PROSE AND POETRY
AT SCRIBBLERS CLUB

Story of Late Working Guest, and Poetry Are Offered at First Meeting

Futility, by Harry L. Cohen, a story based on the life of Will Chase, late working guest, and three poems by David Kaplan, were the contributions at the first meeting of the Scribblers Club, an informal organization of Commonwealth writers which meets on alternate Wednesday evenings.

Cohen's story dealt with Chase's life as a futile fight against insurmountable odds. Starting with his earliest recollections, as told to Co-operators, the whole path of his experience was traced.

Left alone at a tender age, Chase was put into an orphan asylum. Before his fifth birthday the child was adopted by an Iowa farmer of means. For three successive winters his feet were frozen. He finally succeeded in running away and finding a place where he was treated well. But the people were poor and could hardly raise enough on their poor farm to supply their own needs. After a few years he left them.

For years he drifted about the country, working part of the time. Twice he was married. The first wife stayed with him just so long as his bank account lasted. The second proved too shrewd and changed him from a paid hired man to an unpaid husband. He succeeded in leaving her only when his health broke down.

The light of his life was an unswerving faith in the co-operative idea. All his savings were wiped out in one, but the hope persisted. A similar venture failed to satisfy him and he drifted on.

Somewhere, somehow, he learned of Commonwealth, where co-operation was a reality and nobody could buy in. His first visit lasted a few weeks; the second was terminated by (Continued on Page Three)

College Improvements

The past summer saw numerous improvements at Commonwealth. Several buildings were painted, stone foundations laid under others, a new stone and concrete porch built for the kitchen, dormitories papered, a new fireplace installed, and the roofs restored.

It is but four and one-half years since the college was moved to its present location. The group members of that time lived as real pioneers, in tents, until suitable buildings could be erected. One of the tents was used for the entire first year and was abandoned only when a hole was burned in it.

Since that time the process of building up has been going on steadily until today there are twenty structures, including dormitories, cottages, Commons, laboratory, laundry, barn and others.

The first buildings were rough green lumber and unpainted. The cold weather and drying caused contraction of the boards and left wide cracks in many places. The winter winds, coming through these vents, made it difficult for group members of that time to keep warm. It was a real problem to eliminate such conditions with limited help and even more limited finances.

From time to time, as the opportunities presented themselves, improvements were made. Two years ago the Commons was completed by the addition of two wings and a summer dining room. Then siding was put on all the buildings. Just last year (Continued on Page Three)

CHANGE OF PLANS

Due to the many requests received, Dr. William E. Zeuch will visit and speak at colleges and universities on his trip through the North and East during the winter quarter. In addition to the subject previously announced he will give talks on Problems of Communal Living and Power Economics.

ZEUCH AND FULKS
SPEAK AT OPENING

"Problems of Pioneering" and "Crimes of Commonwealth" Are Subjects Discussed

Problems of Pioneering, a talk by William E. Zeuch, educational director, dealing with Commonwealth's relations with its neighbors, referring especially to the slanderous stories circulated about the community, and another talk on Crimes of Commonwealth, by Clay Fulks, featured the Seventh Annual Opening exercises on Sunday, October 27.

"After all these years of struggle and effort," Zeuch began, "I believe the time has come to speak frankly about some things . . . upon which we have for the most part kept our tempers and patience. There comes a time when patience cases to be a virtue."

Zeuch emphasized the fact that there are many friends to whom he wished to give full recognition; and that it was the individuals, both in the immediate neighborhood and about the country, who have been consistently trying to undermine the college, to whom he referred.

"It is necessary, I suppose, for every person or group that starts something new," he continued, "to experience the suspicion of the conservatives, the abuse of the ignorant, and the slander of the malicious . . . . Almost all pioneers, it seems, have had to suffer for the privilege of presenting a new idea to the world."

He went on to point out the various contributions of Commonwealth to the community, its objectives, the $50,000 which it has spent in Polk County and the fact that all the individuals who are spreading the false and malicious stories about the college are either people who have never come here to judge for themselves or others who have been ordered out of the community for good reason and are trying in this way to avenge themselves.

"There's no use in any further pro-
The American College

By Charles Berlinut

I.
As graduation approaches the thoughts of high school students turn toward college. For such as can afford it the important question is which one? rather than should I go? Thus every September a host of sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen-year-olds enter the colleges trebling with eagerness to find out about life; and once inside are handed their freshman caps, while dignified deans and solemn seniors impress upon them the fact that the college is not for the students, but the students for the college. Then they go to their classes: Freshman English, Mathematics, French, Chemistry or Physics, and Cont templation of civilization. From the classroom they are herded out into the athletic fields and gymnasiums.

II.
The majority manage to pass life fairly pleasantly in this way. A considerable minority never give thought to the question: Is this the best possible training for life? They are not in the habit of doubting or even reflecting what are they are given to do to do cheerfully. Let us say that these constitute a third of the students; certainly not more. We are all familiar with this type; it includes the worker who can manage to be fairly content with his lot, however hard.

About half the students, however, find themselves wondering at times what is really the good of going to college? While they feel a certain interest in the fact that the college will have an increased appropriation from the state this year, or that the football team this year is unusually successful, such things do not still the questioning in their minds: Is this, then, college—the place where youth strives earnestly, yearningly, for the meaning of life, for wisdom, the means whereby they may fulfill the potentialities within them? So they feel at times that there is something wrong, but a glance around is sufficient to persuade them that this cannot be; all are scurrying about their business, athletics, debates, lab work, with never a sign of hesitation or doubt. They vent their discontent on the superficial meaningfulness of college life: Christian-Jewish snobbery, fraternity snobbery, military science, and such compulsory courses. As a result they go through college perfunctorily, sneering covertly and sometimes overtly at college, and graduate into a world that takes its hat off to their degrees. So much for the majority.

The rest go to college for a year, when, nauseated by the holy hokum, they leave or are flunked out. And that disposes of it all.

III.
Such is college. But we must not condemn it too strongly. What is the trouble then? First is the fact that colleges exist for themselves, rather than for the students. Colleges swarm with all sorts of meanesses; they truckle to all sorts of religious, political and financial deprivities. Their faculties consist of fearful or ambitious specialists rather than courageous wise men. Their curricula are much too limited to give any true conception of life; they should include many practical courses in living, with all sorts of conditions to cope with. Finally, colleges are essentially exclusive; they should be open to all, rich and poor alike, with no lessening of burden for the well-to-do.

IV.
But is life such a serious thing, to be prepared for solemnly, to need an ascetic apprenticeship of study and meditation? In general, college men are boys, chosen rather for mental and physical robustness than for piercing insight into the peculiar weaknesses and potentialities of the soul. The four years in college are indeed probably going to be the happiest in the life of those who are willing to take college at its own valuation. Never again will they have a chance to throw themselves confidently on the honesty and kindness of the world. They exist in an atmosphere of their own, where troubles can be relegated to the time when the Big Game, the Sophomore Hop, and the Easter vacation are things of the past. The American college is thoroughly in harmony with the American spirit, and it is useless to think of changing the one without changing the other.
Koch Appointed Personnel Manager

Raymond J. Koch, student trustee, has been appointed personnel manager. His duties include the placing of students at jobs where they may work most efficiently, and keeping the campus tasks up to date.

This appointment is the fulfillment of the wish of Director Zeuch to confine his interests solely to teaching. For several years he had been handling the business administration along with his academic duties.

Last year he decided to experiment and a student assistant was appointed. The plan was a success. At the close of the spring quarter when Zeuch left for his summer vacation, Clay Fulks was made acting business administrator. The work of Fulks was satisfactory and, upon Zeuch's return, it was decided by the Board of Trustees to make the temporary appointment permanent.

Fulks continued the policy of Zeuch and appointed a student assistant. Koch has been at his new post since the opening of college and his work thus far, as the official Simon Le­gree, has been well done.

SOCIETY NOTES

Admitted. Clay Fulks is now a member of the Commonwealth College Association. He was admitted at a recent meeting. Fulks had been a probationary member for the required time, one year, and the decision to accept him was unanimous.

Colorful. Crayon drawings in color featured the first edition for the quarter of the Campus Bluff, student publication. They were the work of Professor Goodhue, and of Rose Cohen, a student. The first was a scene along the California coast; Miss Cohen chose for her subject the mountains, as seen from the back porch of Goodhue's cottage.

Brightness. Nocturnal visitors at Commonwealth or newcomers who arrive in the wee hours o’ the morning need have no difficulty in finding their way about since John Mars, stock­man, started his nightly practice of hanging a lighted lantern aloft in the bell tower.

Peanuts! “I didn’t know they grow down here. Do they grow on trees or vines?” The all-wise big-towners are stumped by this momentous question. The Commonwealth peanut harvest is complete and the stacks are drying. Soon the hungry Commoners will have their palates tickled with the fresh, tasty nuts.

Reversed. Spring flowers are blooming again at Commonwealth! There are English violets near White Lodge, crepe myrtle and honeysuckle about the campus. Blase New Yorkers as well as Arkansas veterans admire the blending of reds, purples and golds in the autumn landscape; they see it wherever they turn—and the memory lingers on. For the cities may give some things but only in the fresh, clear, mountain atmosphere is it possible to get the full glory of the season.

SOCIETY NOTES

Thanks, Friends
CASH

Mrs. David Ives, Clayton, Mo., $25.
Peter Molenar, Renville, Minn., $5.

MAGAZINES AND PAMPHLETS
Louis D. Brandeis, Washington, D. C.
F. M. Kirkendall, Dayton, O.

Death Takes Toll in Zeuch Family

Dr. William E. Zeuch, educational director of Commonwealth College, has lost three members of his family within a little more than a year. There had been no deaths within his immediate family circle of father, mother, and ten children in more than forty years. Then, a little more than a year ago, his father passed on. Last Christmas his oldest sister died suddenly from pneumonia following the flu. Just a few weeks ago his oldest brother, Judge Herman F. Zeuch of the Polk District Court of Des Moines, Iowa, was accidentally killed.

Judge Zeuch had been a city judge in Des Moines before his election to the district bench five years ago. He was forty years old at the time of his death. He was the author of several texts on the law.

How It Works

Our friends often ask just how a co-operative, self-supporting group, actually lives and functions. Let us take a concrete illustration. The first Sunday after college opened the dinner consisted of mashed potatoes, chicken a la king with mushroom sauce, peas, cucumber pickles, radishes, peaches, cake, biscuits and butter. The potatoes we raised; the chickens, John Mars, our stockman, brought in from our own pens; the mushrooms were part of a kettelful that David Kaplan and Ray Koch picked on their Saturday afternoon ramble; the pickles and peaches were put up by our group this summer; the radishes were fresh from our garden; the flour for the biscuits was bought through our store. Then Dorothy Alfrey, first year student, who, since her high school graduation has had three years experience as a cook in one of these swell private sanitariums, where you pay $600 a month, and who happens to be an independent genial, 200-pound, five feet ten, corn-fed Iowa radical played by Walter Hoffman, who hails from Berlin, Germany, took these foods and served them in a fashion and abundance for which you would pay two dollars a plate at any self-respecting hotel. The cost at Commonwealth, including labor, was seventeen cents a plate. This is co-operative, self-supporting group living in the concrete.

SCRIBBERS

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death. His entire life was futile and barren.

Kaplan’s poems, Sagebrush and Juniper, High Yellow and a third for which he had no name, dealt with characters whom he had observed in different parts of the country. The characterizations met with the approval of the group.

COLLEGE IMPROVEMENTS

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shower baths were installed.

Slowly but steadily the building program goes on. The campus looks better now than ever before. It is a far cry from the pioneer conditions of those first months to the comparative comfort of today.

Coal oil lamps, the necessity for carrying water, still remain. But the power plant, when it is built, and a new deep well with a storage tank, sending water to the various buildings by gravitation, will eliminate even these and the crude, pioneering days will be—memories.

[Continued on Page Four]
Study In Contrasts

Commonwealth life is a study in contrasts, academically, intellectually and personally. There is little opportunity for life to become monotonous. Each year finds the group different from that preceding, temperamentally, in training, and in ideas. It is this tendency more than any other, perhaps, which makes the college life interesting, and the contrasts are carried right through the faculty. This was brought out recently when a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, who was preparing a batch of bread, took time for instructing a B. Litt. and Phi. Zeta Kappa from Rutgers College how to scrub floors as they should be scrubbed. At the same time a University of Chicago Ph. B. was working over the hot stove, preparing the next meal, and a short distance away a Norwich University C. E. was painting a building.

ZEUCH AND FULKS

SPEAK AT OPENING

[Continued from Page One]

The Joyners of innocence on the part of Commonwealth," said Fulks; "she might as well plead guilty and be done with it. She is as guilty as Lucifer—and guilty of the same offense. Lucifer, you will recall, was the great light-bearer, and light bearing is Commonwealth's crime. Literally and figuratively, actually and symbolically, Commonwealth is also a trail blazer. Just as she struck into a wilderness to establish a seat of learning, she struck into an educational wilderness to mark new trails for educational thought.

"New ideas in education are necessarily more or less antagonistic to the old, the venerable, and the hollowed, and are therefore criminal in the eyes of those who cannot endure intellectual shocks. They are generally met with indignant denunciation; that is always to be expected.

"Nor are the reasons for that phenomenon hard to find. The exponents of the old ideas, old customs, old taboos, always feel themselves being toppled from their places of power and authority whenever the exponents of new ideas, new beliefs, new theories and new practices appear upon the scene. Hence their resentments and hence their tears."

—Henry George.

NOT ALL COMMONERS ARE AFFECTED SO

They dance, they sang, their laughter echoed and re-echoed. Overhead the full moon was shining in a cloudless sky, watching the antics of the capering Commoners below.

Ray Kirvin hopped about followed by Sylvia Lipton and Dorothy Ehrlich. Then Ray Koch, the quiet, the poised, reached up, grasped a limb of the catalpa tree, and drew himself up among its leafy branches.

Fritz Hoffman, a young man with well rounded lines, started an apache dance and was joined by Bunny. Fritz pursued, Bunny retreated. Somehow Sylvie became a part of the dance—and all were in a heap on the ground.

The ecstatic players continued their game. Then came Dorothy Alfrey—and she did a substantial fairy dance. The hilarity seemed to be infectious. In the bright moonlight the dancing figures looked like fauns, gnomes and satyrs as they skimed about the campus. Gene Showalter pulled a reed from the catalpa tree and played Peter Pan.

They danced, they sang, their laughter echoed and re-echoed. Perhaps the arrival of two more Cubans was to blame.

SOCIETY NOTES

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Viva Cuba! Juan Margets and Victor M. Olazabel Montejo, the two Cubans who were expected several weeks ago, arrived two and one-half weeks late, due to hurricanes, passport difficulties and a week in New Orleans. Both have a knowledge of English. The boys are proving themselves good serenaders, Victor especially.

BEES—NO CLOVER

Midway between the S. S. Commonwealth and 'Ymen 'All stands an oak. A\ the base of this tree is a nail keg, now put to an entirely different use—a beehive.

Most of the Commoners who reside in and about these dorms are aware of the honey makers, so they never disturb the busy workers. But one was different. All his life, up to his enrollment at Commonwealth, had been spent in and about New York. He had never met a bee.

Like the bees, this student is a worker; and like a worker, he enjoys sunshine. So it came to pass that on a certain morning when the sun shone brightly and he had no class, Harry Silverstein decided to do some studying outdoors.

He looked about for a resting place—and spied the tree. "That looks like a good spot. I'll sit there." He acted on the inspiration.

The keg seemed like any other of its kind. And the buzzing sound? He had observed that flies do that and that there are other insects about which make really ferocious sounds—and are harmless. So he turned the keg over, pushed it aside.

Silverstein immediately learned about bees. He retreated to the S. S. There he met the other Harry and told his troubles. Together they started an investigation. The second party, feeling strong in his guiltlessness, tried to survey the extent of the damage. But the angry insects proved to be no respecters of innocence, and three of them became intimately acquainted with him, one coming to the back porch of the S. S. to pay its respects.

Garbed like a knight of old, the original malefactor set out to repair the damage. A slicker, buttoned tightly, about him; a heavy woolen sweater draped about neck, face and head, as a helmet; canvas gloves, with ventilated fingers, on his hands; and a straw hat perched atop the wool-covered head, he approached the scene of battle. Slowly, cautiously, he advanced. The infuriated bees tried to drive him away but were forced to give up. The keg was replaced.

Rumba. Ernesto and Gustavo, two of our Cubans, entertained at a recent dance given by Clyde Washington, at his home. Ernesto did a rumba, a Cuban hip-shaking dance. The two boys also proved to be apt students of the native square dances.