

COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS

March 6, 1943

THE LIBERAL ARTS

A student reared on deficient spiritual and intellectual diet is an easy prey for proponents of the totalitarian view. If his skills only are developed and his mind filled only with technical information, he will know nothing of man's emotional history or his practical experience as a gregarious animal. Not realizing the profound truth of Pascal's saying that human nature is both the glory and the scandal of the universe, he will tend to the extremes of blind utopianism or bitter cynicism. His development as a free man is crippled.

The ideal educational process should include at each level of maturity some continuing contact with those problems of human nature and human destiny which man has assembled under the headings of literature, history, and philosophy. The student in high school, in college, and in graduate school should be concerned, in part at least, with the words "right" and "wrong" in both the ethical and mathematical sense.

Unless he feels the importance of those general ideas which have been a deep-moving force in the lives of men, he runs the risk of partial blindness. Unless he has been concerned with evaluating human thoughts and actions, he will not understand the essential dignity of man. He will, therefore, fail in his comprehensions of the real basis of American democracy; he does not understand the cause for which we fight.

--President James Conant
Harvard University

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HERE IT IS AGAIN

Yes, it's time for the mid-semester grades. Please have them in the office, if possible, on Thursday, March 11, and not later than Friday, March 12. Please remember that green cards should be used for the mid-semester reports of Freshmen and Sophomores and white cards for all others. Thank you.

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NO MARCH FACULTY MEETING

We will not hold our usual monthly meeting in March.

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PROFESSORS A AND B

Professor A is prompt and efficient in his dealings with the College Office. His class cards are sent in when they are due, excessive absences are recorded and reported as they should be, his mid-semester reports are in the office a day early, withdrawal cards are signed and returned the day he receives them, and the grade on his final grade sheet agrees with the grade he reported on the withdrawal card. Being human, he once in a great while may overlook some detail, but the word "business-like" comes to mind every time we think of him.

Professor B is tardy and inefficient in most of his dealings with this office. His class cards, due at the end of the second week, are still safe in his possession, and they probably won't be sent in till we call him up and ask for them. Excessive absences are either not reported at all, or are reported several weeks too late to allow us to do anything constructive with the student. Mid-semester reports are usually a day to a week late. The first withdrawal cards lie around his desk till they are lost, so duplicates and even triplicates must be sent him, and the record of withdrawals is often not recorded in his grade book. Being human, he once in a while looks after one of these matters promptly, but the word "unbusiness-like" comes to mind every time we think of him.

They seem so different--these Professors A and B. And they make us wonder. We wonder if they are just as different in planning their courses, in their daily preparation, in their class presentation, in their checking of each student's work, in their entire job as teachers. We wonder if their students, too, see these differences, and if they, like us, don't often wonder about the relative efficiency of Professors A and B.

A stinging nettle stings when touched lightly, but it doesn't hurt when grasped firmly. Professor A grasps these nettling business details firmly, decides them, gets them off his desk and then off his mind. Professor B lets them lie around his desk indefinitely, accidentally keeps touching them lightly--and keeps getting stung. He seems to enjoy their continued tingling. Funny chap, he.

P.S. In spite of the above, Professor B is a most interesting man who helps to make a cracking good faculty.