

Editorial

Comment

Bulletin

Many are muddled over...

School fund investigation

By a unanimous vote of 36 to 0 the legislature Monday endorsed a resolution by Senator Dan Garber to investigate the status of Nebraska's \$14,000,000 permanent school funds, which are controlled by the Board of Educational Land and Funds.

Coming like a bolt in the dark, the action of the legislature has brought to the minds of many ideas of graft and of misappropriation of funds. And with no thorough explanation of exactly what the investigation involves, many have the erroneous conception that the university and the normal schools have been placed under scrutiny.

Toward a better understanding of these funds and of the purpose of the investigation, it is essential to point out the history of Nebraska's land grant, and the immediate difficulties that have brought on Garber's investigation.

When Nebraska became a state its government was allotted several sections of land in each township, totaling in all 3,500,000 acres for the support of education. In the course of years much of this land has been sold, and the receipts from the sales have been converted into bonds.

Today a total of \$14,000,000 in cash and bonds and 1,600,000 acres of land remains, all of which is under the control of a board composed of the governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, and state superintendent of public instruction.

Through poor investment of this money sizable losses

have occurred on several occasions in the past. From 1890 to 1900, some \$500,000 was lost in this manner and through a scandal which involved several important figures in the state. Again in 1931-33, carelessness resulted in serious financial loss. In both instances more systematic control of the funds by the legislature could possibly have averted the disasters.

Once again problems of investment and of administration of this fund have arisen. Large holdings of irrigation district bonds on the North Platte river, and of Whitney irrigation district bonds which are apparently worthless, have brought cries of mismanagement from all sides. And there is danger that the land grant of this state will suffer another drop.

Thus Senator Garber, and members of the legislative council, have called for an investigation, to find what legislation is necessary to protect these investments, and to make up the losses incurred through power district holdings. The university is concerned in the matter only to the extent that it is a leading party wishing the protection of these funds, which pay to the various educational institutions in the state approximately \$1,000,000 a year.

Of course it is possible that in the investigation responsibility for mismanagement may be pinned upon certain individuals. That however is a minor point. Whatever the charges, whatever revelations are made by the committee we can be assured that funds supporting this university will be guarded more closely in the future.

biguous, and prejudiced (see Time, March 3; p. 39) and I believe the professor's job is to interpret, elaborate upon, or even contradict the author's views. This should be a more rational means of diffusing the broadening effect a college education is said to have.

It might be that our professors are not themselves opposed to these methods, since a half-hour spent in giving a test must be much less work than a half hour spent in lecturing. But is it possible that they (too) could be lazy?

I am not an educator, and have no complete solution to offer. I only believe in fewer, and perhaps more difficult examinations and more time allotted to lectures.

Sincerely,
A Reader.

Necessary evils perhaps

This is an educational institution. And its main function will always be the stimulation of thinking. Any man who feels his classes are means to secure grades rather than to secure knowledge doesn't belong in this school.

Too many tests of course reduce the amount of instruction possible through lectures. But if the standards of this school are to be kept high, and if students are to be encouraged to do work on their own initiative, perhaps these tests are necessary.

Snap courses after all aren't courses where nothing is to be learned. Some of the most comprehensive subjects are given the "snap" title. The term applies rather to courses where there are no exams or outside work to compel the student to keep up with the class.

As to the amount of time a professor must spend in examinations and class discussions, it is hard to say. Certainly if a fair examination is given, considerable time must be given to compiling the questions, and in looking over the papers after the reader returns them. The students themselves are to blame. If the class as a whole would score high in the examinations they would not be necessary. It is probably true they are an evil; but they are a necessary evil, resulting from the delinquency of the few.

Editor.

Words, methods used by news analysts unfortunate

Dear Editor:

The words and the method that Messrs. Ordal and Olson have employed in an attempt to refute the arguments presented by Mr. Shields in his letter of March 6 have intrigued me. Even agreement with many of their basic tenets does not preclude objection to the unfortunate method of presentation which they have adopted in their attempt to clarify "the issues for such people as do not have the historical knowledge necessary to indict his (Mr. Shields') culminations for the clap trap that they are."

It is well known that color may be lent to poor argumentation by the judicious use of the mantle of self-righteousness and that—when needed—the appearance of impregnability may also be acquired in this manner.

When those who are unable to advance factual truths in support of their beliefs employ obloquy, they are justly subjected to general condemnation. But, curiously, when

the same tactic is used in addition to a few factual arguments, the finished work is occasionally received with acclamation.

Generically, these are debaters' tricks. They cannot be reconciled with dispassionate discussion, with the doubt of the reasonable man. They are incompatible with all but the mask of impartiality.

Joseph R. Slevin.

Daily ode on mall has definite odor too

Dear Editor:

I find it difficult to perceive any difference between the odor of the Mall and the odor of the "Ode" in your Friday, March 7, issue.

As an undergraduate, I claim to be neither a psychoanalyst nor a literary critic. Nevertheless, I am wondering about Mr. Abbott's state of mind although I am not undecided about his poetical attainment. I find his creation comparable to the prattle of children who have intense imagination but immature judgment.

The worst offense of all was the including and mutilating of a stanza from "The Arrow and the Song" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

If this jumble of words is representative of the best wit of the University of Nebraska, I can only deplore that Mr. Abbott was ever inspired.

Very truly yours,
Shirley Ann Miller.

Meanderings on the Mall

Open letter to my public (both of 'em)

Dear Public:

When I embarked upon the sea of words (oh treacherous sea), I entertained the hope that those words could be made to flow into individual little streams of beautiful poetry, and did they?

I knew not (at the time) what a huge reading audience I would have (both of 'em). Of all the touching phrases gathered from the mails addressed to me, these two were the most fitting, me thinks; "why don't you go over and lie in the mall?" and "just wondering about Mr. Abbott's state of mind." (Strange it seems that a reader of mine would call me, a beardless boy, "Mr.")

At any rate, dear public, today I write my mall poem finale, dedicated to both of you. The mall, it seems, should be meandered around and not meandered upon, and since my poetry was so well received, I have devoted several seconds to dashing of Part Two of the "Ode to that which stinketh—the nose knows." Hereafter, the subject of my poetry shall not be the mall.

Part Two

Oh treeless mall, thou barren plain,
I once more write of thee;
For without trees, or brush, or rain,
Thou must still barren be.
I think that there will never be,
Upon thy soil a single tree;
But poems are ruined by fools like me.
And still, oh mall, must I write of thee?
Minnesota has her Knoll,
And there, 'tis said, the students stroll;
You'll find coeds at L. S. U.,
Walking by the old Bayou;
But if my earthly life would be
A life of happiness, you see,
I should meander spring and fall,
But goodness,—on the mall?
And so with tears within the eye,
With a sorrowful gasp, yea, a sigh,
I drop my quill, no more to pen
The poems—for I write—and then—
Comes the arrival of paper and ink
—Spilled in words that shout, "You Stink,"
So does the mall, my readers few,
So now to you I bid a fond "adieu."

Commentorials

... from our readers

Too many exams make courses stiff, prevent adequate lectures

Dear Editor:

This is an open letter to our astute professors, and to the powers that be which control the academic policies of this university.

In the past few years most of us have noticed the disappearance of the old time snap courses, and the gradual tightening up of the remainder. As when all changes are made, mistakes are likely to happen, and, I believe, we have developed a good-sized "bottleneck" of our own. This appears to me in the form of the growing frequency of examinations in most of our courses.

My "research" is quite inexhaustive, but from my personal contacts I have discovered that many others have noticed this change, and that the majority of them dislike it, at least in the way it is now being made. I sincerely hope I am not rationalizing, as is extremely easy in this case, but it seems to me only logical that he should explain his subject, rather than test his students once or twice a week upon unadulterated "book-learning."

The ordinary text book is notoriously incomplete, am-

Beneath the Golden Dome

by Art Rivin

An encouraging note for those who are in favor of reduced state expenditures but not at the price of ruining state institutions was sounded Monday by appropriations committee chairman, John S. Callan.

The occasion was the education committee hearing on a bill empowering school boards to establish sinking funds by levying taxes above needs in some years so that when school buildings become in need of repair there will be money with which to do the job.

Mr. O'Hara, representing the Nebraska Taxpayers' Association, objected to the bill "on principle." He took advantage of the opportunity to condemn any measure which would result in increased indebtedness for any state agency and to ask that the state stop spending money.

After the lobbyist's rebuttal Senator Callan protested strongly against organizations which continually advocate reduced expenditures and reduced taxation, forgetting the needs of the state and never offering anything constructive in the way of a revised taxation system.

He pointed out that the capitol building roof is leaking in many places and asked if it would be wise "to let the building crumble because the state is in debt rather than to appropriate money to repair it." "Letting our institutions deteriorate to the sinking point is certainly false economy," he said.

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Editor: Clyde Marts
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