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THE STAFF

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Sprig

Spring!! Balmy breezes blowing from the southland. Cheerful old sol beaming down upon humanity telling us that the snows have left us for another long season. The first robins are singing sweetly from their aerial perch; all around the children are proclaiming with the invincible proof of the roller-skate that old man winter has gasped his last. And here in the musty, dingy, Chapin Hall the editor sits racking his weary brain for an editorial subject.

Man is of necessity a slave to duty. His first impulse is to listen to the bucolic call of the robin, throw off the yoke of labor or of routine daily affairs, and let an easy, nomadic existence be his lot. But man must live. And food, a prerequisite to life, is secured only by adherence to duty, with its reward of a bite to eat.

The student is motivated by the same necessity, although his is one of the future. He believes that if he can manage to exist on unbuttered bread obtained by application of the "beg, borrow, or sacrifice" principle during his student days, he will be rewarded with cake in later years.

Getting back to the weary editor in dingy Chapin Hall, he too labors under the impression (probably an illusion) that he is building up a credit for cake in his old age. But cake or no, the editorial refuses to break, and he is going to call it a day. He'll let a few fellow editors from other schools help fill the column.

With Other Editors

AS A HINDU SEES US

To those who are accustomed to being reviled and indicated as a "jazz-mad" youth comes a welcome relief from a distinguished visitor to this country, Shrimati Sarojini Devi. This Hindu woman, ex-president of the Indian National Congress and formerly mayor of the city of Bombay, finds that her stay in the new world "has been a period of veritable delight and revelation," as she expresses her sentiments in a letter to Gandhi.

"Through all the incredible tumult and turmoil of the daily existence, I find the spirit of a valiant and vital youth, seeking for some truth, some realization finer and higher than the old world has yet conceived or expressed. Though today stone and steel and gold be their only symbols, they express the challenge and dream of youth in all its unspent and invincible courage, ambition, power, and insolent pride."—The M. I. T. "Tech."

Look—But Leap

Statistics on the amount of time wasted every day by all the persons in the world in pondering, dallying, and waiting in making decisions would make an interesting study, to say the least. Life as a whole is a matter of one decision after another, starting from earliest childhood and carrying through until senility or insanity render the mind incapable of making decisions. For example, the college man gets up in the morning, after deciding whether the time is propitious or desirable; he chooses the color of his shirt; necktie, shoes, and other clothing; selects the kind of cereal he will have for his breakfast. Thus, it is readily seen that even the smaller things, many of which come to be done automatically, are in reality decisions of some sort.

In a sense, each person is the executive for his or her individual corporation, as well as the working force. Orders must be issued and then carried out. The execution is simple, as a rule; it is determining just what ought to be done with one's self that is of ultimate importance.

Indecision, if carried through life, can not only result in inconvenience, but may result in continued unhappiness. It involves a state of mind which forces one to weigh the facts at hand, choose the side upon which the evidence seems to be heavier, and then cease wondering about the decision, apparently secure in the thought that it was the proper choice for the conditions.

That one trait—it might better be called a habit—may mean the difference between success and failure; prosperity and poverty; happiness and despondency. In any case, indecision has no place in the affairs of the aggressive, cheerful, and sucessful person.—J. B. in the "Purdue Exponent."

"THE SLIPSTICK"

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

GO TO FATHER!

"Go to father," she said
When I asked her to wed.
For she knew that I knew
That her father was dead.
And she knew that I knew
What a life he had led.
So she knew that I knew
What she meant when she said,
"Go to father." —O. Shaw.

* * *

It was the conclusion of the famous blindfold tests. Mr. Rodney B— had just completed the smoking of the four cigarettes, carefully clearing his taste with a cup of black coffee. "Now, Mr. B—," pursued the judge, "will you tell us by number, without trying to identify the brand, which appealed to you as the smoothest and the best flavored?" There was a moment's hesitation, and then,

"Well, gentlemen, it's a difficult task to choose between them, but my choice is cup number three."

—Freddie.

* * *

Always Efficient

Wife: Shall I have your lunch brought up to you on deck here?

Husband: No, have it thrown straight overboard; it will save time—and trouble.

* * *

Blessed be he who asketh for nothing; for he shall be satisfied. —Aesop Bibb.

* * *

Al.:

I inquired in the office of the Deans the other day if the Calculus grades had been turned in. They told me they didn't even know they had been lost. —I.O.N.

* * *

We are forced to conjecture that the reporters were on a spree last week. In talking about the frosh dance, one remarks that the tickets for the dance on April 12 are to be on sale this year. Another woozy pencil-pusher says that the radio broadcast—was made available—for all Armour students unable to be present in the Assembly Hall. Come, come, boys, humor must be confined to Slipstick.

The Great Race

"Your son is pursuing his studies at Armour, isn't he?"
"I guess so," said his father, "he's always behind."

* * *

STANZA ONE

A daughter of a clergyman stubbed her toe, and in the presence of her father audibly said "Damn!" Her horrified father offered her a new dress if she would promise never to say that word again.

VERSE THE SECOND

Then she had a date with an Armour man and his car froze.

WORSE THE THIRD

The next day she went to her father and said: "Dad, I've got a word worth a fur coat."

* * *

Have you heard about the sophomore chemical who is so dumb that every time he has to count up to twenty he has to take his shoes off? —Freddie

* * *

I realized a life-long ambition the other evening.

I went to the most exclusive night club in Chicago, and ordered a ham sandwich. I sat thru the entire performance, bought no cigarets, threw no money to the singers, and paid my check without tipping the waiter. In fact, the cost of that evening's entertainment was the price of that ham sandwich.

Quite an evening for twenty-five dollars if I do say so myself.

* * *

Can't you picture, many, many years ago, Dean Penn standing in front of his father as the latter spoke to him? saying, "John, this is the age of specialties and specialists. Is there anything that you can do better than anyone else in the world?"

And can't you just hear the Dean saying, "Yes, Dad. I can read my own writing."

* * *

A temporary address: Chicago.

* * *

Have you heard of the deaf mute on a blind date?

* * *

Baseball news is sure got us going; the Chicago teams are both rarin' to start, and so we're most impatient. Come on, April, you mean a lot to us,

Al. Auerbach.

Book Reviews

By JOEL M. JACOBSON, '29

MAKING A SQUARE OF THE CIRCLE

From the time of Archimedes the calculation of the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle, which we know to be 3.14159—approximately, has attracted the attention of numerous investigators, a few with mathematical knowledge, the greater number with none. Archimedes himself, said that while 22/7 was not the correct value, it was close enough for his purpose and he did not intend to waste any more time on a more accurate calculation. Since then, however, some ambitious calculator thought differently and figured the value of "pi" to 607 decimal places. It has since been conclusively proved that the circumference and the diameter are incommensurable, and that "pi" has no determinable exact value. Six hundred decimals should, nevertheless, be close enough for the average ten inch slide rule. A great many amateur mathematicians decided, however, that the calculations and proof were in error and attempted to find the exact value. Most of these circle squarers labored under the misapprehension that a large reward awaited the successful discoverer. The values they found varied from 3.0 to 3.5.

One of these "cyclometers," a joiner, thought it peculiar that all the famous mathematicians had failed to find an exact ratio, and decided to try himself. He turned out a circle of wood on his lathe and rolled it along a straight metal track finding "pi" equal to 3.140625 exactly. This momentous discovery he printed in a pamphlet which he sent to all the scientific societies. It is recorded that he received a medal from two Parisian organizations for his work.

Another, a stone mason this time, found, so he says himself, that he could find no one who could calculate for him the number of square feet of stone necessary to cover a circular well he was building. For this reason he measured the area of stone he actually used for his well and found the ratio to be 3.01 exactly. He also printed a pamphlet.

Still a third, a Mr. James Smith, of London, printed a series of articles and pamphlets for a number of years (they must have been pretty cheap in those days) which proved "without doubt" that the right answer was 3 1-8. His method of proof was somewhat as follows: "Assume 'pi' to be 3 1-8, then, etc." He could just as well have assumed 10 1-18 or 100 1-8. He would have arrived at the same conclusion; i. e., that he was no mathematician!

Some budding engineer may wish to know an infallible method of calculating "pi" if he ever finds himself without his trusty handbook. Here is a method which will give the desired result to any degree of accuracy, even the 607 decimals, or more. "Take any diameter, double it, take 1-3 of that double, 2-5 of the last, 3-7 of the last, 4-9 of the last, etc. The sum of all is the circumference of that diameter." This method is based on Taylor's Theorem.

One would think that circle squaring would go out of business with the 19th century. But here in the 20th another carpenter found how to square the circle graphically with only a steel square if you please. The article describing his method was printed recently in the "Carpenter," official organ of the Carpenter and Joiners' Union. The method in brief is as follows:

Take any circle with its circumscribed square. Draw the common diagonals. Bisect the portion of the diagonals between the circle and the square. Bisect also the portion of the circle between the diagonal and the point of tangency of the square. Connect the two points just found and bisect the distance between them. A square drawn through the point thus found and parallel to the original square will have the same area as the circle. It is an interesting problem to find what value this method assumes for "pi." A short geometrical calculation gives to 4 decimals 3.1592. This is in error by one part in 300, not even 1-10 as accurate as his fellow joiner's result of a century ago.

DEAN OF ENGINEERING

Prof. John C. Penn

(A Biographical Sketch)

By STEPHEN JANISZEWSKI

John Cornelius Penn, our Dean of Engineering, was born on November 26, 1881, in Wetering, Netherlands. He attended school there for three years, but in 1890 he came to America with his parents and four brothers.

In migrating to the United States, his family settled in Chicago. Here Professor Penn finished his elementary school education, graduating from the Van Vlissingen public school in 1897. In 1901 he graduated from the Calumet High School and entered the Civil Department at Armour Institute of Technology. Dean Penn worked as a grocery clerk during his grammar and high school years and also drove a delivery wagon. While a student at Armour he worked for a surveyor in Chicago during the summer months to earn his tuition.

Momentous decisions have been made at places which are now historically famous, but Dean Penn decided that he was going to be a Civil Engineer while riding on a street-car to Armour on the day of registration. His reason for selecting this as a career was that he thought it would carry him all over the world. However, all of his work was actually done in the City of Chicago. In this way, Prof. Penn's course parallels with that of many of Armour students and graduates.

Prof. Penn graduated from Armour in 1905, receiving his B. S. degree in Civil Engineering. Immediately after graduation he received a position in the Civil Service in Chicago. Until September, 1910, he was Assistant Engineer of the Bureau of Bridges and Harbors of the City of Chicago. During this period of time he supervised the construction of several of the city's bridges which still stand as products of his ability. Dean Penn was in local charge of the construction of the North Ave. Bridge, the Halsted St. Bridge (Canal), the Erie St. Bridge, and the Kedzie Ave. Bridge over the Illinois and Michigan Canal. He also made a survey of the lake edge from the Chicago River to Evanston.

Prof. Penn began teaching at Armour night school as an instructor in the Civil Department. In 1910 he received his C. E. degree. He later became Associate Professor of Civil Engineering. On the retirement of Dean Monin he was made Dean of Engineering.

Dean Penn married Mae Van Wyngarden, in Chicago, June 6, 1922. He has one daughter, Jane Ann.

He loves the out-doors and his favorite exercise is walking. For eleven successive years he spent his summer as an instructor in the Civil Camp with Prof. Phillips. His favorite hobby is clocks and sun-dials.

Prof. Penn is a member of the Theta Xi, Tau Beta Pi, and Chi Epsilon fraternities. He also holds membership in the Western Society of Engineers and the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education. He belongs to the University of Chicago Club and the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

Dean Penn does not acknowledge the statement that he is a descendant of William Penn of Quaker fame.

In his capacity of office as Dean of Engineering, with the ability to understand a situation, to grasp all the details and give a final satisfactory decision, Dean Penn had proven his popularity with the student body. Those who know him more intimately and know something of his personal side have an admiration for the Dean and engineer—and even when the mid-semester Valentines are distributed, the recipients pay their tribute when they acknowledge that "the Pen(n) is mightier than the Sword."

Inquiring Reporter

Question: What do you think of students who cut assemblies?

C. Stempkowski, '32, Arch.: I feel as though a pupil would not cut an assembly unless he is behind in his day's work, and under such circumstances he will be more fortunate to receive a good grade for his work rather than hear a song or lecture.

R. F. Stellar, 29, C.E.: Assemblies possess the advantage of giving to students a wealth of knowledge in a short time and in a pleasant manner. I always make it a point to be present.

R. E. Moore, '32, E. E.: It makes the members of the band and orchestra feel cheap when only a few students show up. I know, because I'm a member.

R. F. Meehan, '32, M. E. I don't think they should cut them because the assemblies are always very interesting. They learn something when they go to them. If they cut they are only cheating themselves.

Leonard Davidson, '31, E. E.: It all depends on what the assembly is about. It all depends on whether it is of interest to the students.

F. M. Hromada, '32, C. E.: I don't think very much of them. I think that those fellows who cut assemblies ought to go to a few to find out what they're all about. I think the reason that they don't go is because they haven't gone enough times to appreciate their value.