

# THE KEY REPORTER

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THE PHI BETA KAPPA NEWS MAGAZINE

## Phi Beta Kappa Associates Meet

THE sixteenth annual dinner meeting of the Phi Beta Kappa Associates was held on November 22 in New York. Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, President of the Rockefeller Institute and President of the National Academy of Sciences, gave an informal talk on "Science and Education."

The Associates are a group founded in 1940 by members of the Society who realized that the \$290,000 endowment of the Phi Beta Kappa Foundation, the custodian of the Society's capital funds, was inadequate to assure the financial stability of the United Chapters. Regular Membership in the Associates is limited to 200 members of Phi Beta Kappa, each of whom contributes \$100 annually for ten years, after which he or she becomes a Life Member. Hence the Associates assure the Foundation an annual income of \$20,000. Since 1940 the Associates have

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## Meeting of Phi Beta Kappa Senate

### Visiting Scholar Plan Discussed

The Senate of the United Chapters held its annual meeting this year at the new national offices for the first time. On the evening before the formal sessions began, a reception was held at the headquarters for the Senators, members of the Committee on Qualifications, Associates living in Washington and other guests.

At the meeting the Senate's attention was centered on the Visiting Scholar Program approved by the 1955 Council. A Visiting Scholar Committee with Senator Kirtley F. Mather as Chairman, and Senators Laurence M. Gould, Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Peter H. Odegard and Louis B. Wright, has been appointed to select the lecturers. While the Committee hopes to get the program under way by next spring, the fact that most college calendars are now filled for this year probably means that visits will not be scheduled before the fall of 1956.

### Louis Martz Wins Gauss Award

The 1955 Christian Gauss Prize was awarded by the Senate to Louis L. Martz, professor of English at Yale University, for his book *The Poetry of Meditation*, published last November by the Yale University Press. The \$1,000 prize was presented to Professor Martz by Senator William C. DeVane at the 175th anniversary meeting of the Alpha of Connecticut on December 5 in New Haven.

This is the fifth award of the Christian Gauss Prize, given annually for the best book of literary scholarship or criticism published by a university press. Professor Herbert Ross Brown of Bowdoin College, chairman of the award committee, described the study as "a wonderfully illuminating book, tracing the derivation of seventeenth-century poetry from religious guides to meditation. As a contribution to our knowledge of the interrelations of re-

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### Washington Housewarming

Some 75 glasses were also warmed at the reception held in the national offices December 2. 1) Associate G. Howland Shaw and Waldo G. Leland; 2) Nancy Lewis of the Committee on Qualifications, Senators Peyton Rhodes and Charles Odegard; 3) Senators John Pomfret and Helen White; 4) Associate Stanley Hornbeck and Senator Thomas Barclay; 5) Senators Peter Odegard and Goodrich White; 6) L. R. Lind of the Committee on Qualifications and Senator Guy Stanton Ford. Mr. Lind seems to be saying that *he* had nothing to do with it.

# THE WASTELANDS REVISITED

William Lee Miller

SCHOOL people have to put up with a lot. Pummeled, pressured, and advised from every side, still bearing the wounds inflicted by super-patriots, super-religionists, super-taxpayers, and superintendents, the educators now have to deal with yet another attack from Arthur Bestor.

Bestor, a professor of history at the University of Illinois, is the most powerful spokesman for those who say the prevailing educational philosophies are "anti-intellectual." A few years ago he assaulted those philosophies with blunt articles carrying pointed titles like "Aimlessness in Education." From these articles came a book called *Educational Wastelands*, which was not exactly friendly to prevailing educational trends. Now Bestor has opened fire again with a hefty and more or less definitive sequel, *The Restoration of Learning*. It may not restore learning, but it ought to keep the educational journals steaming through the winter.

The "Wastelands" are the American public schools. The culprits Bestor pursues are the "educationists" who, he says, are not the classroom teachers, but rather some school administrators and educational bureaucrats. The ring-leaders are professors of education. From their hideouts in the teacher's colleges and departments of education, they exercise an almost unchallenged control over the American public-school system, according to Bestor, devising its curricula, using the state to enforce their ideas of teacher training, arranging the certification requirements so that anyone who wants to teach has to take piles of their education courses, and insisting that the prospective teacher be trained more in how to teach than in any subject he might teach—if he is lucky enough to teach anything as old-fashioned as a subject.

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William Lee Miller, ΦBK Nebraska '47, has taught religion at Yale and Smith and is now on the staff of *The Reporter*. This article is an abridgement of one which appeared in the October 6, 1955 issue of *The Reporter*, and is printed with the permission of the editor.

The program of the educationists, he says, is drawn up by men who (except for a few mavericks) have cut themselves off from the scholarly world and have no respect for it. "Education" has become a separate field, with its own departments and colleges, its own special jargon, and its own program for not overburdening children in our schools. Isolated from any genuine intellectual inheritance, its leaders are available for the latest fad. "Education for a changing world" is one cliché. But, says Bestor, there is nothing more useless in a really changing world than the excessive contemporariness of these educators, since what is contemporary today is gone tomorrow.

"Integration" is another cliché, and it helps account for those "core" courses which telescope a number of subjects under headings like "Common Learnings" and "Family Living." In their passion for what is immediately "practical," the educationists have moved narrow vocational training into the heart of the high-school curriculum, claiming to meet the "real-life needs" of students, but actually short-changing them by denying them the truly practical, because more broadly applicable and powerful, training in disciplines of the mind. "We don't teach history, we teach children," is one old slogan of these educational theories. But all right, if one is really going to teach children, one has to teach them *something*. These educators say they deal with the "whole child," but surely that shouldn't mean that the schools can't deal with separate things thoroughly and systematically. "When I dine," says Bestor, "I am interested in the 'whole' meal. But I certainly do not expect the soup, the meat, the salad, and the ice cream to be stirred up together. . . ."

BESTOR is not alone in making his charges against the hard-pressed educators. Many ordinary citizens are wondering whether the schools are teaching Johnny to read, whether the schools are teaching Johnny to write,

whether the schools are teaching Johnny much of anything. Education people reply, "We teach him to be a good citizen in a good society. We meet his physical, social, and vocational needs. We aim at the free unfolding of the emotional nature of every human being. We teach social unfolding and getting along with others. We deal with the whole child." But somehow this doesn't seem to replace the desire of some pesky parents and citizens for more reading and grammar and history and math.

Also, there are some writers who ride in the posse with Bestor, and in their stuff one can find listed some of the colorful results of the philosophies Bestor criticizes. Howard Whitman toured the country's schools for *Collier's* and reported "biology" tests solely concerned with football plays, a girl who spent most of two grades taking care of a donkey her progressive school had purchased, and parents who referred contemptuously to their children's courses as "Concentrated Beanbag" and "Advanced Sandpile."

Albert Lynd wrote a book called *Quackery in the Public Schools*, and Mortimer Smith wrote one called *The Diminished Mind: A Study of Planned Mediocrity in Our Public Schools*. Lynd seems particularly taken with a course called "Progress in Democratic Smoke Abatement," while Smith's favorite horror is a full course in a Midwestern high school devoted to "Orientation to the School Building."

The bruised educators have responded to these attacks from Bestor & Co. with their own barrage of articles ranging in tone from highly indignant to merely exasperated. The man who has never had an education course, reading these responses to find some answers to Bestor, discovers at once that the education field is not quite as uniform as Bestor had led him to believe. But it is still not easy to find convincing answers to him.

Many of the reviews of his first book referred to the new findings of research, which are supposed to justify modern educational practice. For example, one reviewer says that Bestor disregards the "new findings" in "experimental psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, depth psychology, and mental hygiene." No doubt the "literary-minded critics," as an educator called them, don't know all they should about the results of

these studies, and perhaps part of our discomfort with modern education does spring from ignorance. But not the major part. The struggle is mostly not about data but about values. Research may discover new data about the context of learning, but it cannot refute the notion that some learning ought to take place. The same reviewer who listed all those psychologies admits that, presumably as a result of these hot findings, "Some modern educators have been so impressed with the emotional, physical, or vocational concerns of students that they may sometimes talk or act as though the intellectual, no matter how defined, is no longer very important in the schools. . . ."

The reviewer goes on to say that's too bad, but he's mighty calm, it seems to me, about the horrendous admission he has made. In that calmness is reflected the difference in values. Surely those psychologies have not come upon some esoteric knowledge, unknown to the learned world, which would justify abandoning the careful development of the ability to think. If that is the direction in which these findings lead, they really seem more like losings.

The defense of the educators regularly cites studies that are said to show that in the fundamental skills pupils today do as well as or better than the pupils of Grandma's day. But Bestor's answer to that seems hard to get around. Even after compensating for the effects of inflation on the dollar, we are spending seven times as much per pupil as we spent in 1870, three times as much as in 1910. And all we get for it are results that are about as good as they were then. I also noticed that when buildings or facilities are discussed, the standard for educators is certainly not drawn from fifty years ago but is the absolutely ideal possibility for the future: "Our children deserve the very best schools we can build." But when the content in those same schools is discussed, the standard shifts to the past and the argument goes over to the defensive: "We're doing as well as they used to do." It all depends, perhaps, on what is regarded as important.

**T**HE reluctant conclusion of all this is that though Bestor may overstate the danger of modern trends and though he certainly overstates the ea-

gerness of the public for something more solid, he nevertheless is hard to refute. At least, someone who agrees with his basic judgment about the importance of intellectual training finds him hard to refute. With regret one must say that his criticism, though possibly too polemically stated, seems nevertheless to be one that some of the exposed and hard-pressed educators had coming to them. That's the way it seems to one non-educationist chosen at random: me. I read Bestor and was impressed. I read some educational literature and was appalled.

For example, I don't really grasp the full meaning of "the functionalization and democratization of education." The phrase occurs in an official educational booklet called "Vitalizing Secondary Education," and describes an educational movement that has been the subject of outraged scrutiny by Bestor and others. One can see why. In its lexicon, "academic" and "bookish" are sort of cuss words, which understandably makes us academic and bookish types a little nervous. The writers of that "Vitalizing" booklet want high schools to be "free of college domination." The "doctrine of mental discipline" is resolutely set aside, and the "early classrooms," where it is presumed that the teacher knew more than the students, are described as "dictatorships." In place of all that old stuff they are now going to "democratize" the process of learning (everything, but everything, gets democratized by these people). This means, apparently, the dropping of "subject matter" (another bad word) in favor of "education through real life situations."

The "life-adjustment" movement that flowered in this booklet is the epitome of all that Bestor opposes. The resolution with which it began said that the high schools, training twenty per cent of American youth for college and preparing another twenty per cent for "desirable skilled occupations," should give the remaining sixty per cent the "life-adjustment training they need." Intellectual training only for the college types (who apparently can be picked beforehand), vocational skills for another fifth, and something else, to "adjust" them to a thought-free "life," for the rest. To Bestor and to this writer, that program is democracy stood on its head: not opening out and raising the standards

for every man, but rather reducing standards to the predicted future of the mass.

Some educators say that this movement, which began in 1915, is now on the wane. Also, they say it always was more fully represented in booklets and in resolutions than in schools, and that it did not represent the best, or even perhaps the major part, of current educational thought. But it was an official program of the U. S. Office of Education, it was endorsed by major leaders in education, and it must represent, though perhaps at their worst and in the extreme, many of the important themes that appear elsewhere in modern education. Therefore, those of us who are not much taken with vitalizing and functionalizing can only be glad that Bestor and others have lit into it.

But perhaps there is part of an answer to us critics of the educators in the social and economic conditions they face. Those of us who are safely on the sidelines can't know all the pressures on the men who must actually do the day-to-day work of administering our gigantic school system. We don't know what it's like to try to accommodate the swarming multitudes of new school kids, and keep them off the streets and off the labor market, and raise money for the new buildings we need, and find new teachers, and ward off the cranks who poke at the schools, and satisfy school boards and politicians, and protect the public-school system from the few who really don't believe in it, and show that the schools aren't "Godless" without offending the atheists, and fit together Puerto Ricans and old Yankees and Negroes and Southerners and cultured and uncultured and Jews and Catholics and rich and poor and bright kids and dopes into one school system, and keep all hell from breaking loose with the delinquents, and perform myriad health and civic functions that the community thrusts onto the schools, and then find these blamed intellectuals pounding on us to teach more history and English.

Also, there may be some nuances behind the educational jargon which, never having had education courses, we don't understand. Therefore, our untutored judgments do need to be checked and corrected by those with greater knowledge and experience of

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# Halfway Between Ape and Angel

MAN'S EMERGING MIND. By N. J. Berrill  
Dodd, Mead. \$4.

A Review by Kirtley F. Mather

THIS is a book which had to be written just at this time. I doubt that anyone could have written it more skillfully or more wisely than Professor Berrill has done. Don't be misled by its title; it is not a psychological study. If it were, I would not be reviewing it. The author is Professor of Zoology in McGill University whose special interests concentrate on embryology and marine biology. Actually some such title as "Man's Emerging Nature" would seem to me more accurately revealing than the one used, although I suppose the human mind is after all pretty much responsible for the nature of human nature.

Be that as it may, Professor Berrill's smoothly flowing text reconstructs the past history of man as a biological species emerging from innumerable antecedent generations of earthly creatures, surveys the human situation in the fleeting present with special thought for the relation between man and his environment, and turns his own inquiring mind toward the possibilities of the beckoning future. Thus, it is really not inappropriate for a geologist to write this review.

Many significant new items concerning the fossil remains of man and his nearer relatives among the primates, from Tertiary and Pleistocene time, have come to light during the last few years. These are woven into the tapestry of this particular history to give a chronological account of extraordinary merit. But the most praiseworthy aspect of these pages is their vivid vitality; much more than dry bones is seen in each fossil ancestor. Emphasis is appropriately placed upon the arboreal behavior which seems to explain many of the distinctively human characteristics of bone and muscle, sense perception and brain structure. The point is well made too, that our ancestors turned from sitting in trees and swinging from boughs to walking and running at precisely the

right stage in their evolutionary development.

"Cooperative within the family, these early humans could have cooperated as hunting packs of larger and more effective size, as wolves do too; for cooperation once established tends to spread; but always at the base of it lies the intimate and intelligent interplay within the family, between male and female, mother and infant, father and young. Here is the home of man and the cradle of speech. . . . And as the tongue wagged, so the brain grew. . . . In a general way we can say that the brain volume doubled during the ten million years or so of man-ape evolution in the Pliocene period, and that it has on the average doubled again during the last million years."

Human history in the modern sense begins seven or eight thousand years ago. "The present is a climax when population waves have reached the rim of the world and are rolling back upon themselves, where adverse climate is to be coped with rather than escaped from, and where there is no longer any place to go." Professor Berrill does not believe we are destined to occupy the planets, but that the earth is all we have or ever will have.

So what of the future? We must "eventually come to terms with the planet—in greater wisdom, humility, and appreciation of what we are, how we came to be, and a better sense of values and purpose. . . . The essence of man is his quality, not his quantity, and this is no place to stop, halfway between ape and angel."

Kirtley F. Mather, professor of geology emeritus at Harvard, former book review editor of *The American Scientist*, is a Senator of ΦBK.

## Recommended Reading



### SOCIAL SCIENCES

Eric F. Goldman

CITIES IN REVOLT. By Carl Bridenbaugh. Knopf. \$7.50.

Another impressive volume (covering 1743 to 1776) in a series which is providing a striking picture of the complex and subtle role of American cities in colonial times.

THE MORAL DECISION. By Edmond Cahn. Indiana. \$5.

A fascinatingly original exploration of the ethical tangles into which the law can lead.

THE AGE OF REFORM. By Richard Hofstadter. Knopf. \$4.50.

A sparkling and richly suggestive treatment of the reform drive from Bryan through F.D.R.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF SIGMUND FREUD. By Ernest Jones. Basic Books. \$6.75.

The second volume, covering 1901-19, of one of the major biographies of our time.

SECURITY THROUGH FREEDOM. By Alpheus T. Mason. Cornell. \$2.90.

Probably the wisest discussion we have of the interplay between the rights of property and the rights of the individual in American political thinking, with a particularly timely treatment of the idea of welfare capitalism.

JEFFERSON DAVIS. By Hudson Strode. Harcourt, Brace. \$6.75.

Vol. I (to 1861) of a distinguished two-volume biography which seems certain to give Davis a wholly new place in the history of American life.

### FICTION, POETRY, AND THE FINE ARTS

John Cournois

PASSIONATE PILGRIM. By Lawrence and Elizabeth Hanson. Random. \$5.

Life of Vincent Van Gogh told with skill and sympathy.

THE FABULOUS ORIGINALS. By Irving Wallace. Knopf. \$3.95.

True stories of characters who inspired several fictional masterpieces.

FLUTE CONCERTO OF SIDNEY LANIER. By Myrtle Whittemore. Pageant. \$3.50.

Intimate study of Southern poet with stress on his musical attainments.

JOHN SINGER SARGENT. By Charles Merrill Mount. Norton. \$5.95.

Biography with emphasis on the painter's relation to his sitters.

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**TIGER AT THE GATES.** By Jean Giraudoux. *Oxford*. \$2.75.

Beautiful if somewhat wordy play about Helen of Troy translated by gifted poet and playwright, Christopher Fry.

**STYLE.** By F. L. Lucas. *Macmillan*. \$4.

Those who care for preservation of English at high level should not miss this book by distinguished English critic.

**TOM BARBER.** By Forrest Reid. *Pantheon*. \$5.

Famous trilogy of boyhood, introduced with appreciative appraisal by E. M. Forster, himself a fine novelist and sound critic.

**AMERICAN PAINTING FROM THE ARMORY SHOW TO THE DEPRESSION.** By Milton W. Brown. *Princeton*. \$15.

Comprehensive, intelligent review, lavishly illustrated with black-and-whites.

### PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION, AND EDUCATION

**George N. Shuster**

**AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS AND THEIR FIELDS.** By Wilmer Shields Rich. *American Foundations Information Service*. \$35.

The seventh edition of a book which has been of incalculable value to all harassed administrators of educational and other institutions constantly in need of money is characterized by admirable lucidity and factualness. Information has been garnered and checked. There is no longer any reason why appeals should be directed aimlessly to foundations the purposes envisaged by which are unknown, or any basis for fear lest potential benefactors of mankind should be at a loss to know what to do with their money. The American foundation has become part of our culture and this book is therefore not merely useful but fascinating as well.

**PROTESTANT-CATHOLIC-JEW.** By Will Herberg. *Garden City*. \$4.

The author appends to three penetrating analyses of the major religious groups in American life an essay in which "religion" as currently practiced is castigated for being "brought in to provide an enthusiastic mobilization of human resources for the promotion of the well-being of the individual and society."

### THE KEY REPORTER

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Editor: Elizabeth Frazee. *Book Committee:* John Cournos, Eric F. Goldman, Kirtley F. Mather, David McCord, George N. Shuster. *Consulting Editor:* Carl Billman.

**THE IMPERIAL INTELLECT. A STUDY OF NEWMAN'S EDUCATIONAL IDEAL.** By A. Dwight Culler. *Yale*. \$5.

Professor Culler's study of Newman's projected university and of the thinking which led to its creation is as interesting a book about education as has appeared in a long time.

**THE RETRIAL OF JOAN OF ARC.** By Régine Pernoud. *Translated* by J. M. Cohen. *Foreword* by Katherine Anne Porter. *Harcourt, Brace*. \$4.75.

Miss Porter says that of all the books about Joan this is "the last, profoundly satisfying word for me, for all time to come." Narrating the retrial which took place twenty years after the girl from Lorraine was burned at the stake, Mme. Pernoud proves herself a discerning artist and a notable religious historian.

### NATURAL SCIENCES

**Kirtley F. Mather**

**THE EDGE OF THE SEA.** By Rachel Carson; *illustrated* by Bob Hines. *Houghton, Mifflin*. \$3.95.

An enthralling and highly informative interpretation of the seashore in terms of the essential unity that binds life to the earth.

**THE BIOLOGY OF THE SPIRIT.** By Edmund W. Sinnott. *Viking*. \$3.50.

In a real sense a sequel to *Two Roads to Truth*, man's body, mind, and spirit are here presented as three parts of a fundamental reality, all amenable to the methodology of science.

**PENNSYLVANIA CLOCKS AND CLOCKMASTERS.** By George H. Eckhardt. *Devin-Adair*. \$15.

Truly an epic of Early American science, industry, and craftsmanship, this sumptuous volume contains information of great interest to those concerned with the history of science as well as to those for whom an accurate measure of the passage of time seems to be important.

**WILD AMERICA.** By Roger Tory Peterson and James Fisher. *Houghton, Mifflin*. \$5.

Two unusually perceptive naturalists, one American and one British, report their adventures and observations during a 30,000 mile tour of the perimeter of the continent.

**THE BEQUEST OF THE GREEKS.** By Tobias Dantzig. *Scribner's*. \$3.95.

A surprisingly interesting study of the problems, principles, and procedures which modern mathematics has inherited from Greek antiquity.

**REFLECTIONS OF A PHYSICIST.** By P. W. Bridgman. *Philosophical Library*. \$6.

A new edition, with ten additional chapters, of a distinguished collection of non-technical writings, first published in 1950.

### LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

**David McCord**

**THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SAMUEL JOHNSON.** By Walter Jackson Bate. *Oxford*. \$4.50.

Excellent and fascinating new study of an old subject. "No man can be said to put you in mind of Johnson." It is Mr. Bate's achievement that he puts you in Dr. Johnson's mind.

**THE OPEN HEART.** By Edward Weeks. *Atlantic: Little Brown*. \$3.50.

Cheerful, talkative, largely autobiographical essays of an editor and enthusiast as brisk at the lifeline as at the deadline. Mr. Weeks of the *Atlantic* has a tenacious love of adventure, letters, and humanity, and the world is his oyster with a zipper. Few readers will forget the title piece; and the one on Mickey (a spaniel that I knew) will be breaking hearts in anthologies for a long time to come.

**THE EASY CHAIR.** By Bernard DeVoto. *Houghton, Mifflin*. \$4.

Say what you will—and much has been said: this country is not aware of its loss of voice in Bernard DeVoto. Quite apart from his principal function and stature as a historian, he was a journalist of genius and vision. It was no idle whim of the man that the divisions of his last book bear the newspaper titles of Feature Section, City Desk, and so on. DeVoto was a whole newspaper in himself: editorially wise, fearless, skilled in the language of his subject or adversary, scientific in the spectrum of values, and often ahead of the story when it broke. At heart he was a militant conservative. His patriotism was natural and touching; and his sense of justice (try "The Third Floor") remains as vivid as the enormity of his learning, web of interest, and the decibels of an ambulant vocabulary. He made friends on the four-square and enemies in the round. If he sometimes set up straw men reinforced with concrete, even so the tilting was just about as good as when the battle became real. For all his sulphur, he could turn to sentiment the way one puts a piece of applewood on the fire just to see the ash of it pure white. He had humility in appreciation, as in "Almost Toujours Gai"; and wit that could be sharp—for example, the teacher quoting and parenthetically correcting his former student, Joseph Alsop: ["I used to warn you against the passive voice, Joe"]. Benny loved and spoke for all America, and particularly New England, but the west of course defined his endless bivouac. Perhaps when the wild honey is harder to come by and the Buffalo chips are down, we shall wish we had half his foresight in conservation and other matters. What was it Thoreau said? "Not that the story need be long, but it will take a long while to make it short."

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## WASTELANDS (continued)

the problems. But that does not excuse us from making the judgments. We can and should decide about priorities and values, about the purpose and direction of the schools. In fact, not being caught up in the terrific crush—and also, one is tempted to say, the terrific cant—of the education game, we might even be able to see some few things more clearly, such as that values of great importance to us have been discounted.

I SUGGEST two judgments that the nonexpert who expects a bit more than a good time from the schools can make about Bestor's argument. One can agree with him on his central evaluation: The schools ought primarily to train the mind. The *priority* ought to be on developing powers of analysis and discipline and imagination, powers of the intellect. For all the fierce attacks and flying fur, Bestor is really making this positive point. Some educators say to this, "Shucks then, what's all the shouting about? We're all for training minds, too." But as Bestor points out, and as some educators' reviews of his books inadvertently demonstrate, they do not hold this as the clear priority.

The result, as Bestor and others have described it, may be to allow the school to deal with the easy and immediate and practical matters and neglect its difficult and important work. One parent told Mortimer Smith, "We used to take Mary to the zoo, and the school taught her arithmetic. Now we teach her arithmetic and the school takes her to the zoo."

Bestor explains most cogently what he means by the intellectual role of the school. It does not mean, as the caricatures by some educationists have tried to say it does, the memorizing of the inert facts. The so-called "subject-matter fields" are not mere collections of facts but powerful tools, "disciplines" that have proved their superior power in use. Some educationists say that those new findings of research have proved that no subject is any better than any other for training the mind, but surely mathematics and language and logic and history are better at it than *Boy's Cooking*.

It is important for children to learn social sensitivity and emotional ma-

turity and physical fitness and good grooming. But these aims should not be allowed to supplant or subordinate the primary task of the school, intellectual training. If the school doesn't impart that, who will?

To say this is not to be solely concerned for the intellectuals or the gifted few. The persistence of this line of attack on Bestor is evidence that some of the things Bestor says about his educationist opponents may be true. To imply that only intellectuals are interested in intellectual training or deserve it is a revealing mistake. The schools should be concerned not with intellectuals but with the intellect; they should strive to train minds—not just brilliant ones, but all minds.

Of course that isn't easy, and of course the training doesn't penetrate far with some slow learners, and of course those of us who aren't teaching can talk more blithely about it than those who actually have to face the kids, but that doesn't change the goal. This, as Bestor says, remains the fullest possible training in systematic thought for everybody. This is the purpose of the schools and the true meaning of universal public education.

BUT ONE objection can be taken to Bestor's position. He implies, and occasionally even says, that the people (you know, "the people") have regularly supported his kind of education. Therefore, since the public is innocent, the educationists must bear all the guilt, and Bestor heaps it on them. They emerge in his books as double-dyed villains, forcing their watered stock onto a victimized populace. But surely these educationists are not as unique, or as bad, as Bestor paints them. If, as he charges, they have let the schools share a bit in anti-intellectual currents, still they did not invent those currents. Their "educationism" did not spring, like some strange anti-Minerva, full accoutered from the brow (or whatever it would be) of whoever-it-was (schools were rather modern in my time, too.)

Nobody had to force Americans to want what is "practical." No intimidation was needed to get them to look for what is called new, modern, contemporary, and progressive. No educationists had to interlock in a directorate to make the American public a bit suspicious of fancy thinkers who are so busy readin' all them books that

they don't even know where to find the carburetor. No "power politics" by the education fraternity was necessary to bring to the top the know-how boys, with their "techniques" and "methods," their laboratories and workshops. This is the American inclination.

The schools, serving the whole public and inundated with floods of kids they have to take, are under some of the same pressures of number and speed and the desire for tangible results and immediate returns that mark other parts of our society. Perhaps the answer lies not in the denunciation of the educationists in which Bestor and others, including this writer, have engaged, but rather in the more vigorous and resolute effort to make the qualities important to us have a more lively position in the society. Happily, Bestor is also engaged in that.

He is trying to reinvigorate in education the best of the American democratic and pragmatic intellectual heritage—the heritage from which, maybe in reduced form, the theories of education also are drawn. It is interesting that even Bestor does not rest his case on any pure and intrinsic worth of cultural and intellectual disciplines for their own sakes; he defends them rather as being really more practical than their supposedly practical substitutes. He is an American, too.

Just because Bestor is wrong about "the people," he's right about the emphasis to make in the schools. Because the American society won't automatically support an intellectual education, it is especially important for those who see its value to fight for it.

Bestor admits that liberal-arts professors and other intellectuals bear some of the responsibility for the isolation and desolation of the wastelands. Perhaps he doesn't confess it frankly enough; he seems to place the blame for the separation of the education world from the scholars and scientists almost solely on the former; perhaps the blame is more evenly distributed. But he does propose programs by which the scholarly and scientific world may try to retake some responsibility for the lower schools. That's a hopeful sign, which may show that better side of American democracy not always apparent to observers. This better side is the continual thrust of free men to combine inclusiveness with real attainment.

ligion and literature, this book is impressive in its triumphant combination of close, critical reading and sound historical scholarship. Informed as well as informative, and written with a fine critical objectivity, *The Poetry of Meditation* is fully worthy to join the other distinguished volumes which have been selected for the annual prize award established in 1951 by the Senate of Phi Beta Kappa."

Louis L. Martz is a graduate of Lafayette College, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year.

### Address Changes

In notifying Phi Beta Kappa of a change of residence, members are reminded that, whenever they are not able to indicate this change on a KEY REPORTER stencil, they should send not only their new address but the one to which their Phi Beta Kappa mail was previously sent; also chapter and year of initiation. This information should be directed to Phi Beta Kappa, 1811 Q Street, N. W., Washington 9, D. C.

### British Summer School Program

Four special six-week courses are being offered next summer under a joint program at the Universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, Birmingham and London. The Oxford course is "Literature, Politics and Arts in 17th-Century England"; at Edinburgh, "The European Inheritance: History, Literature and Philosophy"; Birmingham University offers "Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama"; and the London course is "Literature and Art in England c.1750-c.1850."

The university summer schools are primarily for post-graduate students, but undergraduates are not excluded if they are qualified. The total cost of the courses—room, board and tuition—varies from \$199 to \$210. Applications must be sent by March 26 to the Institute of International Education, 1 East 67th Street, New York 21, N. Y. Application forms and brochures are also available from the British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.

JANUARY, 1956

## Out of Key

### Gastronomical Qualifications Required

A serious question of policy has been brought to the attention of the United Chapters by David D. Morris, secretary of the chapter at Albion College. It seems that a Michigan farmer claims that "turkeys really ought to graduate Phi Beta Kappa." The man relates how one bird escaped the Thanksgiving table for seven years because he was so smart he became a pet of the family. Turkeys know enough, he continues, not to eat corn in the summer because its carbohydrates raise their body temperature, and to face the wind in the cold because it presses feathers close to the body for warmth.

"The qualifications mentioned," writes Mr. Morris, "seem to indicate a lack of understanding of Phi Beta Kappa. Members do not become pets to save their skins. They do not study food selection, as that is a branch of home management and, at least in this chapter, the members have declared it not to be a liberal arts course. Turning against the wind should probably be considered merely a vocational skill.

"Since this is probably the only time turkeys have been considered for membership, I should appreciate your advice." The real difficulty, our correspondent points out, is that "our members would like turkeys as members 'in course' at our annual banquet."

### Painter to Scholar

(This quatrain was composed in response to David McCord's review, in the last issue, of Mr. Thompson's *Fishing in New England*. The author is also a painter, and is a member of the National Academy of Design.)

You'd never think it  
But I'm envious when  
Men expose that trinket  
On the abdomen.

—LESLIE P. THOMPSON



contributed a total of more than \$297,000, of which the Trustees of the Foundation have allocated approximately \$206,000 to the United Chapters toward its operating expenses. The remainder of the contributions has been available for reinvestment by the Foundation, the present endowment of which now stands at approximately \$650,000, excluding the value of the Washington property purchased in 1954 for use as the permanent offices of the United Chapters.

The Board of Directors of the Associates, meeting immediately preceding the dinner, re-elected Thomas C. Desmond as president of the group. Also re-elected were Frank Aydelotte, Edwin H. Burgess and Marion Lofton Smith, vice-presidents; Charles A. Tonsor, secretary; and Hermon F. Bell, treasurer. In addition, Harold J. Baily was elected a director to serve for the remainder of the term 1953-56, replacing Jerome Alexander, who has resigned because of ill health.

## To the Editor

I hope all readers of my article on the problem of loyalty in the September KEY REPORTER will have read Norman Thomas' account in the November number of his successful efforts to induce a change of heart in the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company.

Among the numerous letters expressing general agreement with my article two in a friendly way raised questions about the accuracy of other details. These call for brief comment.

Was I correct in saying that in my boyhood I had recited the Apostle's Creed in Baptist and Congregational churches? My correspondent pointed out that each Baptist and Congregational church establishes its own basis of membership; that in neither denomination are the churches bound by a common creed. This I believe, but I also believe my memory is accurate. In any case, my mention of a personal experience was quite without criticism of either church—merely a concrete illustration of a general problem, in as simple terms as possible.

On the other point I am sorry to say that I was in error, but I must ask you to believe that I erred in ignorance and not in cunning. The Mississippi oath of 1950 is against promoting change by "means not provided for or sanctioned by the Constitution." This of course makes my ironical remarks about "alteration" out of order. It does not, however, make less ridiculous and insulting the elaborate setting forth of what might be called the lightest shadow of a shadow of a subversive act or thought.

WILLIAM T. HASTINGS

An appropriate time to take stock of . . .

# The Human Situation Today

In the nineteenth century the problem was that God is dead; in the twentieth century the problem is that man is dead.  
Erich Fromm

"The radio has just announced that an atom bomb was exploded over Japan. What does that mean?" "It means," I said, "that I am scared to death."  
Joseph Wood Krutch

Our best chance for survival lies not in our courage or our resolution as much as in our modesty and patience. We cannot master the forces of history, but we may be able to beguile them.  
Reinhold Niebuhr

The pathos of latter-day man in the New Society is that he hungers for personal fulfillment and for a sense of community with others, and he has been unable to attain either.  
Max Lerner

We cannot make wise decisions if we continue to pretend that human behavior is not controlled, or if we refuse to engage in control when valuable results might be forthcoming.  
B. F. Skinner

The major problem for us is the conquest of vacuity through education, because vacuity is the result of the leisure which technology makes possible.  
George N. Shuster

I am firmly of the opinion that man is not on the planet by divine right, though he may be apical in many ways to the pyramid of life.  
F. Fraser Darling

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