Commonwealth College
FORTNIGHTLY
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NEIGHBORS GUESTS OF COMMONWEALTH CHRISTMAS EVE

One hundred and fifty children and parents, including most of Commonwealth's neighbors for miles about, were the guests of the school on Christmas eve. Commonwealth students presented an entertainment, which consisted largely of musical numbers.

Instrumental music, Christmas songs, and folk dances were on the program. The neighbors found the numbers novel and stimulating, particularly an aesthetic dance by Commonwealth girls, to which they gave their closest attention. At the close of the program the Christmas tree was lighted and sweetmeats were distributed to the children.

FARM-LABOR APPOINTS COMMITTEE

The Farm-Labor Union of America, at its national convention held in Texarkana, Tex.-Ark., December 10 to 12, authorized the appointment of a committee to investigate Commonwealth College as to its usefulness to the farmer-labor movement and to report to the next convention.

Covington Hall, instructor in labor problems, represented Commonwealth at the meet. He says the Union is the most powerful working farmer organization in the south.

HEDGES OF ELECTRICIANS SENDS BOOKS AND GREETINGS TO COMMONWEALTH

Commonwealth College acknowledges with thanks a gift to its library of twenty-one books from M. H. Hedges, director of the Speakers Service Bureau, which is attached to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The staff of the bureau exceptionally worth while and welcomes them among them much needed volumes on labor and social problems, public speaking, literature, and journalism.

Mr. Hedges makes the following kind remarks about Commonwealth's work:

This bureau is affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and it fell to my lot to read your interesting description of the life at Commonwealth College being published in the January number of the Electrical Workers Journal. I was deeply moved by it. I did not know that that kind of enthusiasm for education existed anywhere in the United States. I had
been a teacher in American colleges long enough to know the desire for luxury and leisure quickly abrogates a passion for plain living and high thinking.

I wanted to express my appreciation therefore at once to you people at Commonwealth College. I went through my library and found some books that I could well spare and which I am sending you today with my best wishes to Commonwealth College. I am enclosing also a brief course as a gift from the Speakers' Service Bureau.

COMMONWEALTH INSTRUCTOR DISCUSSES HISTORY WITH ARKANSAS CLUB

At the invitation of the Community Club of Old Potter, Arkansas, W. C. Benton, instructor in history and law, gave a popular lecture on American history recently.

Besides talking on various historical subjects, Mr. Benton discussed changing methods of teaching history. "The history that I studied thirty years ago", he said, "could, with a large measure of truth, be said to consist of the biographies of great men, the dates of discoveries, battles, elections, etc., but historians nowadays are paying much more attention to the conditions which caused these things to happen."

WHAT IS RELIGION? ARE WORKERS FIT TO SURVIVE? FORUM SPEAKERS ASK

Discussion shifted from economic to religious and moral topics at the latest Sunday evening meetings of the Commonwealth open forum. On December 13 Margaret Coy, instructor in pedagogy and English, spoke on "New Heresies in Religion". Harold Coy, teacher of journalism and English, followed the next Sunday with a talk on "Nietzsche and the Working Class".

A modernist, a social prophet, a psychologist, a novelist, and a philosopher were examined on their religious views by Mrs. Coy. Harry Emerson Fosdick sees in religion, constantly revitalized an essential need of man. H. G. Wells looks forward to a world in which man will bestir himself instead of invoking the gods. Havelock Ellis believes that religion is that which satisfies man's emotional needs as bread does his economic ones. To Theodore Dreiser religion is an escape from unpleasant realities. Friedrich Nietzsche views most religions as the consolations of slaves and would substitute the ideal of the superman.

The definition of the word "religion" was warmly debated during the discussion period. Some claimed that the term should be extended to include all gropings for a better life, whether they involved supernatural elements or not. Others believed this would lead to confusion and urged limiting the use of the word to its theological connotation.

Nietzsche's anathematization of the proletariat stimulated abundant oratorical backfire the following Sunday when Harold Coy
presented "the German Anti-Christ's" views on "master morality" and "slave morality". Nietzsche saw in Christianity a glorification of weakness and in socialism an attempt to raise the inferior man at the expense of the superior.

The speaker left the evaluation of the Nietzschean theories to his hearers, who made such comments as these: (1) Capitalist economy tests only one kind of superiority and is therefore not a suitable training school for the superman; (2) The struggle for existence in modern society is carried on not by individuals but by groups, and the working class, by uniting, will prove itself the fittest group to survive; (3) Notwithstanding Nietzsche's hostility to the proletariat, the workers are profiting by his analysis of morality; for by organizing and aspiring to greater responsibilities they are replacing their slave morality by a master morality.

STUDENT BATHERS SNFER AT WINTER SOLSTICE

Next to the dance hall, the swimming pool in Mill Creek is the most popular recreation spot around the Commonwealth campus. True, its popularity is subject to seasonal variation, but a substantial portion of the Commonwealth group is as unflagging in devotion in foul weather as in fair.

The Commonwealth buildings are situated on a high bluff overlooking this Mill Creek, with few exceptions the proudest stream for miles around. The instructor in economic theory has marked out his home site here on a promontory above a waterfall; in an unguarded moment he relaxed from his scientific impassivity long enough to dub the undoubtedly soothing sound which he heard "a rippling, laughing lullaby". The power generated by some such waterfall should one day rive Commonwealth's logs, can its string beans, light its study halls, mayhap wash its dishes.

Mill Creek is a watercourse of no mean historical associations. Since "beneath the wa'" it has been the instrument whereby an unending procession of Baptist souls has been consecrated. With the advent of Commonwealth its sphere of usefulness has been enlarged. Cleanliness is next to godliness, and Mill Creek now promotes both. To be sure, now that winter's here, tales of a tub are current around the campus, but the more austere Commoners are still content to perform their ablutions at the Creek.

When college opened in September half of the school community had daily recourse to the swimming hole. Defections began in November. Most of the backsliders were boys, for the girls, jealous of their new-found freedom, never lose a chance to demonstrate how worthy they are of it. Menaced by inferiority complexes, ashamed, the boys returned. Old timers of Polk County shake their heads gravely and warn the youngsters that it's more than a man's life is worth to go into the water at this time of year. But students from Idaho and New York are little impressed by the rigors of an Arkansas winter which so far has brought little ice and no snow.
HORNY-HANDED LABOR STUDENTS LOOK FORWARD TO MORE HOME-GROWN FOOD

Commonwealth College's next Thanksgiving dinner will be almost entirely home-grown if Farm Manager August Schmidt's busy preparations for spring cultivation on the "east eighty" furnish any indication. "Schmitty", among other things, is fixing up a farm blacksmith shop, hauling bagasse (cane pulp) for humus, and joining fields by changing roads and fences.

A team of mares, a disc, and a wagon plow replace the mule and hand plow with which the farm department had to work last spring. A blacksmith shop with anvil, forge, and all the necessary equipment except a spreading chestnut tree, will further add to the agricultural efficiency of the school where everyone works while he learns.

Mill Creek divides the College holdings into two "eighties". The original tract lies on high bluffs and consists of the campus site, together with timber and pasture lands and a few acres of cultivated fields. The recently acquired "eighty" across the Creek is almost entirely made up of arable bottom and first bench land. With acreage under cultivation multiplied and with improved farm equipment Commonwealth should take a long stride toward self-maintenance next year.

James A. Phillips, vice-president of the Order of Railway Conductors and member of Commonwealth's advisory council, sends in his subscription to the Fortnightly and says, "Sorry I am not in a position to render more assistance at this time.

NIETZSCHE ANTICIPATES INDEPENDENT EDUCATION IDEAL

"Experience teaches us that nothing stands so much in the way of developing great philosophers as the custom of supporting bad ones in state universities... It is the popular theory that the posts given to the latter make them 'free' to do original work; as a matter of fact, the effect is quite the contrary... No state would ever dare to patronize such men as Plato and Schopenhauer. And why? Because the state is always afraid of them... It seems to me that there is need for a higher tribunal outside the universities to critically examine the doctrines they teach. As soon as philosophers are willing to resign their salaries, they will constitute such a tribunal. Without pay and without honors, it will be able to free itself from the prejudices of the age. Like Schopenhauer, it will be the judge of the so-called culture around it!"

--Friedrich Nietzsche in "Schopenhauer as a Teacher."

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

"You have learnt something. That always feels at first as if you had lost something." --Bernard Shaw.