

## ARMOUR TECH NEWS

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## What's To Be Done About It?

Our editorial of last week, headed "Armour's Annual Vaudeville," created considerable discussion, some kindly, much of it otherwise, among the student body. We should have been sadly disappointed if it had not.

We believe that the unfavorable comment, however, was due entirely to a complete misunderstanding of the article and its intent.

To clarify our position on the matter, we wish to enlarge somewhat on the subject thus brought up, and, if possible, to offer a few suggestions which might aid toward eliminating the cause of all the hubbub. Before proceeding with this article, we suggest a careful re-reading of last week's onslaught.

Regarding the misunderstandings: First, that article was construed by many to apply directly to the recent Senior Class election. The article specifically included all four classes, and all their sequels, the farcical attempt at a Freshman election last Monday being no exception.

It was further misconstrued, particularly by the members of the Campus Club, to be a direct criticism of the victories reaped by the non-fraternity factions. To the contrary, the non-fraternity victories as such were a very healthy reaction to a series of fraternity walk-aways in previous years. The article applied much more pointedly to the class of '29 election of last year than to that of this year. Nor did we by any inference condemn the actual campaigning among the factions. If any group wants to contribute a few nickels to the Illinois Bell, or invest a few of their good dollars for posters and campaign literature in order to advance their cause, that is their own concern, and a perfectly legitimate one.

To get back to the original subject, let us analyze the situation as a whole. We have a series of elections. Each is hotly contested; each stirs intense rivalry, and each precipitates several factions among the students. The nominations are opened, and probably two, maybe three men, are put on the presidential slate. There may be four or five factions or parties, each having their own idea of a choice, yet all do not obtain representation. The discretion as to who shall be nominated lies almost entirely with the chairman of the meeting, who, in the case of the upper-classmen, is the previous year's president. This chairman is usually very much biased as to whom he wants nominated, and when he wants the nominations closed.

There, as we see it, is the big flaw in the present system of choosing class officers. To this very condition we referred last week when we said the elections were unrepresentative. The actual number of ballots cast in any election for any one man means nothing, if the original slate upon which he appeared does not contain truly representative men.

And now a possible solution, if any, to correct the fault in the system. The presiding chairman must be a non-interested, unprejudiced individual.

Wabash College, of Indiana, attains this end by placing the four class meetings in charge of student committees of three, one to preside and two to act as tellers and general assistants, the appointment of these committees being vested in the Senior Council, which in turn is composed of a group of the distinguished men in the Senior Class. A faculty representative sits in on the meeting which draws up the committees.

Still different and very likely superior methods are in vogue elsewhere. Some effect the nominations through a nominating committee, which committee usu-

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## BOOK REVIEWS

ALBERT EDWARD WIGGAM

"The Fruits of the Family Tree"  
"The New Decalogue of Science"  
"The Next Age of Man"

By JOEL M. JACOBSON

"The Fruit of the Family Tree" is the best and most simple explanation of the causes and effects of heredity that the layman can read and understand. Clearly and simply, in the modest tone of a true scientist, he sets before us the facts of modern biology. The fight between the exponents of heredity and those of environment in the determination of character is subsiding. There is now but slight doubt that environment has but little effect in man's development except in that it changes the direction of the stream of heredity. (An unproven possibility.) The late researches into the ancestry of a number of typical families show this clearly. One family, in 200 years of existence, produced 12 college presidents, 65 college professors, 265 college graduates, 60 physicians, 100 clergymen, 30 judges, 80 public officers, 3 congressmen, 2 senators and 1 vice-president of the United States; while another family in the same time has given the world 310 professional beggars, 40 wrecked by disease, 50 prostitutes, 60 thieves, 7 murderers and 53 other criminals. What more proof is needed? In such a length of time the effects of poor environment can be safely disregarded, so that the history of such a family—one which has never produced a single useful citizen—cannot be overlooked.

Without the preparation of the "Fruit of the Family Tree" I would probably have never completed the second and later of Mr. Wiggam's books. His "ten commandments" antagonize me. Mr. Wiggam, laying down the law like a modern Moses, is not to my taste, and yet I feel sure that all he says is vitally important to the welfare of the human race. In other words, the "ten commandments of science" would have affected me much more deeply had they not been written in the tone of a biological alarmist.

Notwithstanding Mr. Wiggam's arrogant presentation, he has given us something worth thinking about. I, personally, have never believed that all men are born equal or will ever grow equal under the same conditions. This book strengthens my opinions with tangible proof. The author's conclusion is well worth considering: "The bright will always be ahead, and the dull will always be behind."

In reality the ten commandments are the methods Wiggam suggests for avoiding the results of his "third warning"—"that the highest triumphs of science are mainly enlisted on the side of race deterioration." Man, forsaking his natural outdoor life more and more, is gradually weakening. Couple this to the fact

that we are continually saving the weak, the diseased, the criminal, the insane, and the feeble-minded to reproduce their kind, and we have a truly momentous warning. Until society prevents these types from having children the race cannot advance.

The "tenth commandment"—"the duty of philosophical reconstruction," particularly interests me because a small part of the discussion is devoted to a rather new school of philosophy—naturalism.

"In this philosophy of naturalism the universe stands revealed at last in all its gaunt nakedness, as a mere machine without sympathy or purpose. Man is found to be a brother not only to the brute, but to the clod and the crystal. He sweeps for a brief moment round his little orbit, and passes into the trackless void with the same mechanical precision as the stars. Life, itself, instead of being the warm, pulsing thing which we have thought, is believed to be a mere phenomenon of matter. . . ."

If such an interpretation of life actually were accepted by the man on the street it would have one of three results, which one, being largely a matter of education. First, men may assume a sort of "eat, drink and be merry" philosophy. Second, it may cause the world to plunge into social and political revolution, each seeking to grab what he can. Third, it may cause the adoption of a "true liberalism, a true freeing of the human spirit" . . . resulting in a "civilization, not of power but of values, a civilization of beauty, gaiety and happiness; of social tenderness, sweetness and gentility; of intellectual and spiritual adventure, such as did characterize the old Renaissance and the most high and palmy state of Rome and Greece, and those other precious moments of history when society thought of men as persons and not as masses."

In his latest book, "The Next Age of Man," Wiggam has not the highly idealistic and sure attitude of the "New Decalogue." He repeats himself considerably, whole chapters being much like his earlier books. He is more practical, however, and reverts more to the methods of his first and best book. The practical means of carrying out the ideas of the biologist, birth control, is being misused. Where its purpose should be to prevent the reproduction of the unintelligent and unfit, it tends to do the opposite. Only the higher classes can secure the necessary information. "For example," the author says, "if I should mention at this point any method of birth regulation, I should be promptly and unceremoniously jailed as a common criminal." Whether or not such a situation can be remedied will depend on the efforts of Wiggam and the other biologists to change public opinion.

to the subject? Many students admit having spent eight and nine hours on this task. If it is necessary that we spend so much time, why do we not receive credit in proportion? Something should be done to remedy this condition of unbalance. —One of Them.

ENTHUSIASM is the dynamics of your personality. Without it, whatever abilities you may have lie dormant. You may possess knowledge, sound judgment, good reasoning facilities, but no one will know it until you discover how to put your heart into thought and action. A wonderful thing is this quality which we call enthusiasm. If you would like to be a power among men, cultivate enthusiasm. People will like you better for it; you will escape the dull routine of a mechanical existence and you will make headway wherever you are.

—J. Ogden Armour.

## "THE SLIPSTICK"

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

In the crowded street car  
The homely lady stood—  
And stood and stood and stood and stood  
And stood and stood and stood.

"At last the worm has turned!" exclaimed the excited M. E. as he adjusted the gears.

She (indignantly): "I'd like to see you kiss me again?"  
He: "All right; keep your eyes OPEN this time."

When playing poker, and all seems gloomy and hopeless, remember the words of Perry or John Paul Jones or somebody: "Don't give up the ship!"

Izzy: "What has three brains and dances?"

Dizzy: "I bite. What has three brains and dances?"

Izzy: "Ten thousand chorus girls!"

Though not definitely known, this remark is attributed to Napoleon or Socrates: "You can always tell a senior—but not much."

The Slipstick Receives a Spirit Message  
Dear Slipstick:

—The Ghost of the Attic.

Professor Cooper: "Use vermilion in a sentence."  
Bird: "My girl is ugly, but her old man is rich, and I'd like to have vermilion."

Nervous Patient: "Howinell do you take these capsules? Do you break 'em open?"

Irritated Doc: "No; swallow them, and they'll break open on your gallstones."

Griffith: "Why didn't you examine some of the stones around the campus as I told you to do?"

Rose: "I couldn't find the campus!"

Grif.: "Well, didn't you see that blade of grass?"

An echo is the only thing that can cheat a woman out of the last word.

And don't forget, Freshie, the big Armour-Vassar football game will be held at 8:30 a. m. at Schommer Stadium next Saturday!

Our office record shows the enrollment of a freshman from Yuma, Ariz. Investigation disclosed the fact that he lived his entire life in that city, and has been happy. My! my! What a wonderful sense of Yuma he must have!

(Continued from column 1)

ally corresponds to the Senior Council mentioned above. Others have nominations by petition, which system works very smoothly and effectively. None have as much faith in human nature as we apparently had when our present system was adopted.

These are but a few of the possible solutions. The LETTER BOX welcomes any others that the students may have to offer. What is to be done about it?

## A \$500,000,000 Bonfire

This week is Fire Prevention Week. Every year the National Fire Prevention Association sets aside one week in which to carry on an active campaign among the citizens and property-holders of the country, spreading propaganda in an attempt to reduce somewhat the half-billion-dollar annual fire loss which occurs in this country. Adding to this figure a little reading on the history of disastrous fires makes one realize the appropriateness of such a campaign.

The first important fire of which we have authentic record is that of Rome, in 65 A. D. Emperor Nero is held responsible by many. It is known, at any rate, that he was notoriously slow about taking measures for the city's protection.

The Great Fire of London, with property damage of \$60,000,000, occurred in 1666. In 1812 the great Moscow fire consumed 51,000 buildings at a loss of \$150,000,000.

Within the last century many of the larger American cities have been partially destroyed by fire. The business section of New York City was practically wiped out in 1835 by a fire starting in a narrow, wind-swept street. The great Chicago fire of 1871 is said to have been started by a cow kicking over a lantern. The next year Boston had its great fire. In 1900 the Hoboken pier and steamer fire cost 215 lives. In 1906 San Francisco had its great fire following an earthquake, and with a loss of 200 lives and \$350,000,000 property damage.

And just the other day the newspapers were headlining the Madrid theater fire, the sixteenth great theater fire in the world since 1811.

Let us all give the matter of Fire Prevention some special thought this week. A small fire prevented may mean a big disaster averted.

## LETTER-BOX

A. I. T., Chicago, Ill., Oct. 8, 1928.  
Letter Box: Now that the courses at Armour are run on the semester-hour system, have the students any reason to expect that the figures given in the catalogue are true? In most cases, it seems that the instructors adhere to the system by assigning only enough work to require the indicated amount of time to be spent in preparation. In other cases, however, the student cannot possibly prepare his work in the time shown in the catalogue. The catalogue shows for Physics Laboratory, three hours in the lab. and two hours preparation each week. In this two hours "preliminary" must be written, results calculated, and a "final" written. Where is the students who can do all this in the time allotted