

Horse and Buggy Education

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of two editorials on education and teaching methods by Paul Keller, junior student in the college of engineering.)

A sage once said that at college, we learn less and less about more and more until finally, when we know nothing about everything, we graduate. This may be a rather severe criticism of our present educational system, but it is generally admitted, even among prominent educators, that our present methods of education are grossly inadequate for the job that they have to do. It requires very little foresight on the part of anyone to see that if the present teaching methods continue in existence, in the light of recent scientific and technological advances, our children will have to go to school half of their lives in order to make a decent living for the rest of it.

This resentment against inadequate teaching methods is being expressed most forcibly by returning veterans. Former lieutenant Gaynor Pearson of the USNR made this typical comment in a national educational periodical. "The veteran returning to school discloses distrust and criticism of authority and unyielding dogmatism. He is an outspoken critic of outmoded lecture notes, antiquated teaching methods, and time consuming curricula".

This outspoken criticism and resentment is causing many a sleepless night for our "Hoosier schoolmasters". It is fostered by two forces. First, the veteran is not a pink-cheeked juvenile who looks on all professors as God's own little chickens. He is a mature person whose sense of value is keen, sharpened by having seen more of life in a few years than many see in a life time.

Secondly, most veterans have been exposed in some way or another to the best type of education available. I refer to the many G. I. training courses, particularly in the technical branches. The most scientific methods of teaching, including visual and audio aids, were combined to teach the most men in the least time. All non-essential time-consuming material was eliminated.

These teaching methods have been condemned by many educators. They are right in many respects. It is not a panacea. J. D. Messick, dean of instruction. Montclair Teachers College, has said, "Regardless of the criticisms that can be made of the service educational program, it has impressed the public with the necessity for many changes." Many of our dyed-in-the-wool educators have criticized it on the basis of its speed. "You can't cram ideas into the human mind at that rate!" they cried, "All minds cannot accept them".

How perfectly true they are. You can't cram ideas into all minds at that rate. Why, then, must our entire educational system from primary to Ph.D. be bogged down so that a few dullards can keep up with the most brilliant minds in the class? Not until a student reaches a graduate status is his mind really allowed to develop at its own speed. The University of Chicago's plan which allows students to advance by examinations alone is a step in the right direction. However, in those courses which the brilliant student must take, he is still hamstrung by lesser minds.

Examine your own classes. Isn't it true that most of your classes are taught in about the same manner that classes were taught 50 years ago? It is the same old dull routine of lectures, notes, assigned reading and tests. Admittedly, some classes can not be taught in any other manner and a few courses make use of visual and audioaids to some extent, but, in most courses you sit in a class room while some professor lectures, often in a half-whisper, on a subject, elementary to him and, consequently, boring. The result is that if you stayed awake and if you sat in the first two rows (A thru D) you might have a general idea of what the subject is about. Your only other chance to learn anything about the subject is to go home and read an impersonal book (Chapt. 6, sections 1 to 7) and hope that the author had not left out the minor points which will help you to realize the important points.

Possibly one reason why such a situation exists is expressed by Cyril F. Richards, the Dean of Dennison University, when he said: "He (the college professor) frequently embarks upon his career on the basis of his knowledge of his subject as demonstrated by his graduate work, or general reputation in his field. It is too often the case that college teachers receive little or no instructions in the arts of education".

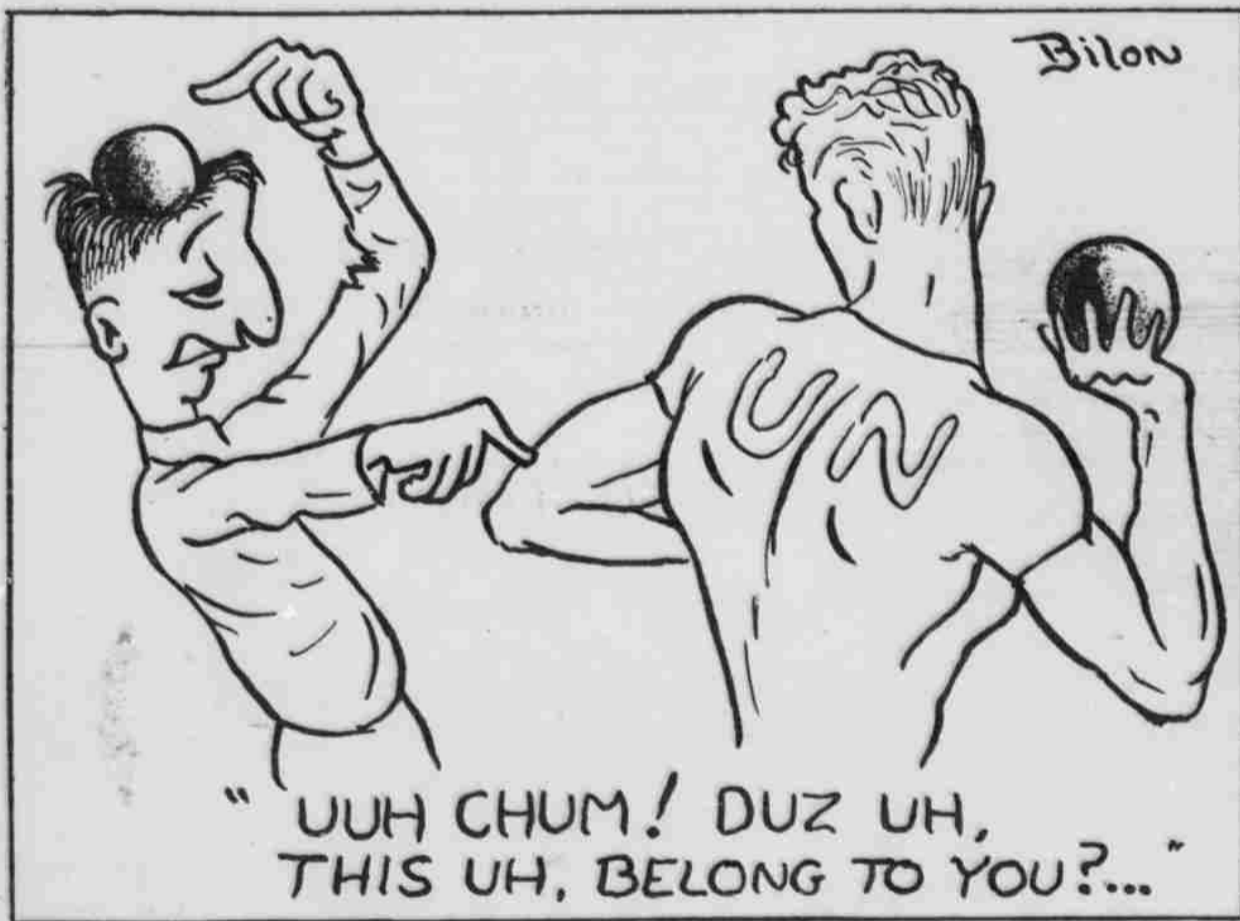
I think all of us students will admit that most of our professors are brilliant economists, linguists, medics, mathematicians, or engineers. On the other hand, how many of us will admit that most of them are even good educators? Some of them are, fortunately.

I doubt if Mr. Richards' above reference to the 'arts of education' referred to present educational methods as taught in our normal schools and colleges. One graduate student now serving as an instructor, upon seeing the above quotation, exclaimed! "Cripes, don't tell me you think every instructor should take 20 hours of education."

I certainly do not! Teaching methods as taught today are as antiquated and outmoded as the bustle. In our own library the card index shows the most of the references listed under education were copyrighted around the turn of the century, a surprising number before. Out of several hundred listed, only a baker's dozen were written after 1930. Yet many great improvements have taken place within the last ten years.

A few improvements have managed to creep into teaching, yet that old stigma "human inertia" or resistance to change is constantly opposing these new methods. Only grudgingly is their adoption permitted and then only under pressure of public opinion. The reluctant educator will admit that new teaching methods "have some value" but various excuses such as insufficient funds, further training of teachers (often as much as 30 minutes to teach them to run a motion picture machine) and other equally lame attempts to disguise their own dogmatism.

P. K.



Block-Bridle Club to Honor Col. Thompson

The contributions of Col. Art Thompson of Lincoln to the livestock industry, not only in Nebraska but the nation, will be told tonight when he is honored at the annual Block and Bridle Honor's Banquet in the Student Union ballroom at 6:30 p. m.

Willard Visek, president of the club, will preside. Short talks are scheduled to be given by S. R. McKelvie of Valentine, Don Casement of Manhattan, Kas., Ross Miller of Lincoln, John T. Caine, III, of Denver. Col. Thompson will respond.

Calvin Dahlke, vice-president of Block and Bridle, will present a

portrait of Col. Thompson to Prof. William J. Loeffel, chairman of the animal husbandry department. It will later hang in the honor gallery in the Animal Husbandry Building at Ag Campus.

MOTHER'S DAY CARDS

A grand selection for your approval

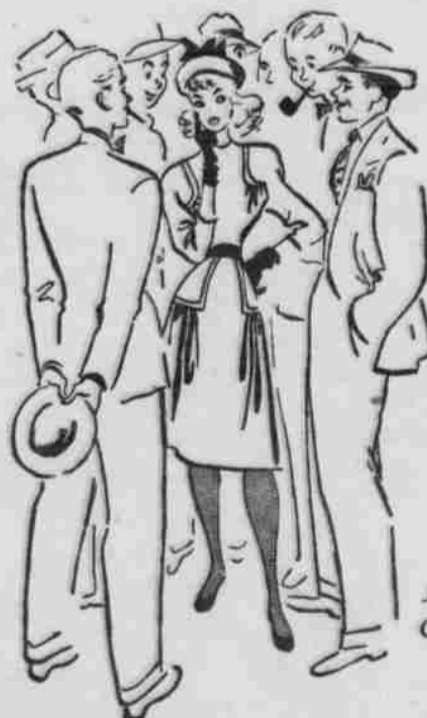
Goldenrod Stationery Store
215 North 14th St.

Let Mrs. Harding help you with your teacher placement questions.

Cornhusker Teachers' Bureau
Trust Bldg. 10th & O Sts.
Personal service. Mrs. W. C. Harding

MILLER & PAINE

Hosiery Section—First Floor



Nifty Nora

A sweet Senior-ita is Nora.
Of charm she exudes such an aura.
From Maine to the Coast
She's the college man's toast.
To dizzying heights she will soar-ah!

HER FAVORITE HOSIERY IS

'As You Like It'

Daily Nebraskan

Member

Intercollegiate Press

FORTY-FIFTH YEAR

Subscription rates are \$1.50 per semester, \$3.00 per semester mailed, or \$2.00 for the college year, \$3.00 mailed. Single copy 5c. Published daily during the school year except Mondays and Saturdays, vacations and examination periods, by the students of the University of Nebraska under the supervision of the Publication Board. Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post Office in Lincoln, Nebraska, under Act of Congress, March 3, 1879, and at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, act of October 2, 1917, authorized September 30, 1922.

Ag Union Begins Advanced Dancing Classes Tonight

Ag Union will sponsor a series of advanced dancing classes beginning tonight at 7:30 p. m. according to Mrs. Richard Hiatt, Union director.

Miss Donna McCandless will instruct the series of five classes which will include advanced steps of the rumba, samba and tango.

Johnny Cox and his orchestra will furnish music for a dance in the Ag Union ballroom Friday, April 25, from 9 to 12 p. m. Tickets are priced at 44 cents per person.

Hot Hamburgers WITH POTATO CHIPS

DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR FROM 7:00 P. M. TO 12:00 P. M.

BILL MERIDITH'S CAFE
Just Phone 2-4470

ANNOUNCEMENT DEADLINE

FRIDAY, APRIL 25th

Seniors—order your official graduation announcements today

NEBRASKA BOOK STORE

1135 R

Lincoln