to those who desire to lead in the construction of the new world order excellent opportunities for training and development in the Social Sciences. Here more than in any other educational institution in the country we have complete intellectual and academic freedom. Individualism in our method of study is the foundation upon which we build. He who desires to learn and to serve can best learn at Bard. At the present time there are 41 students majoring in the Social Sciences and many students from the remaining three divisions who are studying in the various branches of the Social Sciences—economics, history, politics, sociology, social educational, applied psychology, and philosophy. The Social Science Division

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ART

by

THEODORE N. COOK

Those vitrolic paintings by Mervin Jules, which were in Orient Gallery through last Thursday, were more than social protests. They were challenges directed at the present school of regionalist art, which, Jules believes, is little more than illustration, and has only historical value.

His own work is clearly divorced from the Benton-Curry-Wood axis, although he worked as Benton's assistant several years ago. Jules is more interested in dissecting and analyzing our social evils than in describing the length of donkey ears. He is more interested in the former because he considers it more vital to our life. He does not believe that art should be separated from important issues of the day.

Jules grew up in near poverty, he had to fight hard in order to survive, and this has left a distinct mark on his art. In fact it is the foundation of his work. His subject matter is restricted to New York and Baltimore sweatshops and back alleys, and he is proud of it. This is the life he knows best, and this is the life he can paint best. He has only one aim in his paintings: to arouse sympathy for under-paid workers, and anger for their exploiters. He does not cater to art fashion because it would smother his message.

His show here was varied, containing both good and bad, lyrical and harsh. I think his interior of a laundry was one of the best, because in it he succeeded in integrating dynamic design with rich color, something which he often fails to do. His little yellow man out on the limb of a dead tree also stood out as Jules at his best. Few paintings of complete despair and bewilderment can compare with that one. His temperas almost burst with feeling, each fine stroke of paint skillfully palced to create tension, each work obviously the result of long hours of brooding. I think he defeats his purpose, however, when he deliberately uses repulsive colors to describe hated situations. He invariably drives people away from these canvases, with the result that they ignore what he is trying to say.

During his visit here Thursday he stressed that he is still a student, and will always be one. Even now he is branching out, designing silk-screen animal prints for children. This reveals a side of Jules which our show did not present. He can do fanciful wild-life as well as lecherous men, and dumpy society matrons. I think this is important, for his main works give the impression that he is completely one-tracked.

Yet I cannot help feeling that a profound distrust of mankind is the mainspring behind his art, and that this greatly limits his range of fire. Breugel and Daumier, both of whom he admires, were primarily interested in the masses, and sympathized with them, but still maintained a love of humanity. Jules seems to be so over-

by

RICHARD BURNS

Jan McIver's watercolors in the Art Gallery are a pleasant contrast to the social oil paintings of Mr. Jules in the last exhibition. McIver's work is less depressing, more conventional in subject matter, but no less interesting as a new use of an old medium.

To walk up to a painting and not be sure of how the artist has applied his medium is a compliment to him. This is true of some portions of Mr. McIver's work in which the watercolor is so heavily defined and sculpturesque that it has the quality of an oil painting.

The pictures attract you, not so much with bold or brilliant color as with bold lines and swirling compositions. First you see these strong curved lines as designs in shades of brown or gray. But as you study the picture you sense, rather than see, his pure thunderstorm colors. He contrasts stark white with clouds which are almost as dark as his ground colors.

His imagination is strongest where he has created landscapes which are restless with the elements of wind and rain, as if they had been done at the height of a storm. The motion in his paintings is an unusual combination with his careful draftsman-like neatness. There is neat arrangement also in the work of Mr. Jules, the man with the tortured soul, but his workmanship is static and bold, harsh colors, make it seem a little rotten.

After Mervin Jules' paintings, Jan McIver's carefully composed thunderstorms are a blessed relief.

MUSIC

(Continued from page 3)

dates November second to fifth. The occasion will be a visit to the college by Analee Camp, well-known violin-cellist, and Ernest Bacon, pianist and composer. In private life they are Mr. and Mrs. Ernst Bacon, and are both members of the faculty of Converse College. Their stay at the college will include, beside the concert Monday evening, November 2, in Bard Hall, a round-table discussion on musical subjects of general interest on Tuesday. There will also be informal meetings with faculty and students, and performances of contemporary music. It is to be hoped that all those interested in music will avail themselves of the opportunity to hear these visiting musicians, and will participate in the discussions. The specific time and place of these various activities will be announced on the weekly college calendar.

whelmed by bitterness that his vision is warped. His art, however, is a growing thing, and it is still possible that he will gain a more complete range of emotion within his work.

SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

(Continued from page 3)

sponsors two extra-curricular organizations which are open to the college community. The Economics Club which meets on alternate Tuesday evenings at 7:30, serves as the general meeting place for those of the division and is at present engaged in a discussion planned to be carried on thru out the year on the topic of "A World In Transformation." The Philosophical Discussion Group which meets on alternate Monday evenings at 10:00, discusses the various Philosophical problems confronting the world. Allied indirectly with the Social Studies we have both the Bard Forum and the Bard Debating Society which serve as discussion centers for topics of general interest. We are benefited also by the location on campus of the Sloane financed Institute For Economic Education which offers to many of us practical experience in the problems of public opinion investigation. The Institute also holds monthly open meetings for the discussion of such research problems.

It is the hope of the author that thru this column we will be able to satisfy many of the wishes you expressed thru the recent BARDIAN Survey. I hope we will be able to discuss together the common problems that confront us in the Social Sciences, review important books connected with the Social Studies, discuss our student government, reflect student opinion on contemporary affairs, and discuss trends in the present world revolution.

Correspondence

Dear Sir:-

Would you please be so kind as to inform us why you mar the pages of an otherwise very good paper with such a self-proclaimed fountain of wisdom as Sedgewick?

Dear Mr. Sedgewick:

Would you please be so kind as to spare our feelings. If you are afflicted with bad taste, don't broadcast it. There are still laws in this country and people who threaten—under the cloak of anonymity—to "blip you one" don't last long.

As to the Freshman Show. Let us admit that it was very bad, but what do you expect in free entertainment? Billy Rose? 60 Freshmen arrive, and within 3 days are informed that they are to arrange a show within 3 weeks. In spite of breach of co-operation, many of them devoted a great deal of time and effort to the show, some even suffering financial loss. They do the best they can, their best may not be good enough for Lord Sedgewicks high standards, but they do their best.

Surely it is extremely bad taste to ex-hume the show and blame the actors.

I suggest that if Sedgewick be permitted to fill up a substantial portion of the Bardian in future, (a) sign his column and bear the responsibility for what he writes and (b) ipck on someone like Hitler to let out his spite. — Respectfully submitted,

Frank E. G. Weil.

Looking Around

by JIM WESTBROOK

It just does happen it seems that youth will be bald. College is bald, the world is bald and evidence of this was rather effectively displayed the night of the recent fraternity parties. We have it on good authority that in the shadow of the Gothic countenance of Stonerow sometime on Saturday evening there appeared enigmatically a young man in his underdrawers.

This columnist is fairly certain that he did not have a large audience. But audience there apparently was because the story trickled around campus until finally it reached the ears of the community council, whereupon the young man was called up and asked to explain himself. There was really not much that he could explain, and the details are not worth mentioning. The fact was he was not wearing any excess of clothing and any number of people could have seen him. The council informed him that if he was seen in this condition again drastic steps would be taken.

Now this is all well and good. It is not a commendable thing to have our neighbors from Ward Manor and Red Hook, our friends from Vassar and elsewhere, our various patrons going under the assumption that this is a place where students run amuck in their underdraws. But after all isn't the incident more comic than anything else? Is it not just another example of the natural clumsiness with which the human machine adjusts itself to societal living? This unfortunate gentleman's only mistake (and distinction) was that he happened to be out-of-doors. Else there would have been no controversy at all. Moreover it is reasonable to assume that even if there had been no censorship the thing would not happen again.

The student council is a worthwhile establishment. So far it has been run sensibly. And members have acted with an understanding of their environment. But God save us from the day when it becomes a police force. This college can fall into moral disorder through the flexibility of its regulations. It is the duty of the council to see that it does not. But a worse state of affairs would result if it assumed puritanical tenets. Every once in awhile it is good for us perhaps to let go, even if it entails parading our underwear. As long as it does not happen too often. I am rather inclined to think it is a healthy thing, we might term it healthy tallability.

Nine Times

A Poem

by

DICK RICHARDSON

"Heaven's a peaceful dream,
And Hell's a roaring waste;
But life, the in-between,
is a G-d---d stinking place."

So sang Nine Times, as he dangled his toes
In the Whirling River and thought of life
and death.

But of death and things he soon grew tired,
So he lifted his toes and set them on the
shore

To bake, and dreamily wondered if nine
times nine were twenty-four.

At last he smiled, for Nine knew that, of
all the times

He was wrong; that he would some day
find

By saying that nine times in one, two,
three, etc.,

That the glorious truth would out, come
ninety-three or four.

Now our friend was joined

By one Times One is One,

Who also sat and dipped his toes

In the Whirling River, then baked them
in the sun.

Now One Times One Is One,

A-baking and dipping so long,

Grew tired of the other's fun,

And to him sang this song:

"Heaven and Hell are states of
mind;

And nine times nine is eighty-one,
not seven;

But, because it's best (not to men-
tion rhyme),

Let's kick out Hell and make of
life a Heaven."

Then One Times One Is One

Was whirled away by the Whirling River;

And Nine Times said, "It looks like fun,

But, alas! it's awfully difficult to be help-
ful ---

It's much easier and I'd rather be just
cynical."

Thus Nine Times forgot that nine times
nine is eighty-one.

So, just for the hell of it and fun,

He says nine times nine is eighty-three,

And waits for God to serve him tea.

(1939.)

College Meetings

Speaking in the College Meeting last night, Dr. Jacques Barzum of Columbia took as a subject, "History — Poison or Antidote. The speaker chose a comparatively minor and rather dull aspect upon which he developed the major portion of his speech. A comparison between "unpopular history" such as that of current books, movies, romantic fairy tales about George Washington, and "unpopular history" or that written by scholars as the speaker said, "who some consider dry as dust" is all very well and good in the proper place, but as one might presume from the title, the whole subject of History, pro and con, was to be spoken on.

A more interesting point to specialize upon would have been the one that Dr. Barzum merely skipped over. That is the theory that History repeats itself or vice-versa according to individual opinion, or the desire to make the present resemble the past. An argument as to the relative merits and bad points would have been much more interesting, appropriate and compatible with the subject.

One did not come out of the lecture with any definite conclusions as to what the speaker had been aiming at or trying to put across to the audience.

* * *

"History, Poison or Antidote" was the subject of an excellent talk given by Mr. Jaques Barzun at the College Meeting of last Thursday night.

As for the technicalities, so to speak, of his presentation. His voice is soft and cultural, his manner mild and his presentation good.

The speech itself contained a point or two that could be contested. It is possible that Mr. Burzon over-simplified the situation, blaming much on the popular histories. He implied, and justly so perhaps, that popular histories — "the cherry tree myth," "The Lincoln legend," to name a few, were causes, in part, of our trouble today. Now, it is true that these stories are builders of intolerance, falsify the truth, and tend toward super nationalism. Yet, it is a question whether they are the effects of deeper forces — rather than the causes in themselves. No matter. These idle ramblings but serve to show that the man had much to say—and said it well.

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Bard — A Freshman's Eye View

by

RICHARD EELLS

"What's it going to be like?" I suppose every new man, before coming to college, asks himself this question. Usually for some months he looks forward in anticipation, expecting some things, hoping for others. In my own case, living and working at Bard was for a long time a vague, but pleasant, prospect. I recognized certain needs and held high hopes, formed ideas and set up ideals. These, so far, have been admirably fulfilled. So, there are a lot of things that have impressed me about Bard, most of them good, a very few bad.

Bard is a "college community" in the best sense of the term, a nearly independent unit providing its members with live, everyday practice in profitable social behavior. Many individuals, even those who are well educated, never really grow up. Their knowledge may be great, but unless they are capable of living and acting usefully in society, they are not completely developed. The usual liberal arts college cuts out a four year period from the individual's life, a period of comparative isolation from normal, everyday living. Efficient living must be learned later, by hard and painful experience. Bard, in contrast, although offering regular courses of formal study, provides more: a functioning community group in which each student plays a part, wherein he gains invaluable training in getting along with his fellows, in efficiency, in good citizenship.

How well this group idea has worked may be seen in the general feeling of equality, that absence of class distinction that impresses the new comer. Freshman or Senior, Model T or Cadillac—every individual soon feels himself an equal active member of the community. And this is a difficult task that Bard surmounts especially well: maintaining individuality, yet maintaining excellent results in cooperation and teamwork.

The value of the individualized teaching program as carried out at Bard has been expressed by many. To the new student, however, I believe there is a special advantage. During the critical first adjustment period, when everything is new and different, it is ideal to have the studies so well adapted to the individual. Elimination of the customary rigid requirements and strict specifications permits a slow student to move ahead understanding his work, doing it thoroughly. On the other hand, his more rapid classmate is not detained in progress by a slow group. For all, thorough study of new work is possible at a rate of speed fitted to the individual desire and ability. Progress too is greatly aided by the main idea of the Bard teaching program, as I see it. Leading and guidance are the vital ideas, not driving and flunking.

Of special delight to the new man, coming from the average home and the average high school, is the complete personal freedom existing here. He is treated as a sound-thinking, self-controlled adult, and appreciates the fact. The absence of constricting rules and regulations is enjoyed by everyone. The average Bardian, after settling down, is anxious by his own good actions to maintain this system.

These have been a few of the distinctive features which I regard as especially constructive for Bard men. There are many other valuable aids to a student's all around

efficiency: the winter field period and the concentrated practical experience which it affords; the excellent library system, immediately available for the solution of many a problem; the liveable and attractive rooms and dormitories. These are but a few.

It would be quite easy to call this a complete description of Bard. But this is an unbiased "ledger of impressions". There must be a "debit" side . . . nothing is perfect, Bard included. An idea of the loopholes, the conditions which may arouse displeasure, must also be given. It is not my purpose here, however, to indulge in minor details, this or that personal opinion, or the petty quibbling of so and so. Small things at Bard, things of this sort, are only temporary, or perhaps, biased opinion. At any rate, you can't please everyone; someone will always be dissatisfied. There is a comfortable feeling, however, that progress hasn't stopped, that improvements are still going ahead, weeding out little undesirables, adding helpful items.

Bard is a free place, free in thought, study, words, actions. And in this very freedom that it offers lies a possible weakness. The Bard system depends upon the individual, upon his growth and development, and eventual success. We allow great personal freedom which aids the average man in the development of a strong character, an appreciation of true good living. But of the necessity, at the same time we allow freedom to certain individuals weaker in self-discipline, men still in need of closer supervision than is at all practical here. Bard demands a certain type of student. A man who has matured sufficiently so that independent living will serve but to round out his abilities and character. Unfortunately, however, this is not always the case, with every student coming here. Cer-

(Continued on page 7)

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River Morning

A Short Story

by

DICK RICHARDSON

The searchlight of a sternwheeler sends its luminous ray out into the night and fog, groping for the markers that show the river depths. The light pauses for a second on the dark form of a skiff which is held, strained by the current, to a small willow tree that quivers at its work, as if it felt the damp, cold mist that accompanies the dawn. The light instantly shoots upward to the bank, picking out the dark, irregular object for which it is searching. The object moves, and the light skips forward along the bank, as if ashamed of letting its curiosity get the better of it.

A man on the shore, resting on one elbow, gazed after the steamer until the last, steady splashing of the paddle wheel could no longer be heard. Only then did he give vent to his feelings, and spit vigorously on the sand, murmuring something about "curiosity killing a cat."

The dawn light shone faintly through the mist that was soon to perish under the scorching rays of the morning sun.

As the sun rose over the horizon, the man, too, squirmed out of his blankets and got his breakfast. He was a fisherman who had started at a town in the north, perhaps St. Louis or Cairo, and was probably going as far down the river as Memphis, then hitch-hike his way north again.

"The jugging ain't been so hot this year. Maybe go clear to New Orleans. Might get a job on a big boat down there." His face brightened as he talked to himself. His hopes, however, were short-lived, for 'way down deep he knew that next year he'd be doing the same thing. He was a "river

rat," and his will couldn't change him.

"Augh! I couldn't stand one of them jobs, anyway."

"Gotta be my own boss."

He gulped the last swallow of his coffee down and in a comparatively short time had his few belongings in the skiff. He stood a moment gazing at the trees on the opposite bank, the sun glistening on the west leaves. Perhaps he was wondering at the beauty of the scene, but most likely just absently staring into space, thinking of the wild time he was going to have in New Madrid.

And so, the man departed, rowing for the channel and strong current.

Two pelicans ponderously slapped the water as they rose to fly northward, their shadows stretching out across the channel like some great serpent, even darker and duller than that muddy, muddy river.

THUS SPAKE SEDGEWICK

(Continued from page 2)

(d) What LIBRARY?

(5.) If asked to get a book out of the LIBRARY would you go to

- (a) Mrs. Isaacs?
- (b) Bard Hall?
- (c) Erwin Smith?
- (d) Who's Erwin Smith?

(6.) Of the following things that are not in the LIBRARY, which would you like to see there? (answer no more than five.)

- (a) Students.
- (b) Paulette Goddard.
- (c) Tippy Morrison.
- (d) Books.
- (e) John Bard.

MUDDLE OF THE WEEK: Art Stevens, discussing the C. A. A. course: (being offered for potential suicides): "When I'm flying up there, I can't decide whether it's lack of fear or paralysis."

BARD — A FRESHMAN'S EYE VIEW

(Continued from page 6)

tain individuals are not of the type to which Bard is suited, and I have found that almost invariably these were the students who did not especially like Bard. One who does fit, however, has a wonderful opportunity, a unique situation that is a helpful as formal studies in its development of the individual. That is, freedom of life in a community comparable to any other, a building of self-reliance and experience in real living.

I have tried to make this a comprehensive view of impressions of Bard. On looking over my ideas, I find them sadly one-sided . . . but in the best direction. If I were not a Bard booster, writing this column would not interest me; it would be a discouraged account. This is not the case. I am a firm believer in the values of Bard today. Moreover, in its position as pioneer on this new frontier of progressive liberalism in education, there lies great promise for the future. It is promise of better training, better preparation for happy, efficient lives, of educational advantages unsurpassed for the character-moulding of tomorrow's citizens.

ADDRESS BY PRES. BUTLER

(Continued from page 1)

organization of a free and liberal world that will have no down trodden people because of others selfish ambitions.

The students at Bard may well remember his words and his ideals as they are inoculated with that kind of liberal education which as prominent and distinguished a man as Dr. Butler believes will eventually form a better world to live in.

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