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America's Youth Movement.

AMERICA'S youth, and more particularly its college youth, have been the object of biting criticisms voiced by some of our more or less well known national minds during the past few months.

For the most part, we feel, they simply decry the absolute indifference of youth to the tremendous social changes that are taking place in this country today, and if we believe them, America's youth movement apparently is, at best, still in an embryonic stage.

William E. Berchtold's article "In Search of a Youth Movement," appearing in the June issue of the New Outlook, attempted to probe the fundamental causes for this seeming apathy of youth toward the frantic pleadings of the older generation to assume command of the idealism of the "new era."

It will be noted that Mr. Berchtold is a bit vitriolic in sizing up the average American college student. Perhaps they are all the things that he has to say about them. But an exception must be made at this stage of the game. Our college graduates, and undergraduates, are the victims of a social system in which they had no part in making. Unquestionably it is true that a youth movement in America, even in an embryonic stage, is being carefully hemmed in by rock ribbed conservatism.

Quite obviously, as the author points out, our youth movement must be directed by college graduates, but the real youth movement of the masses must come from the thousands of young men and women who receive only a high school education. Here, we feel, lies the integral part in the failure of realization of a youth movement.

But, for the most part, Mr. Berchtold's summation hits the nail on the head. We quote:

"America has never had a youth movement worthy of the name, unless we go back to the days of those youthful revolutionists who became tired of the tyranny of an old ruler of empire and brought the United States into being, only to surround it with every safeguard against any succeeding 'youth movements' of similar proportions.

"Can the United States expect the younger generation, as a homogeneous unit, to take an increasingly important part in our national political life? The commencement orators would have us believe that our national salvation lies along some such path, but each conjures up a vision of youth squarely behind his pet penance, whether it is labeled internationalism, nationalism, communism, capitalism, fascism or some other ism. There is a great deal to be said for the idea of placing youth in the saddle, but the elders who so glibly let pleas for a 'youth movement' slip through their beards may find that they are due to receive more than they had bargained for if youth takes their notions seriously.

"If the United States has the raw material for such a movement today it is to be found in the 3,000,000 young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25 who have neither jobs nor schools to occupy their time. Most of this raw material, however, must still be classed as that of rugged, although somewhat ragged, individualism. Their heads are still buzzing with the school-book tales of

great fortunes made by poor men in an America of unlimited opportunity. The fact that the frontiers of territorial and business expansion (where most of those fortunes were made) no longer exist has made little impression upon them. Such facts were not emphasized during the years they spent in school and they cling to the most brilliant pictures of this land of opportunity, waiting for a propitious moment to knock on the door which they feel certain will be opened unto them as it was to their fathers before them.

"Aside from the perennially active groups advocating communism or socialism, there are no signs of organizing the great mass of American youth who have been endowed with no more than an elementary or high school education. Politics, except for such mild, formalized discussions as may be a part of the high school curriculum in civics classes, has never occupied the attention of those youths who finish their education in high schools. Can the youth of the United States expect the students and alumni of its universities and colleges to furnish the leadership which anything approaching a national movement would command?

"Perhaps no youthful group in the world has been traditionally more apathetic to politics than the American college student. He has looked upon the study of government as the piling up of so many necessary units toward a degree and concludes, when he reaches voting age, that politics is a rotten business which can hardly be made to smell sweeter through his puny contributions of black crosses in white spaces on a cut-and-dried ballot.

"This all holds true only so long as the graduates of succeeding classes are absorbed into business and industry and are inspired by the sporting chance of reaching the seats of the mighty.

"Prolonged unemployment, such as the members of the last four graduating classes have experienced, is apt to change this traditional viewpoint of the college graduate. The tens of thousands who have failed to be absorbed by business and industry since 1929 appear on no roster of the unemployed for they have never been employed, nor are many of them on relief roles or in the ranks of the CCC.

"They have patiently bided their time waiting for the economic hurricane to subside, but as they wait they are beginning to wonder whether they are not the real 'lost generation.' Their rugged individualism is fraying a bit and they are watching the straws in the wind to learn from which quarter they may expect a leader whom they can follow, albeit without losing their individualistic composure should the hurricane suddenly subside and the sun shine again on the old laissez faire world. Can they find that leadership or outlet for expression which they seek in the organizations now active on college camps throughout the country?

"Anyone who will set out to search for the long-heralded youth movement in America, as I have, will be apt to conclude that there is none worthy of the name. If such a movement ever gains headway, it is not likely that university presidents, clergy, politicians, or commencement orators who advocated it will find it to their own liking. They would most likely be swept before it, horrified in the realization that the canned dogmas which they had dished out to the younger generation were not to be a part of youth's own plan.

The real answer to the question of the likelihood of a youth movement in America lies in the final appraisal of the new deal by the 3,000,000 young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25 now without jobs or opportunities for schooling. That appraisal is bound to be based on whether the new

deal offers them opportunities at least as good as those which the cult of rugged individualism offered their fathers before the frontiers of territorial and business expansion were closed."

Mr. Mencken On Education.

"In that fat and golden era (Coolidge golden age) the little schoolhouse of American tradition almost disappeared," writes H. L. Mencken in Liberty. "In place of it there arose in all the country towns vast consolidated schools that dwarfed every other local building. And in every such edifice there was a large hall for concerts, plays, pageants, debates, and speechmaking, and into it all the townspeople crowded once a week or so to hear the padagogs tell them how much the new education was doing for their children.

"In these new schools the three R's were pretty well abolished, and it was possible to reach almost the high school grades without knowing much about them. But in place of them there was a long list of new studies. The girls were taught how to make the dresses in Vogue, and to prepare seven-course dinners for ten people; and the boys were instructed thoroughly in scoutcraft, salesmanship and parliamentary law. Both devoted a great deal of time to learning just how to salute the flag, and both were well grounded in public speaking, American ideals, and artificial respiration.

"This catastrophe (the depression) paralyzed the padagogs and for a couple of years nothing was heard from them save moans. But with the coming of the new deal they began to take heart again, and ever since last summer they have been busy with plans to unload the public schools on the federal government. The chances seem to be good that they will never roll again in the catnip that made them leap and exult so handsomely in 1928. The schools will go on, of course, but running them on the scale of Hollywood is apparently out. The padagogs are, taking one with another, very foolish fellows, but nevertheless they are probably honest at bottom, and in the midst of all their bull roaring they have probably accomplished something valuable for the American public school, people, for civilization, and maybe even for God. When they began their dizzy rise in the world the schools were the sport of politicians, and teaching was anyone's job.

"The new pedagogy put an end to all that in most places. It tried to formulate reasonable standards for teachers, and to get rid of the drones and idiots. It tried to improve the curriculum so that the children would learn more than the bare three R's. It tried to make the schools more sanitary and more comfortable. It tried to displace the political superintendents with men who were really interested in pedagogy and eager to carry it on in the best possible manner. Above all, it tried to give teaching a new professional dignity and security, and to attract to it a new and superior class of young men and women.

"These objectives, in the main, were achieved. The public schools of the United States are actually much cleaner and more attractive today, both physically and spiritually, than they were when the New Pedagogy got on its legs. Unfortunately, the poor gogues, once they got going, didn't know where to stop. Having made the schools sanitary, they proceeded to make them palatial. Having provided

the teachers with professional self respect, they went on to convert them into uplifters and world savers. And having lifted pedagogy itself out of its own wallow and given it a certain intellectual respectability, they began turning it into a profound and complicated mystery and hocus pocus, full of highly dubious tricks and secrets, and incomprehensible to any rational man.

"We need the public schools, but there is no reason why they should be so intolerably expensive. They'd be much more valuable if they ceased being free cabarets and country clubs and went back to being schools. In the same way, the teachers would be happier if they could dispense with their laborious cramming for credit and degrees and be free to devote their whole time and energy to teaching. And even the master padagogs, I believe, would be safer, more useful, and more contented men if they could bring themselves to throw overboard all the bogus science which now crazes them, and stop making speeches for a while, and retire from pressure politics, and give themselves honestly and wholeheartedly to the great task of trying to give the children of the United States the maximum of education at the minimum cost."

—Lincoln Journal.

STUART NEITZEL ON ARCHEOLOGICAL TRIP Group Will Investigate Burial Mounds in Illinois.

Stuart Neitzel, Falls City, who just completed his course at the university has joined an archeological party from Chicago University. The group will spend the summer investigating burial mounds of an extinct race in southern Illinois.

While in the university Neitzel accomplished Prof. Bell of the archeological department on several summer trips into various parts of the state. He was also business manager of the Prairie Schooner during his undergraduate life.

DR. BILLING GIVES SECOND GROUP OF SCIENCE TALKS

(Continued from Page 1.)

Sturdy which are appropriate for Junior High Levels and which integrate this work and the Science of Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Two special lectures are to be given during the week, the time and place of which will be given in Thursday's Nebraskan. The first will be on the subject "The Place of Science in the Public School Program" and the second will be on "The Responsibility of Teachers and Supervisors in the Development of a Science Program." Open group conferences will follow each class period and special group or individual conferences may be arranged by appointment. A general conference on science problems at elementary and junior high levels is also scheduled each day at 11 o'clock in T. C. 323.

Dr. Billig, who is a member of the National Council of Supervisors of Elementary Science and other professional groups, has been active in research for the development of science materials which are appropriate at the various elementary, junior and senior levels.

The first group of lectures for science teachers was given last week by Dr. Wilbur L. Beauchamp, assistant professor of Education in the University of Chicago. Dr. Beauchamp, who has been prominent in the educational field for many years, devoted most of his lectures to the Unit Method of teaching sciences.

Views and Reviews

BY CLARK C. BRADLEY.

Summer—that period during which we plan to do all the things we didn't find time to do during the rest of the year—may provide an opportunity for a little reading, and it is certain that we want what time we do spend at this to be well spent.

It is taken for granted that no one—at least not university students—read merely for the sake of reading. Consequently, intelligent and careful selection of reading material is to be expected, and we believe that this can best be done by basing our selection on the comments and opinions of unbiased critics.

Magazines will no doubt comprise a part of the reading done on the campus this summer, and with the large number of publications available considerable caution is needed if one is to avoid spending his valuable time wading thru material really unworthy of his attention.

In this field a blanket rule can be made to apply in almost all instances, and that is—stick close to the literary field with the exception of Esquire and possibly a few technical magazines. The reason for this is simply that popular magazine editors do not edit for the university reader, but because of their wide circulation are forced to observe numerous restrictions regarding style and content.

The quality of the news-magazines has increased remarkably within the last few years; so much so, in fact, that they afford one of the most authoritative sources of information about the many important events that are occurring these days.

It has been said that books that make one think are better for the reader than those that merely force particular facts upon him. This column is much in accord with such an opinion. Didactical writing is far less effective over a long period of time, than that type of composition that stimulates the development of the reader's own idea.

H. L. Mencken's latest book, "Treatise on Right and Wrong," is certainly a book of the latter sort. You may not agree with the theories the former editor of "American Mercury" presents in this work, but you will agree after having read it that the caustic critic of the American scene has made you think. Furthermore, if you aren't entirely disinterested in this thing we call "Life," you'll find the tome very absorbing reading.

No doubt many have postponed reading Hervey Allen's "Anthony Adverse" until the summer months, and in many cases it has probably been a wise thing. Considerable time is needed to appreciate this bulky work, but it is by no means an impossible task, and it is certainly worth the effort. Further comment or explanation about this book is, of course, needless.

Those who are not familiar with the University of Nebraska's own literary publication, "Prairie Schooner," should look forward to the appearance of the summer issue, which will be out in the near future. Nationally recognized in the literary field, this magazine presents the work of many Nebraska writers as well as others from this part of the country. O'Brien's latest collection of short stories contains high praise for the magazine, which is edited by Prof. L. C. Wimberly.

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