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IT IS MUCH EASIER
TO BE CRITICAL THAN
IT IS TO BE CORRECT.
—Benjamin Disraeli.

"Constructive Thought"

One of the most difficult tasks for one who is not adept in the art is the treatment of any subject in a literary fashion. "Literary," according to Webster, is anything "of or pertaining to learning." Hence, any discussion, conducted in a so-called learned or rational manner, may be considered as "literary."

A person not experienced in treating a subject after a literary fashion has one of two handicaps; either he does not know what he is talking about (or writing about), or he hasn't the power of expression.

A combination of logical thought and the power of expression may be classed as "constructive thought." Power of expression does not mean the ability to write or transfer ideas to paper. Rather it means to be able to carry them out to their logical conclusion.

"Constructive thought," when we trace it from its source, consists of a series of steps, the first and the last of which are the most difficult to attain. To explain "constructive thought": the idea must first be born, must then be enlarged, worked with, pro and con, criticized, amended, and finally carried out. It is the last step that takes the idea out of the "thought" class and puts it into the "constructive thought" class. The series of steps that qualify the original idea must be topped by realization. No thought can be classed as "constructive" unless materialized.

When primeval man used a stone wielded with his arms, he appreciated the advent of a handle, wooden or otherwise, that would facilitate the operation of the instrument. The party who discovered the application of a handle was capable of constructive thought. There is no assurance that the discovery of this handle was not accidental, but such incidents as outlined above were undoubtedly paralleled many times in the course of man's development.

The old alchemists searched untiringly for the philosopher's stone. They had no rational ideas behind their quest, and although they made many interesting and valuable discoveries, their work cannot properly be classed as "constructive," since the ideas underlying their experiments were illogical and unstable.

To make a long transition to the present day, we can see the application of "constructive thought" to all that makes up our modern civilization. Upon analysis we also see that development is mutual.

Let us consider, as a present day example, engineering and business, two phases of modern civilization that are hopelessly interdependent. Say, for instance, that a business man deemed that it would be a profitable investment to build a hotel. His idea at this stage may be classed merely as a "thought." However, as it goes through the various stages of economic consideration, the "thought" reaches perfection. But it can not be classed as "constructive thought" until the idea is actually nearing its goal, namely the completion of the hotel structure.

At this stage of development let us consider the problem from an engineering point of view. The business man makes it possible for the engineer to work, but the business man would be non-productive unless the engineer could show him and actually prove to him by action that his ideas are practical. Thus in the case of the hotel, the engineer makes the idea an actuality in brick and steel. Hence it is the constructive thought of the engineer, along the line of actual problems of physical realization, that makes the business man's progress a possibility.

Summarizing, the business man makes possible the progress of the engineer by creating a demand for huge engineering projects; the engineer on the other hand, by guaranteeing the feasibility of a project, clears the path for the advancement of the business man's program.

Here we see the interdependency of the various factors that make up modern civilization in which co-operation is such a vital factor. But whether the need be for individual efforts, or for co-operative work, advancement is only assured where "constructive thought," the realization of well-thought-out ideas, is the dominant motive.

.. "THE SLIPSTICK" ..
Cleave to "The Slipstick"; let
the Slipstick fly where it may.

Think and Win

If you think you are beaten—you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you like to win, but think you can't
It's almost a cinch you won't.

If you think you'll lose—you've lost;
For out in the world we find
Success begins with a fellow's will—
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're outclassed—you are;
You've got to think to rise;
You've got to be very sure of yourself
Before you can win a prize.

Life's battles do not always go
To the faster or stronger man.
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

—Author Unknown.

THIS IS A FROST

Prof. Hendricks: Have you done your outside reading?
Frosh: No, sir. It's been too cold.

—Freddie.

Professor Swineford was lecturing to the class and one of the students was nodding his head and having an awful time keeping his eyes open. Finally the professor grew impatient and remarked, very sarcastically, "Might I inquire at what time you went to bed last night?"

"Why, yes, I was home last night at a quarter of twelve."

"What? Didn't I hear you say before class that you were dancing at two this morning?"

"Sure, that's right. But I didn't get home till three, and isn't three a quarter of twelve?"

Diplomacy

Small Boy: Dad, one of the boys at school said I looked like you.

Dad (beaming): And what did you say to him?

Small Boy: Nothin', he's a lot bigger 'n me.

—Dick.

The father of the young hopeless held the valentines in his hand and scowled darkly at his progeny.

"I have a note from Dean Penn, stating that you have flunked in physics, calculus, mechanics, and chemistry. Do you mean to tell me you are a complete failure?"

"Oh, no, father. Say not that. Haven't I the most humorously described Ford on campus?"

After examining some of the so-called cars that are parked on Federal St., one can only assume that they are a leap ahead of the condition of the Vestris.

But the War is Just Beginning

He: I want to get a license.

Clerk: A hunting license?

He: No, I'm thru hunting. I want a marriage license.

—Freddie.

Poor Mary

Mary had a little watch,

The price she paid was low.

And everywhere that Mary went

The watch refused to go.

—Len.

Have you noticed a figure striding thru the street swathed in a black cloak and resembling a Paris gendarme on the scent of a criminal? Let us allay your fears and assure you no characters have escaped from any books in the library; 'tis merely Professor Griffith and his trick raincoat.

Spiritualism

Frosh: Gosh, I knew these buildings are old, but I never knew they were haunted.

Greener: Who said they were?

Frosh: Well, how about this school spirit?

"This is the limit," cried the professor in an anguished voice as he strode forward and solved the problem.

"A cow, owned by Farmer Jackson of East Alton, maddened by the glaring headlights of the engine, charged a Big Four special train and toppled it into the Wood river." Excerpt from the CHITRIB.

This may seem like a lotta bull, but its dated 1898.

An Insane Tale

Dumb: Do you know that they don't have insane asylums in Arabia?

Er: No, why don't they?

Dumb: 'Cause there are nomad people in the country.

"Jennings whipped George Jennings, 7-5, 6-4," Herald and Examiner. Steady, old boy, and learn to master yourself!

Humph. Do you know what our greatest ambition is? No? Well, it's to write this colyum for one issue after we graduate.

—Al.

Book Reviews

By JOEL M. JACOBSON, '29

Captain Fracasse

By Theophile Gautier.

Gautier does not philosophize, but carries the theme along brightly, always showing the surface most evident. In a novel of this sort, deeper consideration does not seem necessary. One is perfectly willing to be carried entertainingly along, and enjoy with the character the ups and downs of life.

Unpleasant Plays

By George Bernard Shaw.

Shaw's extremely forceful and tragic themes are overlaid with a veneer of comedy. Galsworthy, in "Strife" and "Justice" treats such themes seriously, as does Ibsen in most of his plays.

The Double Garden

By Maurice Maeterlinck.

The time cannot be spent to analyze the many ideas that this book provoked. The author's clear insight into the tendencies of politics, his analysis of modern drama, his personification of the automobile, his knowledge of the habits of bees, his love of flowers, all his versatility of thought must be passed over. The mind of Maurice Maeterlinck is one large interrogation point, ruthlessly questioning and examining everything. So strong is this characteristic that, while he scarcely sets down a question mark himself, he directs the thoughts of readers on his own investigating track. Couple to this that all his ideas are set down in a flawless and inimitable style, so flawless and so inimitable that it loses nothing at the hands of the translator, and we have a book that is truly worth reading.

Madame Bovary

By Gustav Flaubert.

This book gives the impression of being an exceedingly personal and intimate biography. A faithless wife is the heroine and all the other characters are placed there merely to aid in the changing and directing of the stream of her life exactly as the pebbles control the course of a rivulet. It is upon the true development of character and the methods by which an author succeeds in foisting the puppets of his play upon the reader that the reality of a story depends. It is here that Flaubert shows his true worth, giving us a story real in its intimate detail, in the author's deep knowledge of people, and in the wealth of figures of speech.

Smoke and Steel

By Carl Sandburg.

In all, these poems are worthy of reading, poems of things we know well, poems that, in the language of the people, give us new ideas, new thoughts, new viewpoints. Can any Armour student read these lines without a thrill. "The runners now, the handlers now, are still; they dig and clutch and haul; they hoist automatic knuckles from job to job; they are steel making steel."

"Campus Crushers"
Appear; No Alarm
Just Another Fad

Why is a college man?

You can pick them out any place. Always something distinctive, something "cullitch" about your real American undergrad.

The fads shift from time to time and place to place, but there never was either rhyme or reason to them. It used to be teamster's gloves, then flowing ties, and again baggy trousers. Now it's crusher hats.

You see them everywhere, jammed haphazardly atop the college man's head. It doesn't matter if they hang down over an educated eye or rest precariously on an educated bump of knowledge. The more nonchalant and careless they appear the more "college" a man is. You roll them up and stick them in your pocket; the more disreputable they look, the classier you are.

A rah-rah raccoon coat, twenty inch trousers, and a crusher hat and you're all set for the Drake, the Greasy Spoon, or the fraternity brawl.

Whom should we see looking at us from the back cover page of the last issue of the Engineer but A. H. Everly, '28, and L. J. Ericsson, '28? They were gracing the picture illustrating an advertisement of the General Electric Company. Everly is at present working on photo-film at Schenectady while Ericsson is working on meter-testing at Fort Wayne. Both these men are taking the student engineering course.

LETTER-BOX

A MONTHLY "ENGINEER"

To the Letterbox:

I do not know upon what knowledge some of the men based their replies to the Reporter last week, but I am certain that these men are absolutely unacquainted with the facts.

The only objections presented to making the "Engineer" a monthly seem to be that it would be too much work and impossible to gather enough material. These are easily overruled. At the present time the staff of the "Engineer" has on hand sufficient material for two complete issues, and enough promised for another. Articles are to be had for the asking; engineering news is plentiful; local news is abundant; the material for other features is easily obtained. That, certainly, eliminates one of the objections.

Of the 21 publications listed under "Engineering College Magazines Associated," only two presented by major engineering schools are quarterlies. One of these is the "Armour Engineer." Schools of a lower rating than Armour publish monthlies and make successes of them. Is the Armour student body so inert and incapable that it cannot do likewise? Objection number two is overruled.

Why can't the undergrads and the faculty co-operate and bring out a monthly "Engineer" that will be as good as, if not better, than the present quarterly? Surely, no one doubts that this would be a beneficial undertaking.

As a final word to the students: Talk it over among yourselves. Speak to the faculty members—get their views, and if need be, change them. Throw away your hammers, and then let's all get together and give Armour what it really needs, and has needed for years—an A-1 monthly magazine.

R. J. GUENTHER, '29,
Articles Editor, "Engineer."

To the Letter-Box:

It has been the custom in late years for the seniors to have the tables in the west end of the lunchroom reserved for their special use. However, when eating at the lunchroom this year, it has often been necessary for seniors to eat on the benches. This week the underclassmen including the juniors will be told to "keep off" the seniors' quarters. It is not a question of democracy, and if the requests are ignored, it will probably be a question of autocracy.

—M.G.M.

To the Editor:

I think a football team at Armour would put this school on the map. We hear and read plenty about the feats of Carnegie and Georgia Tech while we have to stand by and listen to the music rather than make it ourselves. There would be no question of material or coaching ability; and as for a place to play, that could be easily arranged once the team made its name. It is not necessary to list the advantages we would derive from an "eleven"—we have track, baseball, basketball, swimming, tennis, golf, etc., why not football?

—Freshie.

(Ed. Note: Contributions to the Letter-Box were also received from D. R. Humes, '32, and P. H. Korrell, '32. We are sorry that, because of an over-abundance of copy, we will not be able to publish these letters before the Christmas holidays. Thanks, just the same!)

"Safe Water Supply"
Lecture to W.S.E.'s

"Safe Water Supply" was the topic of a lecture given by H. H. Gerstein, '22, to the student branch of the Western Society of Engineers at a meeting held last Wednesday in Room B Mission. A history of the water supply of Chicago from its founding to the present day and the various problems in sanitation that it provoked was covered very thoroughly by Mr. Gerstein. The present day problems of chlorination in the producing of a safe domestic supply was stressed with respect to the reduction of typhoid. His talk was amply illustrated by slides.

Edward H. Mohr, '28, president of the student branch announced that the Fall Smoker of the W. S. E. will be held at the Phi Kappa Sigma House next Wednesday, December 19.

BEG YOUR PARDON

An erroneous statement appeared last week in the news story pertaining to the issuance of the "Engineer." The article stated that E. H. Earle, '17, wrote the story on "Chromium Plating." This story was written by I. G. Klein, '29, while the story by Earle was on "Developments in Hydraulic Turbines."

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