

The Daily Nebraskan

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THURSDAY, MAY 27, 1915

THE CORNELL CONFERENCE

We are publishing in today's issue full particulars of the conference of University students to make a scientific study of international affairs, which is to be held at Ithaca, New York, in June. This will be the first great meeting of students to consider these big problems which the world is at present so vitally interested in. The World Peace Foundation have inaugurated a great movement in their attempt to interest the college men of the nation in a study of war, its causes and its solution. This movement should develop a large class of intelligent men in this country who in times of international crisis will be able to act carefully and deliberately and who will be able to direct public opinion along intelligent lines.

The World Polity Club recently organized here is one of the student clubs affiliated with the World Peace Foundation. It is likely that one or two of the student members will be sent as delegates to the conference. The movement is worthy of support and should mean a material strengthening of the level headed forces that are necessary to shape the policy of our nation in peace and in war.

A WIDER VISION

A University training does anything for an individual should widen his mental horizon, to the extent that he can be charitable of the other fellow's viewpoint. It would seem that as we receive new ideas and broaden the scope of our knowledge that we would have a greater respect for other people's ideas and opinions. However, we may disagree with them, we ought to realize that they may have good grounds for their beliefs and that they are as sincere in those beliefs as we are in ours.

The same thing is true with regard to our different lines of work. There are some individuals in the University that think their department or school is the only one worthy of consideration and that anyone who is taking other work is simply wasting his time. There have been professors who evidently believed that their subjects were the only ones that had any real value. There are students that are so narrow that they speak scornfully of certain work that other students are doing. There are University people who have such narrow religious and political ideals that they eagerly denounce anyone who differs with them.

In the name of Education we should seek the truth and be willing to recognize it when we find it. We are all working toward that end whether we recognize it or not. And the significant thing about the matter is that no one has yet discovered the whole truth. It may be that some other fellow has the very thing we are

searching for so why too ready to denounce his ideas. If University men and women are uncharitable how can they expect others to be so?

THE FORUM

I sincerely appreciate any correction and criticism Dr. Jones may have of my awkward amateur efforts in rhetoric which may not appear in good form.

But to the other matter which is called "libel." That is a small word with various degrees of rigidity included in its definition, the penalty for which, in civil cases, depending on the truth or falsity of the representation. But the justice or injustice of the representation in this case is not brought into question so that that element is irrelevant and may be waived for present purposes.

If what I wrote offends someone, I make no apology, is someone feels insulted I do not retract my statements. I simply state I did not and do not have any personal malice.

Let "libel" be defined as it may. If, in the progress of civilization and growth of righteousness, Mayor Dahlgren should be removed from office in Omaha, can it be done without bringing to the attention of the thinking and conscientious public, some of the dark deeds alleged and often frankly admitted in that city government. Should he not be offended, could he not well consider himself insulted. If such supposed action be called "libel" and subject to penalty of the law, it seems a slender hope that city has for any dreamed of reformation.

We do not, surely, hold the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe in contempt and wish that she might have been sentenced for libel because she wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin," depicting Negro life in the South with such verity that the slaveholder and his trade were held in unfavorable light and he was deprived of his human property.

I do not in the least object to the utter obscurity to which the professor would consign me for service is the basis of true greatness and voluminous recognition is not necessary for the development of any measure of noble nature one may possess.

J. B. WATSON.

Editor Daily Nebraskan:

I shall not attempt to write a volume to say something, more or less, but it seems decidedly inconsistent for a cadet officer to rule out the remarks of a private on the ground that the remarks are liable to be prejudiced. Mr. J. Lloyd McMaster admits that he is fairly in love with military training. Let him not forget that, "Love is blind," whatever may be said about the prejudice a person may have against an institution.

Mr. J. Lloyd McMaster dwells at length on the physical benefit derived from military training. I should like to ask him this question: If military training is of so much physical benefit, why is Germany not able to compete with America in the olympics? Germany has been straining herself to make a respectable showing with America in the last few meets, but has not succeeded. If I am not much mistaken, the German government itself has been behind the movement. There may be other causes, I grant, that may have had some effect. Yet if there is anything to Mr. J. Lloyd McMaster's contention, the effects should be apparent to some degree at least; Germany should at least do better than she has; in fact, she ought to do almost as good as the United States.

We would also like to hear of some of the "good effects" of war. It was our idea, after listening to so many anti-German propagandists, that Von Bernhardi had a monopoly on this kind of literature.

ANTON H. JENSEN.

To the Editor of the Nebraskan:

If Mr. Jensen will turn to the first sentence of the letter under discussion, he will find an epithet which I am sure he will pronounce offensive and unpardonable. As an example of libel in the same letter, I will call his attention to the irresponsible accusation that the officers of our University battalion have obtained their promotion through favoritism rather than merit.

I am well aware that the phrase "freedom of the press" is one to conjure with. Nevertheless, I venture to suggest that the importance of unbridled editorial or private comment (as distinct from untainted news), has been greatly overestimated. After all, talk is cheap, and nothing much comes of it. For my part, I am so weary unto death of the torrents of sentimental gush from the pens of H. G. Wells and other irresponsible idealists that I sometimes could find it in my heart to wish that the Germans would conquer them after all.

After their hot-house atmosphere, the following sensible words from an English historian, summing up the whole matter, comes as a breath of fresh air.

"Empires are won and governed not by talk but by action. This, I think, is a thing that we should all do well to remember from time to time. Exaggerated esteem for our Parliamentary institutions has led us to attach too much importance to speeches. Their original purpose was to persuade men to a common course of action; but they have never been very efficacious, and in this country have long been superseded by political organization or, in plain English, wire-pulling. People have a strange notion that, without much chatter, there can be no liberty. But liberty (whatever liberty may be, is a small thing to a nation compared with discipline; and in fact liberty of any kind is impossible without discipline. If I am to judge of a nation it is useless to tell me of its political institutions, for the best of them will work badly and the worst of them well according to the honesty of the men whose business it is to apply them. Let me know what is the state of its discipline, parental, social, national, and with what spirit that discipline is borne. Let me know what are its military institutions, and how far they are supported or ignored; whether the citizens come forward with cheerfulness to fulfill a national duty, or whether they are reckless, self-indulgent shirkers who try to impose on a few the service that is common to all, and take refuge in cant to disguise their cowardice. Then I will tell you without reading a single speech whether the nation is sound at heart or rotten."

The state of discipline, parental, social, national, and the spirit in which that discipline is borne, this—not oceans of irresponsible talk—is the test of national character.

Yours very truly,  
GUERNSEY JONES.

May 26, 1915.

To the Editor of Daily Nebraskan:

I was very much amused by the letter from Mr. Jones in a recent edition of your paper and since that time have often wondered if he really was in earnest about his libel suit. The writer of the article he so unably failed to criticize expresses the sentiment of a large number of us unfortunately who are compelled to paddle up and down Twelfth street these rainy days.

If drill was not compulsory only those fortunate or unfortunate enough to have commissions would assemble at the east end of the Aromy every night at the hour of five. Perhaps Mr. Jones would say that the average university student is not capable of deciding what is and what is not good for himself. If a student in the Sophomore class does not know enough to be satisfied that drill is doing him no

good, and if he has to force himself to attend every afternoon, something has been decidedly lacking in his previous education.

The only argument in favor of military training at the University of Nebraska seems to lie in the fact that the other students have such a feeling of security when under the direct protection of Colonel Fowler and his regiment of finely equipped beardless youths. The girl students especially may retire to rest feeling perfectly sure that on their awakening they will

still be enrolled in Life's directory.

Indeed the whole situation now existing is a farce and one which will soon be changed,—if not by the authorities, then by the unfortunates who are forced to go this routine of foolishness. This afternoon the appointments will be made for the coming year. It would be rare indeed to find one student who was refused a promotion drilling next year. If drill is such a good thing, why should not the students as they grow older realize the fact.

K. F.

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