BENTON ADVOCATES COMPENSATION LAW

Arkansas Federation Decides To Present Bill to Next Legislature

After the delivery of an opinion by W. C. Benton, instructor in law at Commonwealth College, local 194 of the American Federation of Teachers, to the effect that Section 32 of Article 5 of the Arkansas constitution, prohibiting the legislature from limiting the amount recoverable for personal injuries, would not render a Workmen’s Compensation Law in effect, the 21st annual convention of the Arkansas State Federation of Labor decided to present a bill for such a law to the next session of the legislature.

There are only five states that have not yet adopted a Workmen’s Compensation Law, Arkansas being one of the five. The matter has been up for discussion in the Federation several times in recent years, but no action was taken on account of the constitutional impediment.

Two drafts for a law were submitted to the Convention, one by the American Association for Labor Legislation and the other by Delegate Benton, both of which were referred to the Legislative Committee.

Mr. Benton was instructed to petition Arkansas Supreme Court for an opinion as to the validity of the law proposed by him. Although there are no precedents to warrant such action it was thought the court might render an opinion prior to the enactment of the law on account of the public interests involved.

CAMPUS THERMOMETER HITS NEW LOW MARK

The coldest spell in this vicinity since the establishment of Commonwealth on its present location, struck Wednesday, December 7. A sweeping north wind brought the thermometer down to fifteen degrees above zero.

Sixteen above was the lowest the temperature fell last year. It is a very unusual thing in this section of the country for the first cold spell to be so severe, according to old-timers.

Hunger: Something which falls to the lot of those who produce food.

Efficiency Drive

"We are so efficient and drive so fast that not even the rabbits are able to get out of our way," said Herman Ericson, official timekeeper for the farm crew, while relating the story of the accidental killing of a rabbit on Tuesday afternoon.

"We were making as much speed as possible to try and gather an extra load of corn, in order to be as efficient as possible so that we would not have to work an extra four hours Saturday afternoon. I saw the rabbit jump out of the field and jump toward the horses. I was afraid that it might hurt them and tried to stop but our terrific speed made this impossible and the left rear wheel ran over the rabbit's neck, killing him instantly."

Buster Wynn, member of the farm crew, took the rabbit home, dressed it, fried it in the kitchen and passed it around to the members of the farm crew.

"Darn Good Work" Say The Commoners

The library fireplace held its first fire last week. Its builders, Ullah Rich and Professor F. M. Goodhue, were present at this semi-ceremonial ceremony.

An Oklahoma artist defines art as "joy in labor." By this definition or by any other the new fireplace is a work of art.

Goodhue and Rich, the experienced and the enthusiastic, the scientific and the youthful—such a combination gave the fireplace its individual qualities.

Goodhue’s slender, precise hand drew the plans; Rich’s huge, powerful hand selected and shaped the stones. A regular, symmetrical structure was formed out of a pile of irregular, asymmetrical stones.

Anyone, no matter what his experience, would find pleasure in looking at the library fireplace, but Commonwealth students, many of whom have worked upon similar projects, have special knowledge to aid their appreciation.

"It’s darn good work," they are saying, and that is collegiate for "it’s a work of art."

REUNION OCCURS AT GUEST HOUSE

Sisters of Kate Richards O’Hare Drive Up From Jacksonville For Visit

Something of a family reunion took place at the Guest House, when two of Mrs. Kate Richards O’Hare’s sisters, Mrs. H. S. Brown, and Mrs. Jesse DuProz, and the latter’s daughter, Miss Vivien DuProz, arrived at Commonwealth recently. They traveled by automobile from Jacksonville, Florida, via Salina, Kansas.

"I am having many new and interesting experiences," said Mrs. DuProz. "This is the first time I have traveled by automobile. I have often read of the Ozark mountains, but not until traveling through them did I discover that the authors had been justified in their rhapsoodies. Commonwealth certainly has an ideal location.

"After I get out of the habit of looking for gas jets and electric buttons, I will feel quite at home. It seems to me that one of the biggest problems at Commonwealth would be that of having people adjust themselves. We all get so used to the luxury and the material things of life. However, I adapt myself readily. What one gets out of a place like this, after all, depends entirely upon oneself."

"WHY NOT STICK TO SUBJECT?" ASKS ZEUCH

"The most remarkable thing about your debating," said Mr. Zeuch to his class in public speaking, "is your ability to debate about anything but the question."

The class had been debating, for two consecutive class periods, the question: "Resolved that Ford is giving society the value of the wealth he has accumulated."

"Inevitably," said Zeuch, "the discussion falls back into Capitalism vs. Socialism. Charlotte talks about the four-hour day. Harry orates about the unhuman conditions of the workers. Raymond philosophizes about the qualities of a genius. Now what I want you to do is to see whether you can stick to a subject. Tomorrow we will debate on prohibition."
Commonwealth College Fortnightly

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Signed articles express only individual opinion.

Editors, particularly of labor and farmer papers, are welcome to make free use of material appearing in these columns. A line crediting the Commonwealth College Fortnightly will be appreciated.

Vol. IV, No. 1 January 1, 1928

WHAT IS COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE

Commonwealth was organized in 1923 to provide education for workers on a self-supporting basis.

Commonwealth is located in the Ouachita near Mena, Ark., where it operates agricultural and other basic industries by means of four hours' daily labor from its students and teachers.

Commonwealth seeks to develop in young men and women of the working class the capacity to serve the labor movement.

Commonwealth is a non-sectarian, non-propaganda institution. It sponsors no particular religious, political, or economic creed. It holds that scientific experimentation carries the only hope of adjustment or solution of personal and social problems.

Commonwealth is the only institution for higher education where both teachers and students earn their maintenance by part-time labor while engaged in academic work.

VEGETARIAN TASTES FRESH FIRST TIME

Because he attempted to imprison a mouse in the oven of the Laundry stove, Raymond Koch was painfully bitten on the right arm by Minnie Siegel.

According to Koch, he had been warming his feet in the oven when a mouse attempted to run up his pants leg. He drove the varmint back into the oven and closed the door, saying, "I'm going to teach that mouse a lesson."

At this point Miss Siegel, who was ironing clothes, dashed to the rescue of the mouse.

"I'm a vegetarian, and I won't tolerate torturing mice," she shouted, and attempted to open the oven door. When Koch grabbed her and prevented her from opening the oven door, Miss Siegel hurled into tears and, in rage, fastened her teeth into Koch's right arm. Koch called for assistance and the wood crew, rushing in, separated the pair.

The Campus Bluff

By WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM, Instructor in Journalism

Ten ambitious journalism students were, at the beginning of the present term, faced with the problem: "Can you learn to swim on dry land?"

The Fortnightly could not hold their writings even were it a journalistic journal, which it does not strive to be. The column of space regularly given the college in the weekly Mena Star was a task for one but not ten.

A journalist without a journal turns to fiction or poetry. The prospect of ten promising cubs suppressed into minor poets filled the class with dismay.

Hearing your stuff read in class is not like seeing it "in print." "And how can we distinguish between a feature story and a '90 dash," they were asking, "if we get no actual experience on a paper."

Out of the perplexity of the Commonwealth College journalism class was born a unique idea in journalistic laboratory work. "The world's best newspaper," was founded. It measures approximately five feet in length and three feet, six inches in width. It has a total circulation of one.

Its name, "The Campus Bluff," was suggested by a line in an early school catalog: "The campus ** * * is situated on a bluff ** * * *." The paper asks in its masthead not to be taken "too seriously" and hints that its readers may at times indulge in "obvious exaggeration for humorous effect." Its serious object is to be "journalistic, interesting, and reliable."

It has two pages, a first page and an editorial page. These are actually bulletin boards set upon easels in the school dining hall. The material, typeset, is tacked upon the boards. The style of "make-up" used is that of a conventional newspaper, with eight columns to a page.

During the time that the idea of this odd contrivance was taking shape, a half dozen plans were suggested. The first one—of simply trimming the margins from the pages of "copy" and fastening them to the board by means of thumb tacks—was early discarded in favor of a more complicated device whereby a sort of barred door, with seven bars corresponding to column rules on a page, was to be closed on the copy after it was in place. But such an arrangement would not permit of two-column heads or of any two-column development.

Fortunately two members of the class are on the carpenter crew and are used to thinking in terms of boards. They recalled that the college possessed some five-inch slip-laps. "Would not five inches be about the right width for the columns?" they asked.

As the device was finally constructed it consisted of eight of these boards carefully planed and fitted together, with a two-inch board on each side for the margins. A cleat on the back side and at the top held the boards together. A rip saw was used to widen the space between the boards up to within eight or nine inches of the top. In this top space, backed by the cleat, the name of the paper was painted in large letters. A cleat was nailed across the bottom in the bottom marginal space.

The "copy" was typed on ordinary copy paper but care was taken that the lines were less than five inches long. When make-up time came the sheets of copy were simply wrapped around the boards—that is, the margins of each sheet were tucked back through the columns and wrapped around in the rear. For double column stuff, headlines, etc., two sheets copy paper were pasted together and wrapped around two boards.

Heads were hand lettered in black crayon; jim dashes, thirty dashes and cut-off rules were simply drawn in with the same crayon.

When the make-up was completed the contrivance had very much the appearance of a vastly enlarged front page of any conventional newspaper.

Fortunately, one of the class is a talented cartoonist, so that plenty of "art" is available. Photographs, snap shots, etc., are also "printed"—that is, they are pasted on a sheet of copy paper and tacked in place.

The editorship is passed around, so that every student can experience both the indignity of having his copy "edited" and the gnawing responsibility which is an editor's. By the process of "putting out a paper" a journalistic attitude has been created. Once the class argued about "inverted pyramid style," "human interest stories," and "who, where, what, when and why." Now they are concerned with "tips," "time stuff," "dead-lines," "two-plus heads," "fillers," etc. They have come to understand that a deck is not a sub-head.

As I write I hear the editor for this week bawling out a cub who was editor last week.

"Look here," he says. "You got your lead in the third paragraph and you haven't given any authority, and are you sure you got your initials right?"
Society Notes

Commonwealth Customs cramp a fellow's social style, according to Al Kruger, first year student from San Diego. Kruger has become accustomed to the rough-and-ready in the Commonwealth manner, that is, without contact. Ordinarily six inches of Arkansas atmosphere intervene between Kruger's belt buckle and the corse de his partner.

On a recent Saturday night Kruger attended a dance at Mena. It was his first experience with the native sophistication.

"A lively tune started," says Kruger, "and I danced with one of the girls. I held her according to Commonwealth rules. She laughed—a wicked laugh—and said, 'Now honey, you just listen to me and you will never go wrong. You are not at school, so just hug me up tight and dance with a little jazz. Snap it up and away you can.' Well, I danced that style as best I could. But gosh!"

The Black and White Cat which has become a member of the crew of the S. S. Commonwealth during the past year has been identified by Al Kruger as the same feline which was recently excommunicated from Luna Lodge, after consuming some deli-tessen to which it was not entitled.

"It is the same cat," said Kruger, "which later lodged itself in the fireplace chimney at Cunningham's and nearly smoked Bill and Clarice out before being discovered.

"She does not favor any one group," continued Kruger, "and occupies different rooms each night."

Kruger also stated that the cat was received favorably by all the members of the crew with the exception of Buster Wynn. Wynn says, according to Kruger, "If that cat don't eat my favorite mouse, she's my friend, but if she does—well, there will be one more cat with only eight lives."

The New Laundry Building was put into use last week, with the machine in place and all necessary installations complete.

The building is a two-room structure, one room for washing and the other for sorting and marking clothes. A tier of boxes is built along one of the walls. There are sections for individual bundles and nearly every one has been marked.

A feature of the new location is the connection which brings water directly to the washing room. This was installed by Joe Lampert and Al Kruger.

"Our efficiency is now greater than ever before," said Clarice Cunningham, in charge of the laundry department. "Don't be surprised if you find other sphere intervene sophisticated.

BENTON

"Bowed by the weight of centuries
He leans upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on the back the burden of the world."

Observe him: Beading over his plants, hoe in hand. Experience has enabled him to use that hoe dexterously. Clad in overalls of faded blue, his bent figure moves slowly down one row and up another; each plant, in its turn, receiving his tender ministrations.

He stands erect and surveys the many rows that have received unto themselves a portion of his life; and hastily wiping the perspiration from his brow, he decides to continue until all is finished. As the last plant draws near and nearer his face takes on an expression of joy such as can only come to those who know that they have done their work and done it well.

A lover of nature, he pauses to watch the sun lower itself behind the mountains. The evening bell rings out. Wearily placing his hoe across his shoulder, he plods homeward. In the forenoon of yesterday and tomorrow, and all other days, he is Wilbur C. Benton, instructor in law, at Commonwealth College.—Fritz Hocevar.

Anita Loos could remake the book into a roaring farce, and she would have to alter only a line here and there. In fact, the latter portion of the book where the heroine discusses her problems of rent money, etc., continually reminds one of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes."

But it is easy to see why the book is a best seller. It undoubtedly will appeal strongly to the emotions of a great part of the American public—the part which fails for the you-ain't-done-right-by-my-little-gal stuff in any form.

In justice to President Harding it should be noted that he was a kindly and probably a sincere lover. His taste in choosing Nan Britton might be questioned, but that, after all, is none of his business.

For Miss Harding, sister of the president, one can have only admiration. She seems to have made a real effort toward providing for her brother's child. Nan Britton's sister and brother-in-law must be credited with heroic patience. Nan dumped the child off on them during a great portion of its infancy, until they must have cared for it as if it were their own, and then took it away from them at intervals, whenever her mother instinct flared up.

Book reviews that count, in the matter of book sales, are said and not written. I can hear the two reviews that will echo over America as soon as the book achieves general circulation. One of them is like this: "Ain't it just when that is said all is said of the United States—'Th' poor girl!' The other one will run something like this: 'The' shameless creature! She otta suffer. Think of how she run after poor President Harding!"—K. G.

Book Review

THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER
By NAN BRITTON

Miss Britton has undoubtedly told the truth. President Harding must certainly be the father of her child. But when that is said all is said.

The book has not one spark of literary genius. It is a dull, school-girlish account of what would have been a very ordinary romance had not her lover been the great W. G. Harding. The bright spots in the book are the places where Miss Britton is unintentionally funny. For instance:

Early in their love affair, W. G. H. takes the pretty Miss Britton to the office of Gary, the steel king, and introduces her as a friend of his who wants a job. The girl is immediately given a job at $15 a week. As Harding and Miss Britton ride down on the elevator he puts his arm about her and whispers, "Now do you doubt that I love you?"

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COMMUNERS GO A VISITING

I've been having the excitingest time! Guess I'll have to tell you about it. You see, there is just the dearest gentleman lives about two miles from the college. His name is Clido Washington. I don't just know how old he is, and it doesn't matter. He comes to our dances, and he forms us into 'sets' and prompts while we try to learn the mysteries of quadrilles, Virginia reels, and all sorts of old-fashioned dances; such as they say were once popular all over America, but that it is only in out-of-the-way places like this that they dance them any more.

And, oh yes! He has just lots of horses, and once he brought several of them over to the college and let us girls ride them.—And none of us fell off. They were as gentle as lambs. And the whole bunch of us came to come and take dinner with him whenever we felt like it. And it is that dinner, and the way we got there and back that I started to tell about.

Well, we hiked out about ten o'clock one Sunday morning. We hadn't gone far until we heard a sort of roaring. At first we couldn't imagine what it was, but Lucien Koch, who has been here before, said it was Mountain Fork river. Pretty soon we got to it; and it sure is some creek! The water actually darts along almost as fast as a bird can fly. And when it strikes the stones and fallen trees it boils and tumbles about to beat anything.

Well, there was a tree across the river—which really isn't very wide—and they call it a foot-log, because people walk across it just like they do the foot bridges across the ponds in the park.

And it didn't much like to venture out on the foot-log above that boiling water; but Lucien said it was safe enough, and there was a wire stretched along about waist high for us to hold to.—and, anyway, I hated to be laughed at, so I went along with my heart in my throat.

Well, we all walked out on the log—one behind the other—and all held fast to the wire. But Trixie Kruger (That girl from California) got to swaying—and that made us all sway, of course. And, BING! the wire snapped; just like that. I don't know how any of us managed to stay on the log, but we did, all but Trixie and a girl from New York named Mildred Chadwick. Trixie and Mildred fell backward into the river. And it was the most exciting—

Trixie just sat there for a while, as comfortable looking as if she was sitting in a rocking chair on a shady porch on a hot day. Then she

Best Memories Are Not So Very Good

Mildred Chadwick, Harry Cohen, and William Cunningham have the best musical memories among the Communers, according to the results of a music memory contest conducted by Helen Bellman, music teacher. They each scored 21 out of a possible 30 points. At the Camp Bluff looked a look of disappointment on the teacher's face when the scores were announced.


scrambled out. But Mildred came out boiling. She seemed to think Lucien had tricked us, and she ran up and slapped his face. But she repented right away and kissed him. And I believe the kiss was really more painful than the slap. For Lucien blushed terribly, and I saw beads of perspiration pop out on his forehead.

Anyway, Mildred and Trixie took off as many garments as they dared, and we put on anything dry that we could find to get across and fell out. But Mildred came out boiling. She seemed to think Lucien had tricked us, and she ran up and slapped his face. But she repented right away and kissed him. And I believe the kiss was really more painful than the slap. For Lucien blushed terribly, and I saw beads of perspiration pop out on his forehead.

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ARKANSAS PARTY

Wading swollen creeks, dodging treacherous puddles, and scrambling over and through barbed-wire fences, ten students stranded to the Bailey home, two miles from Commonwealth, where a party was being held in good old Arkansas fashion.

The stars were hid. One tip of a crescent moon peeped for an instant from behind a scurrying cloud. The students set out. Two half exhausted flashlights hampered their progress by disclosing stones that were water filled cavities, and puddles that were terribly solid and inches high above the terrain. The trail led through tall trees that only revealed small, shapeless patches of what would have been sky if it hadn't been clouds.

At Silli creek, the only means of crossing (unless you wade) is a place which extends part way across and has a distressing habit of sagging below the water level when overloaded. As the students filed across, arms frantically beat the air in an attempt to maintain equilibrium. Deciding that the game was not worth the candle, two of the Communers turned back here.

In the front yard at the Bailey home a number of young men and younger women were playing "Wanna go fishin'." Would the students join them? They would—and did. A girl pretended she was a fish and a boy designated for the part, played fisherman. Other games, as "Why don't you get married?" and "Ruth and Jacob," followed.

Hours sped by.

"Sorry we must go. Thanks for the pleasant evening." The students once more attacked the stones that were holes in the ground and the holes that stuck up into the air.

"Gee! I'm going to get that theme written if I have to sit up all night!"

"I'm not sorry I went, even though I am all scratched up and wet."

Lights out!

The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it always to be kept alive. It will often be exercised wrongfully, but better so than not to be exercised at all.—Jefferson.

Learned Man: One who does not know how to earn his livelihood.—Old Dictionary.

The mistake of maturity and age has ever been that it lives so wholly in the present and so completely forgets the childhood that is past.—Darrow.