

# THE KEY REPORTER

THE PHI BETA KAPPA NEWS MAGAZINE

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This Issue Goes to 85,000 Members

AUTUMN · 1939

## GETTING READY FOR EXPRESSION IN THE ARTS

JOHN ERSKINE,  $\Phi$  B K *Columbia*

Member of the Editorial Board of *The American Scholar*

WHEN Thomas Jefferson was seventy-five years old his advice was asked about the proper education of a young girl. "A plan of female education," he wrote, "has never been a subject of systematic contemplation with me." But as his letter proceeds he makes some neat observations about the advantage of learning dancing, drawing, and music. "Music," he tells us, "is invaluable where a person has an ear. . . . It furnishes a delightful recreation for the hours of respite from the cares of the day, and lasts us through life."

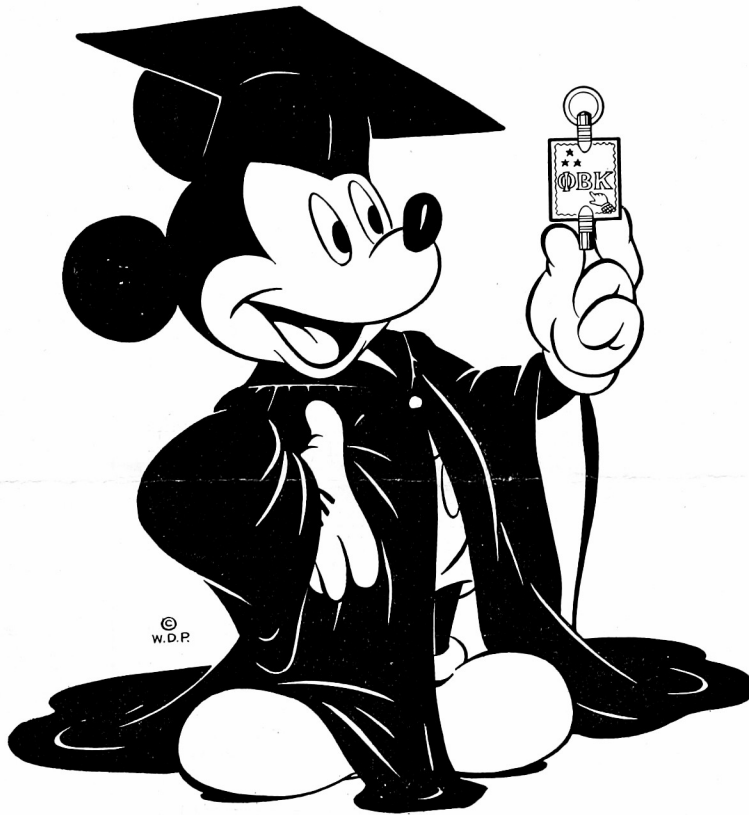
Just forty years earlier Jefferson wrote to a friend in France a letter revealing a much more vigorous faith in the importance of the arts, especially of music. Here is the Jefferson who believed that competent expression in the arts is necessary for any complete articulation of political, or social, or humane ideals.

The bounds of an American fortune will not admit the indulgence of a domestic band of musicians, yet I have thought that a passion for music might be reconciled with that economy which we are obliged to observe. I retain among my domestic servants a gardener, a weaver, a cabinet-maker, and a stone-cutter, to which I would add a *vigneron*. In a country where, like yours, music is cultivated and practiced by every class of men, I suppose there

might be found persons of these trades who could perform on the French horn, clarinet, or hautboy, and bassoon, so that one might have a band . . . without enlarging their domestic expenses. . . . Without meaning to give you trouble, perhaps it might be practicable for you . . . to find out such men disposed to come to America.

Even in Jefferson's day and in his own experience there were beginnings of that amateur music-making which should characterize a democracy, and which sets an example for the practice of the other arts. Almost every man in Virginia who, as Jefferson would say, "had an ear" played the flute — Jefferson himself, for example, and Patrick Henry, and George Washington. The advantage of the flute was its high degree of portability.

In our country today the advance in all the arts is so great that we might easily indulge in a dangerous self-satisfaction. But if we take a long view of our progress, the most promising symptom in our national life is the rapid growth of the arts among the people at large. Everywhere we are learning to draw or paint, or carve, or model, or sing, or play, not primarily because any particular art is to be our pro-



MICKEY GETS PLACES

A drawing made especially for *The American Scholar* by the Walt Disney Studios and used as a frontispiece in the Summer 1939 issue to illustrate Jean Charlot's article, "But is it Art? — A Disney Disquisition."

others, including the postmaster or any person to whom the postmaster delivers this, should send notices of changed names or addresses or of deaths to  $\Phi$  B K, 12 East 44th Street, New York City.

**Brides:**— You and

**In This Issue:** *Mural of  $\Phi$ BK in 1776. Books on Emerson's Letters, Dictatorship, Our Lives (reviewed by Dorothy Canfield Fisher)*

PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED CHAPTERS OF PHI BETA KAPPA in November, February, May and September, at the Rumford Press, Concord, N. H. Editorial and executive offices, 12 East 44th Street, New York, N. Y. Editor, William A. Shimer, Harvard  $\Phi$  B K; Assistant Editor, Dorothy E. Blair; Consulting Editor, Frank P. Graves, President of the United Chapters. Advertising rates upon application. Subscription 20 cents a year, \$1.00 for five years. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Concord, N. H., under Act of March 3, 1879.

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fession, but because we are preparing for life.

But here again we should not be too easily satisfied. The proper use of the arts is to articulate our ideals. To say all that the human spirit yearns for, we need all the tongues. The higher mankind rises, the more obvious the need is that every individual should have the technique of as many arts as possible.

There is reason to doubt that we yet recognize this essential truth. Perhaps we have got no further than the very elementary conception of culture which is concerned with the best that has already been said and thought in the world. Until we become completely self-expressive, our culture will remain memorial and retrospective.

If we are not careful, the growing love of art in our country which leads young and old to practice music or painting or sculpture may end in the sterile condition of the old Chinese scholarship. All the censorships which misguided governments impose are less malign than the censorship the artist imposes on himself when he celebrates by-gones which he knows only by hearsay, instead of the glories and the needs of the moment in which he lives.

Because of this self-imposed censorship, American artists have been caught napping in the present grave challenge to the democracies of the world. Most of our writers, dramatists and draughtsmen can express a voluble and vigorous hate of those hostile to the democratic idea, but argument from hatred is an undemocratic, a despotic, procedure, and to adopt it is to sell out democracy. What we need just now are artist-spokesmen who can represent all that we find precious in our way of life. I regret the emotional condition of those fellow-writers who refuse to have their books published in Germany. Should the Germans be deprived of democratic books just because Hitler attacks democracy? Or are we afraid our books are not really representative of democracy?

In the World War Switzerland was a duelling ground for propaganda. The German advocates tried to persuade the Swiss that France was decadent, lagging behind the march of civilization. The French countered by sending to Geneva a troupe of her best actors and actresses to perform the best French plays.

If now we wished to show the German people the best of democratic life in America, which American painters,

sculptors, musicians, dramatists, poets, novelists, would we send?

It is time we got ready to express ourselves.

*Editor's Note.* — This is a digest of a radio address delivered on May 12, 1939, in the  $\Phi$  B K series, "Get Ready for Tomorrow."

## Volunteers to the Defense

**A**LPHA GAMMA DELTA, international women's fraternity, assembled in biennial convention on June 29, voluntarily voted a gift of \$200 to  $\Phi$  B K's program for the Defense of the Humanities and Intellectual Freedom, telegraphing:

We are happy to join in the work of your organization whose objectives we are proud to support in all our chapters.

The Cum Laude Society, organized in 1906 for the promotion of scholarship in secondary schools and closely resembling  $\Phi$  B K in methods and standards, voted a gift of \$100 to the fund.

Pi Beta Phi, national fraternity for college women, sent \$150 and these gracious words:

The fraternity is happy indeed to ask for the privilege of having a small part in the campaign, in recognition of the honor which has come to individual members of Pi Beta Phi in their election to Phi Beta Kappa, and in appreciation of the nation-wide service which Phi Beta Kappa has long given in the fight for intellectual freedom.

Spontaneous coöperation has also come from several local  $\Phi$  B K groups. For instance one check came with this formal resolution:

*Be It Resolved:* That the Florida Alpha Chap-

## Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Ends 92-Year Dry Rule

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., June 23.—The Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa voted "wet" at its annual meeting today.

A ninety-two-year-old law, forbidding the serving of "spirituous liquor" at the Phi Beta Kappa dinners, was repealed by unanimous vote.

The dry law was adopted in 1847, it was disclosed, because for half a century previous the Phi Beta Kappa meetings had become increasingly uproarious, lasting seven or eight hours and including twenty to thirty substantial toasts.

ter of  $\Phi$  B K, situated at the Florida State College for Women, pledges its own support, both moral and financial, to the  $\Phi$  B K Defense Fund for the Humanities and Intellectual Freedom, and also urges upon all Floridians, whether members of  $\Phi$  B K or not, the importance of supporting every organized effort to maintain the freedom of thought and breadth of culture which have contributed so effectively to this country's greatness.

## Who's News Today

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

The absent-minded professor is one up on the hard-headed banker. When Dr. James Monroe Smith, president of the University of Louisiana, started branching out, before he became a fugitive, sundry bankers were eager to lend him money without collateral. One banker was hurt because he hadn't been declared in on a \$500,000 touch and insisted on shoving out \$100,000. But when the University of Louisiana wanted a charter from Phi Beta Kappa, the national scholarship fraternity, in 1936, the national officers sent a few scholars down to Baton Rouge to look over the plant and the manager.

They refused the charter. William A. Shimer, national secretary of Phi Beta Kappa, today explained this refusal, to this writer, as follows:

"When Phi Beta Kappa's committee on qualification made an investigation of the university in 1936—the second investigation in recent years—it again declined to recommend the institution for a chapter, largely because of a lack of confidence in the administration due mainly to its political tie-up."

At the time of the first investigation, it was erroneously reported that Dr. Smith was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. This department was led into error by this report and wrongly identified Dr. Smith as a member. This correction is especially important in view of the fact that the fraternity is making a gallant fight for the renovation of our national democracy and just now has more of a clinical than fraternal interest in the strange goings-on in Louisiana.

The myth of the cloistered and gullible schoolman is again assailed by news of the appointment of Alan Valentine, president of the University of Rochester, to a directorship of the Freeport Sulphur Company. He is a sure-enough Phi Beta Kappa and they are proud of him. Now 38 years old, he achieved high academic distinction as a Rhodes scholar and as a professor in the department of history, arts and letters at Yale University. Previously, he was assistant professor of English at Swarthmore, his alma mater.

Excerpt from a column in *The New York Sun*, June 30, 1939

## American Mother for 1939



Mrs. Otelia Augspurger Compton, mother of three noted  $\Phi$  B K sons, was chosen this spring as the American Mother for 1939. The family group is shown above — seated, Mrs. Compton, Professor Elias Compton ( $\Phi$  B K Wooster), educator who died in May of 1938; Mrs. Charles H. Rice (Mary Elea Compton, graduated magna cum laude), whose husband, also a member of the Wooster Chapter, is head of Christian College, Allahabad, India. Standing, left to right, are Wilson Martindale Compton ( $\Phi$  B K Wooster), lawyer, economist, and general manager of the National Lumber Manufacturers Association in Washington; Karl Taylor Compton ( $\Phi$  B K Princeton), president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Arthur Holly Compton ( $\Phi$  B K Wooster), professor of physics at the University of Chicago and Nobel Prize winner in 1927. Mrs. Karl T. Compton, the former Margaret Hutchin-son, is a member of the Minnesota Chapter.

## Richard C. Cabot

GORDON W. ALLPORT,

$\Phi$  B K Harvard

Associate Professor of Psychology, Harvard

RICHARD CABOT, physician-philosopher, died at his home in Cambridge on May 7, 1939, in his seventy-first year. In his last will and testament he declared that his life had been one of "almost unbroken happiness." Others would add that it was also one of unbroken service to humanity, for he had devoted himself with all his singularly effective talents to the conserving and bettering of human life.

His many books, written in a lively and gracious style, show how richly his life-work combined the values of science with the values of art. Theory and application were for him inextricable.

To him problems of morality were pre-eminent. *The Meaning of Right and Wrong* (1933) gives comprehensive expression to his own ethical code which

he taught with vigor and controversy. At the time of his death he was working on a final volume, *Creation*, which was to draw together the many threads of his interest and give mature expression to his deep religious faith.

As an ardent lover of moral philosophy, of great and humane ideas, he stood out above his fellows. His enthusiasm for the creators of moral ideas was often intense. Of New Englanders he especially admired Hocking and Southard, Royce and Emerson. The melioristic tradition of his native New England was congenial to him. He was a reformer, and he liked reformers. It was always individuals, leaders of thought, moral pioneers who won his support; never barren causes nor lifeless institutions. Though by no means a radical, Cabot was often found in the vanguard of progressive thought because provocative ideas so readily fired his imagination.

For him the test of every idea was its capacity to add to human stature. Through growing, each in his individual way, man expresses his reverence for God. In education, in work, in play, in love, in worship, in art, one grows, and perhaps especially in music. Ascetic discipline too is required for growth; Richard Cabot had as little use for self-indulgence as did the New England Puritans of old. Yet if growth requires self-discipline it likewise requires liberty. He wanted morality and freedom, and he fought for both.

Richard Cabot did all that he did with gusto. He found joy in his teaching, in social service, in writing his score of well-known books, and happiness in his many enthusiasms and admirations. His course was steadfast. Yet self-assured and tenacious as he was he could yield suddenly in the course of a battle and say, "I am wrong, you were right." And when he admitted his mistakes of judgment he admitted them wholeheartedly. He taught others to learn by their errors as he learned by his. In all that he did he was a magnanimous man.

*Editor's Note.* — Richard Clarke Cabot was born in Brookline, Mass., on May 21, 1868. He held the degrees of A.B. and M.D. from Harvard, and was elected to  $\Phi$  B K there in 1889. During his later years at Harvard he served as professor of both clinical medicine and social ethics.

**Second year medical student** ( $\Phi$  B K 1937, C.C.N.Y.) needs loan of \$500 to continue his study through the present year; maintained A average as undergraduate, is now head of class and has been awarded \$250 city scholarship toward tuition. Educators will testify as to ability and character. Address Member 229,  $\Phi$  B K, 12 East 44th Street, New York, N. Y.

## Know of an Opening?

If name is not given, address Member No. —, care of THE KEY REPORTER.

EDITORIAL — See also 78, 219, 220, 224

154. (Mr., Ala.) A.B. '38; M.A., Vanderbilt; major, history. Exp. — editorial & correspondence work, writing, publicity, public relations. Wants also writing, research, teaching, tutoring.

### LAW

213. (Mr., N. Y. C.) N.Y.U. '30; Columbia Law School '33. Exp. — 6 yrs. in corporate & tax practice with large firms; research assistant to N. Y. State Judicial Council. Wants employment as attorney in law firm or corporation.

214. (Mr., N. Y. C.) C.C.N.Y. '33; Fordham Law School '36. Exp. — briefing in all courts, preparation of cases, trial of small matters. Wants employment as attorney in law firm or corporation, also teach law.

### MEDICINE

215. (Mr., Brooklyn) B.S., St. Lawrence; M.D., Jefferson Medical College. Exp. — 2 yrs. internship, 18 months general residency, 2 yrs. private practice. Wants appointment as district medical examiner for insurance company, or part-time medical position with firm.

SECRETARIAL — See also 224

216. (Mrs., N. J.) Boston Univ.; grad. work at C.C.N.Y., Columbia Teachers College, N.Y.U., Univ. de Rennes, Univ. de Grenoble; major, English. Exp. — teaching high school shorthand, typing; head translator & head of business department in bank; accounting, typing; Spanish trade. Speaks French, Spanish, German. Wants also research, or position in college as house dean or chaperon.

217. (Miss, N. J.) A.B., Boston Univ. '17; M.A., Penn. State '34; major, French; minor, music. Exp. — teaching French; translating; secretarial. Travel in Europe & America. Wants position as companion-secretary.

TEACHING — See also 154, 214

92. (Miss, Brooklyn) A.B., Brown '06, M.A. '07; study at Syracuse, Columbia; English, phonetics, public speaking, French, shorthand. Exp. — teaching high school Latin, English; 14 yrs. asst. in research on legal education in U. S. Wants teach shorthand, proctor examinations, similar work.

218. (Miss, Neb.) Normal School '10; A.B., Univ. of Nebraska '22, M.A. '25; major, English; minors, Latin, comparative literature; yr. toward Ph.D. in English & philosophy. Exp. — 3 yrs. rural & grade teaching, 4½ yrs. high school teaching, 1 yr. high school principal, 4 yrs. consolidated school principal, 4 yrs. Univ. of South Dakota training school; tutoring English & Latin; directing dramatics; coaching public speech. Wants teach Bible & literature in small college; care for children in home, preferably orphans.

219. Dr. Oakley C. Johnson, 380 Riverside Dr., N. Y. C. A.B., Univ. of Michigan '20, M.A. '21, Ph.D. '28; major, English. Exp. — 12½ yrs. teaching college composition & literature; writing textbooks, articles, reviews; editing; lecturing. Travel abroad.

220. (Mr., N. Y. C.) A.B., M.A., Ph.D. Columbia; major, mathematics. Exp. — editing, writing. Wants also editing, writing, or position where mathematics is involved.

221. Miss Ruth Redding, 3815 Farragut Rd., Brooklyn, N.Y. A.B., Wheaton '34; M.A., Columbia Teachers College '36; major, French; minors, German, psychology, education; exchange fellow in France '37-'38, taught English in lycee. Exp. — 2 yrs. teaching; translating, manuscript typing, proofreading, tutoring, research, camp counselor.

78. (Mr., N. Y. C.) A.B., C.C.N.Y. '36; majors, English, Latin, French; minors, mathematics, history, physical science; graduate study in English, Columbia. Exp. — 1½ yrs. as research asst.; 3 yrs. teaching preparatory school English, mathematics, history, Latin; mimeographing, typing, clerical. Wants also work in library, museum, publishing, college office, book store; clerical; research.

222. Mr. F. E. Thornton, 187 W. Frames Ave., Columbus, Ohio. A.B., West Virginia '29; Ph.D., Univ. of Pennsylvania '35; member Sigma Xi. Exp. — student asst., college & university instructor in zoology, physiology.

223. Miss Norma Wallach, 1027 Leggett Ave., N. Y. C. A.B., Hunter '38; major, chemistry. Exp. — tutoring, library. Wants also tutoring, work in chemistry, anything.

224. (Mrs., N. Y. C.) A.B., Radcliffe '35, M.A. '37, complete residence requirements for Ph.D.; major, philosophy; '37-'38 study at College de France. Exp. — tutoring philosophy, Latin, French, German, Russian, Hebrew; asst. in doctor's office, secretarial, social work, retail selling. Wants also research, translating, writing, public relations, secretarial, museum work.

228. Miss Alice Crawford, 202 Edison Ave., New Castle, Pa. A.B., West Virginia Univ. '36; M.A. in French, Northwestern Univ. '38; 1 semester, teachers college. Provisional certificate to teach French, English, social studies. Exp. — practice & substitute teaching. Typing ability. Wants also translating; work in library, travel bureau, export house.

GENERAL — See also 92, 218, 219, 223

225. Mr. Phillip Ash, 601 W. 180th St., N.Y.C. B.S. in psychology, C.C.N.Y. '38; now at New School for Social Research. Exp. — 1½ yrs. research; 6 months clinical work; tutoring, social investigation. Wants position with opportunity for further study.

226. (Mr., N. Y. C.) B.S. in social science, C.C.N.Y. '38. Exp. — economic research, finance, statistics, proofreading. Typing & bookkeeping ability.

227. (Mr., Chicago) A.B., Univ. of Pennsylvania; M.A., Ph.D., Columbia. Speciality social & historical aspects of technology, also human geography, languages, statistics. Exp. — 6 yrs. teaching college sociology & other social sciences; typing, writing, research.

## The Defense Program

TO DATE approximately \$38,000 has been subscribed in New York City to the  $\Phi$  B K Defense Fund for the Humanities and Intellectual Freedom. Only about half the members in the City have as yet been seen, and most of the potentially large gifts are not being solicited until the balance needed to achieve the \$300,000 goal has become evident.

Committees are being set up in every community. Each member may expect to receive a "To the Defense" booklet and a personal visit. The visitor can be made happy either by a contribution or by some other expression of appreciation of his work for  $\Phi$  B K. The visits should be completed as early this fall as possible in order to leave time to obtain large gifts so that they and the totals for each community, State, and chapter can be announced at the big dinner on February 20. In published reports also each gift will be credited to the chapter, the State, and the community.

The Defense Program is stimulating new life in  $\Phi$  B K. Dr. Finley, the general chairman, is receiving many encouraging letters. A Missouri chairman writes, "I am in hearty accord with the idea that  $\Phi$  B K should be more than a 'mutual admiration society,' " and a Texas chairman:

The standards  $\Phi$  B K has consistently maintained neither the public nor the individual dares discard, lest disintegration of all we most cherish in our civilization set in with a vengeance.  $\Phi$  B K being what it is, the Defense Fund appears inevitable. I have thoroughly enjoyed and benefitted from THE KEY REPORTER through the years. I am grateful for any opportunity to repay some of the debt I owe  $\Phi$  B K.

Chairmen appointed to date are listed below. Other names will appear in later issues. Volunteer assistants should report to the local chairman or to Dr. John H. Finley, 12 E. 44th St., New York City.

Conn.	Storrs	W. H. Carter
Fla.	Gainesville	Ino. J. Tigert
Ga.	Atlanta	Thomas B. Higdon
Ind.	Gary	Glenn O. Rearing
	Indianapolis	Hugh McK. Landon
	Lafayette	Cable G. Ball
Ky.	Covington	Glenn O. Swing
	Williamsburg	Albert R. Evans
La.	Lafayette	Albert P. Elliott
Md.	Frederick	Joseph H. Apple
Mich.	Houghton	Mrs. Herma G. Bagglely
	Marquette	Charles C. Spooner
Miss.	Columbus	Mrs. B. L. Parkinson
	Gulfport	Edward Price Bell
	Jackson	James A. Blalock
	University	Victor A. Coulter
Mo.	Joplin	Howard Alan Thorpe
	Springfield	Francis T. H'Doubler
N. J.	Somers Point	Arthur S. Chenoweth
	Toms River	Charles A. Morris
N. Y.	Beacon	Mrs. M. Smith Webb
	Buffalo	Niles Carpenter
	Glens Falls	Frederick B. Richards
	Monticello	Bernard Weiss
	N. Y. C. area	Dave Hennen Morris
	Olean	Wm. C. Greenawalt
	Seneca Falls	Elmer C. Wayne

N. Y.	Troy	Charles S. Aldrich
	Utica	Henry T. Dorrance
N. D.	Grand Forks	William G. Bek
Ohio	Cincinnati	Murray Seasongood
Okl.	Lawton	Winchell Fay Berber
Pa.	Bethlehem	Robert E. Laramy
	Reading	Robert S. Birch
Tex.	Laredo	Valentine L. Puig
	Palestine	Eugene R. Fish
	Victoria	William T. Riviere
	Wichita Falls	Mrs. Wayne Somerville
Vt.	Arlington	Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher
	Montpelier	Fred H. Howland
Va.	Richmond	W. H. Schwarzschild, Jr.
Wash.	Aberdeen	Lewis C. Tidball
	Walla Walla	William R. Davis
W. Va.	Wheeling	Charles McCamic

## Fellow Students Present Keys

RICHARD L. GREENE,

$\Phi$  B K Rochester

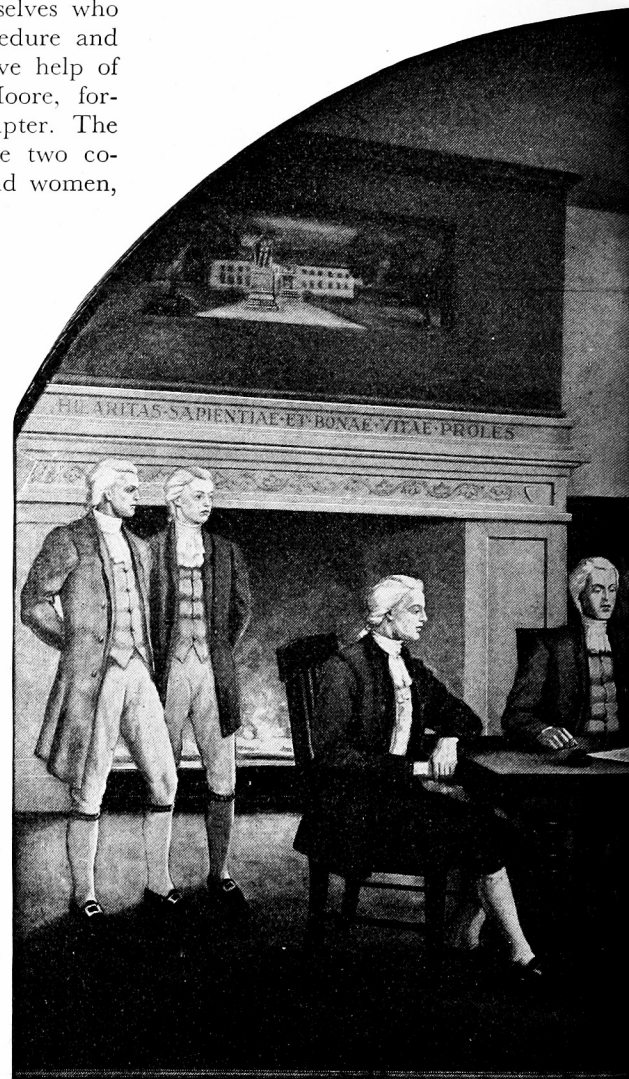
THE actual process of obtaining possession of a  $\Phi$  B K key is at many colleges an extremely informal one. It was so at the University of Rochester until a few years ago.

It was the students themselves who suggested a change in procedure and carried it out with the active help of Professor Clarence King Moore, formerly secretary of the Chapter. The Students' Associations of the two coordinate colleges for men and women, deciding that high scholarship was an activity as deserving of reward as athletics or journalism, voted to purchase the keys for all men and women elected to  $\Phi$  B K and to present them publicly. This action at once met with the enthusiastic approval of the Chapter, the faculty, and, of course, the initiates. It shows every sign of being continued indefinitely.

The expressed wish of the students for wider public recognition of the honor of election to  $\Phi$  B K has led the Chapter to provide an evening's exercises for which a place is reserved each April in the University calendar. The initiation ceremonies are held in the late afternoon, and the new members are then entertained by the Chapter at a dinner to which all members of  $\Phi$  B K in Rochester and vicinity are invited. The company adjourns to a college auditorium for the public proceedings, to which the fellow-students and families of the initiates are specially

invited. The new members are in cap and gown and enter in an academic procession supported by a fair representation of the faculty. The annual  $\Phi$  B K oration is delivered by a distinguished visiting speaker. The presidents of the two Students' Associations make short (and invariably good) speeches and, as the candidates file past them, present the keys amid applause of unmistakable sincerity. An attendance of 600 at the meeting is not uncommon.

There can be no question of the value to the College and to the Society of this "Rochester plan." It has notably increased undergraduate interest in  $\Phi$  B K and in those elected, making the students feel, as some have expressed it, that the election "really amounts to something after all." The campus newspapers are eager to run an "exclusive" story on the election each year, and the



Phi Beta Kappa's founding is depicted in a colorful mural in the Pantheon. Eight of the Society's founders appear in this painting by Johannes O. V. of  $\Phi$  B K, John Marshall (signing the document), William Short, Archibald Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, Virginia. Above the mural is the Apotheosis of Mary, the oldest college structure in America, and the

news is released to them before it is given to the city papers, which are equally eager. Student activities are under review at many colleges, and everywhere the key-word is "co-ordination." It would be hard to find a better example of co-ordination than this plan, whereby college, honorary society, and the self-governing body of all the students join in paying a tribute, at once ceremonial and practical, to success in the most important activity of college men and women — the pursuit of knowledge.

## To ΦBKs in *Who's Who*

HELP the cause by asking the editors to include "Phi Beta Kappa" in your write-up. There are 5,469 ΦBKs in *Who's Who*, an average of 1 in 6 or of more than 2 on every page of the volume.

## Make Reservations Now

NEW YORK CITY'S second largest dinner — over 3,000 and many turned away — the ΦBK dinner at the Hotel Astor last February 20, will be duplicated next February 20 (1940). Again many noted members will be on the program and among the guests; chapters and associations will be invited to send official delegates, their college banners and State flags; and the vital theme to be announced for the occasion will not exclude entertainment. The jollity last February under the chairmanships of Dr. Finley and Dr. Angell gave the death thrust to the old canard of ΦBK stodginess.

Members may bring guests. Reservations for individuals or groups or for tables of ten will be accepted by the Editor of THE KEY REPORTER up to the capacity of the rooms available.

## Books to Own

The Book Committee: Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Will D. Howe, Burton E. Livingston, Robert A. Millikan, Irita Van Doren.

*For the reader's convenience orders for any books or magazines will be filled prepaid by THE KEY REPORTER. A free introductory personal or gift subscription to The American Scholar will be sent with any order of at least \$6.00.*

## These Are Our Lives

*University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1939. \$2.*

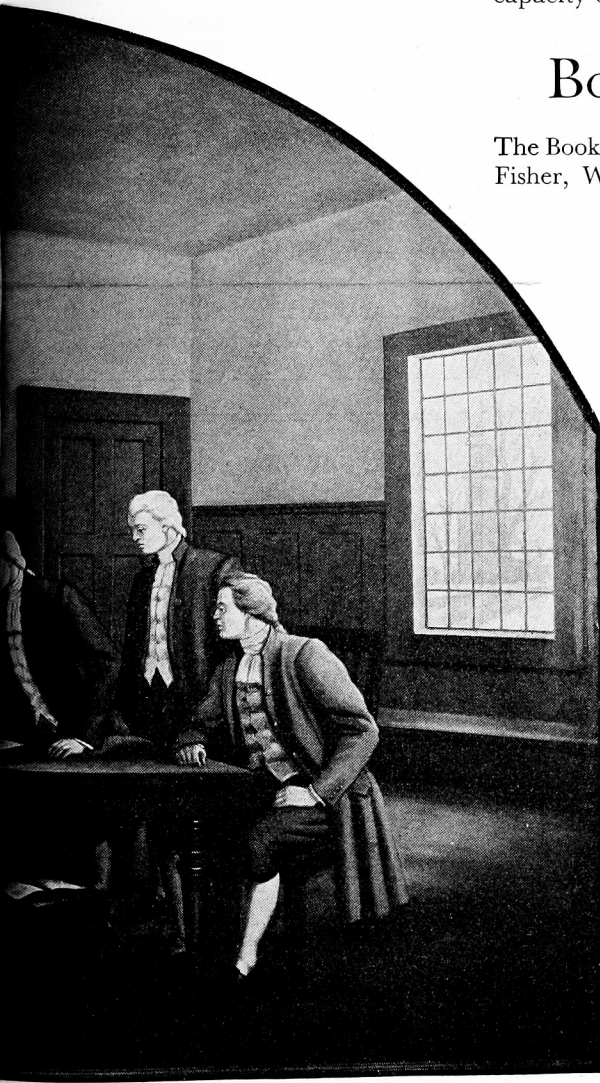
Most people who keep track of publishing news at all know now from reviews and other comments that the volume called *These are Our Lives* is a collection of thirty-five life-stories, chosen from many more told by wage-earning men and women living in North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia to W.P.A. workers on the Federal Writers' project in those three States. Most people also (I am judging by my own experience) know that these brief autobiographical studies have been highly praised by early readers as "vivid," "graphic,"

"powerful," "invaluable," "pungent," even "epoch-making," as a picture of the common life in the South. I wonder if many people who have not read the book and have heard all this about it, feel the same emotional reluctance about reading it which I had.

What did I expect? What was the slight anticipatory distaste that was in my mind, which I imagine may be in the minds of many Americans? Was it fear that I was to be subjected to yet another kind of propaganda, so unfamiliar and subtle that it might be hard to penetrate and resist? Was it the simpler, more natural human dread of being plunged by these stories yet deeper into the flood of hopeless human misery, which inundates our consciousness in these days? Did I imagine that landlords and employers were to be presented as wilful oppressors — instead of as the bewildered fellowmen they are?

Whatever it was, it vanished with the first of these life-stories I read, the one to which the book chanced to fall open in my hands, "From Grease Monkey to Knitter." I passed from that to "A Day at Kate Brumby's House," and then, enormously interested, surprised, incredulous, flicked over the pages and choosing at random fell upon the high comedy of "Easier Ways." Then I laid down the book to laugh at the fears which had kept me from reading it. But I insist that the fault lay with the kind of praise that has been given this collection. The two words which best and most completely describe it were not among the many I had heard. Those words are "human" and "authentic."

Authentic first: — the first impression, the final impression made on the reader by these life stories is that they are true, that they have not been doctored to make them prove anything, either by the person who took them down in their rambling, deliciously folksy lingo, or by any editor in the W.P.A. office. I have never set foot in the deep South myself, I know nothing about the life of the working people there. I do not need such special knowledge, only experience of life itself to feel that this volume is authentic. It has that unmistakable accent of natural, unforced truth-telling which speaks out from an honest voice, a clear and honest eye. And how racy with the rich diversity of humanness are these tales! With what easy power they tear down out of the mind the cheap and foolish idea that "poor people" see different from other people! Here are we, ourselves, as we would be if we had



*Sigma Alpha Epsilon's Levere Memorial Temple in Evanston, Illinois. A group about the table are identified as John Heath, the first president and Bushrod Washington. In accordance with tradition, the scene is in the picture of the Sir Christopher Wren Building at the College of William and Mary. A view of the room may be seen the Bruton Parish Chapel.*

been born Southern wage-earners, white or black — as we are. Those commentators who have exclaimed that this book contained “invaluable” and “vivid” and “pungent” stuff are right. But first of all these should have told us that it is the very stuff of living.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

## The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson

Edited by RALPH L. RUSK. Columbia University Press, New York, 1939. Six volumes, \$30.

This most noted of  $\Phi$  B K orators lives again from his 11th to his 78th year in 2,584 letters printed in the 3,200 pages of these six handsome volumes. The editor ( $\Phi$  B K Indiana) writes in his Introduction (54 pages):

The letters, with their changing moods and temperamental varieties of style, give us, no doubt, the most valuable glimpses we can hope to have of the essential personality of Emerson. But they are perhaps equally important for the light they throw on the events of his life, the genesis of his ideas, and the slow growth of his addresses, essays, and poems.

The letters and the excellent footnotes, which help greatly to make the reader “contemporary with the author” of the letters, contain more than two score references to  $\Phi$  B K. Emerson always told his brothers who had been chosen as orator and poet for “ $\Phi$  B K day” at Harvard, a “day” mentioned in letters to Margaret Fuller, James Russell Lowell, Charles Eliot Norton, Bronson Alcott, and others. Much light is thrown on the famous oration delivered in 1837, “The American Scholar,” which gave the title to  $\Phi$  B K’s present quarterly. That this best known of the many thousand  $\Phi$  B K orations was a stop-gap, and almost failed to be even that, is revealed by the letters. On June 22, 1837, Emerson was asked to substitute for the Reverend Dr. Wainwright, who had cancelled his engagement as the orator for the anniversary on August 31st. On June 19 Emerson had written of feeble health and on August 7: “All very well except that we cannot get any word from Olympus any Periclean word for  $\Phi$ . B. K.” Yet it was delivered on the 31st, and removed any doubt Carlyle still had about his young friend.

On other anniversaries Emerson gave a second  $\Phi$  B K oration and a poem. He writes about several similar performances by others — most notably, one by Edward Everett on “The Circum-

stances Favorable to the Progress of Literature in America,” when General La Fayette was present.

A notable event in  $\Phi$  B K history is sketched in a letter of August 15, 1831, to his brother Edward. Referring to John Quincy Adams, Emerson writes:

I heard him speak a good deal at two special meetings of  $\Phi$  B K lately. He is antimason & the  $\Phi$  B K have been convened to consider whether they will not alter their constitution &



abolish secrets & obligations &c & fine meeting we had the speakers being A H & E Everett Judges Story & Jackson & Davis—J Q Adams, C. G. Loring, Dr Lowell Theoph Parsons & many more. and in conclusion we accepted report wh. made the changes & takes away the *velo*, & makes  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the votes a sufficient majority — & takes off the injunction of secrecy. Kent of Duxbury is poet for the Anniv. J. T. Austin, orator.

The letter goes on to reveal Emerson’s breadth of interest:

Sad political disclosures every day brings. Wo is me my dishonored country that such poor wretches should sit in the chairs of Washington Franklin & Adams. How doth the air now thunder with that once despised whisper “You cant make a whistle out of &c I am trying to learn my own latitude but there is no horizon in C. St. If I was richer I wd. have an observatory. I am trying to learn the ethical truths that always allure me from my cradle till now & yet how slowly disclosed! That word *Compensations* is one of the watchwords of my spiritual world — & time & chance & sorrow & hope do not by their revelations abate my curiosity.

## Dictatorship in the Modern World

A collection of essays edited by GUY STANTON FORD. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1939. \$3.50.

No social fact of our time needs more to be understood by peoples of demo-

cratic faith than the fact of dictatorship. At the same time no social fact is more commonly misunderstood. There are still men in high places, for example, who regard the rise to power of Mussolini in Italy and of Hitler in Germany as a sort of protest — the protest of peoples who feel they have a grievance against the nations that dictated the terms of the Versailles Treaty. To men of this frame of mind the specific to be used against dictatorship is a simple one: remove the grievance by just the right amount of “appeasement” and you remove the dictator. It’s as simple as all that!

Such misconceptions can be cleared away only by careful analytical thinking that appreciates the complexity of social causation and has some idea of historical continuity. It is because the fifteen essays contained in the present volume (a revised and greatly enlarged edition of an earlier work of the same title, now out of print) are distinguished by thinking of this kind that they deserve to be read by everyone who enjoys, and would like to retain, the greatest possible freedom in ordering his life and affairs.

Interestingly enough, the book itself is a good example of the democratic way of doing things. In the hands of another editor — a sociologist, let us say, with a passion for unity and integration — each contributor would have been told substantially what he was to say. He

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would have had impressed on him the importance of coördinating his ideas with those of the other contributors so as to make of the book a unified whole. The result would have been a work pervaded by the sweet spirit of harmony — and practically devoid of intellectual stimulation.

Dr. Ford chose to produce a different kind of book. His experience as administrator doubtless suggested to him the wisdom of the policy he has followed: that of selecting scholars in whom he had the utmost confidence, telling them in a general way what he wanted them to do, and leaving them free to decide for themselves how they would carry out their assignments. The result is a work that is at once authoritative and thought-provoking. Each contributor is a recognized authority in the subject with which he deals; ten of the essays are written by professors of history, political science, and economics in leading American universities. And each contributor has something to say that is worth pondering. The task of reconciling the divergent points of view that naturally develop under these conditions is left entirely to the reader. He is thus made the beneficiary of a democratic form of editorship.

The book opens with a discussion of the "pattern of dictatorship" in which is traced the characteristic sequence of processes by which the dictator prepares to assume power, acquires it, and entrenches himself therein. Then follow a number of essays dealing with the origin, development, structure, and functioning of dictatorship in particular countries (Italy, Germany, Soviet Russia, Turkey, Latin America, and the Far East). We are next told of the techniques of propaganda and methods of economic control employed by the Fascist dictatorships in securing their hold on power. Two important but neglected aspects of dictatorship are treated in the essays on the position of women and the rôle of the lieutenant (the "number two man" exemplified by Goering and Ciano) under modern dictatorships. The book closes, appropriately enough, with a discussion of the prospects for democracy as they appear today.

The prospects for democracy in America will depend, in no small measure, on how widespread among our people can become an understanding of the truths set forth in this book.

CARL S. JOSLYN.

*Professor of Sociology, University of Maryland*

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