

THE KEY REPORTER

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SUMMER · 1939

A Stronghold of Freedom

MARJORIE NICOLSON, Φ B K *Smith*

Dean, Smith College

From an address delivered in the Symposium on February 20th—see page 4

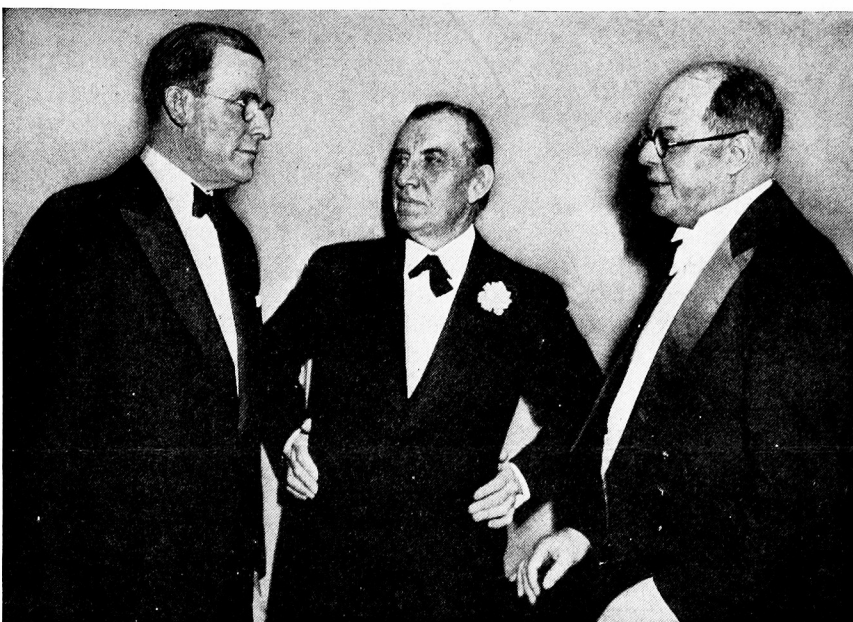
THE liberal arts college has been and must continue to be the stronghold of the humanities; yet the liberal arts college today is meeting a crisis more serious than at any time in its long history. The chief attack upon us is from those who insist that education be "practical." "Of what use is a liberal education?" It is a constant question, and one to which we can give no answer which satisfies the questioners. I am reminded of the famous Cambridge toast: "To pure mathematics and may it never be of use to anyone." It is our glory and our function to pass on the goodly heritage of the past, to stress learning not for profit but for learning's sake.

But in so doing we meet another opposition — that tendency in education which believes in what a shrewd old professor of mine called "The Doctrine of Interest without Principle." In the face of this we are prone to give way, to try to make our curricula more attractive. We are lowering standards, dropping our requirements for admission and for graduation, yielding to a pressure which we must resist. Because the secondary schools for economic or other reasons drop Latin and Greek, or higher mathematics, or science, shall we sit quietly by and accede where we should lead, follow where we should insist?

Who is to face the issue? We have Phi Beta Kappa — a dispassionate, loyal, devoted body of learned men and women.

We are the one group who can impose upon our colleges true standards. We are the judge of whether an institution is a liberal college; we can grant charters where we will; we can publicly take away charters from institutions which fail to meet the true standard of liberal education. It is for us to set the standard of the future, for us to determine the content of that "complete and generous education" which alone is liberal education. It is for us to insist that our liberal colleges be the stronghold of freedom of thought, of freedom of speech,

that they be the milieu in which can develop the true liberal — free from prejudice, from arrogance, magnanimous, tolerant, liberal. It is for us to establish the true motto of the true liberal: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."



*Charles Evans Hughes, Jr.,
John H. Finley and
John Kirkland Clark at
Phi Beta Kappa's Dinner,
February 20, 1939*

The Humanities or Absolutism?

ROSCOE POUND, Φ B K *Nebraska*

Former Dean of the Harvard Law School

From an address delivered in the Symposium on February 20th—see page 4

HISTORICAL continuity is involved in civilization. We reshape the institutions of the past to new uses. We understand new conditions from analogy of old ones. We apply reason to experience of the past. The materials upon which we exercise creative reason were given us by the past.

Not the least of our heritage is the idea of freedom. The

(Continued on page 5)

**In This Issue: Get Ready for World Problems by John W. Davis
Reviews of *Seasoned Timber*, *Reaching for the Stars*, *Tree of Liberty***

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First \$1,500 ΦBK Award

Alice B. Critchett, *summa cum laude* graduate of Mount Holyoke College in 1933 and winner of numerous college awards and scholarships, has been awarded ΦBK's Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship in French. Miss Critchett plans to go to Paris in July to continue with intensive research her study of the influence of Voltaire on Anatole France.



In 1929 Miss Critchett entered Mount Holyoke with a scholarship for the freshman

man ranking highest in the college entrance board examinations. In her junior year she was elected to membership in ΦBK and obtained a scholarship from the Institute of International Education for study in France with the Delaware Group, returning to this country with a scholarship medal from the University of Nancy and a diploma

(Continued on page 6)

Taunt for a Scholar

BESS R. DWORSKY, ΦBK *Minnesota*

Shut the spring night out!
Let written words console the empty heart,
Words of the rotted dead, who once were men,
And lived, and marveled when
They saw the greening sprout
Of wet black earth and knobby bough.
Aye, shut the spring night out —
Too late for loving now.

Shut the spring winds out!
Let dead men's songs blow through the dusty heart
Dreams of the withered past that once was young.
Lose cloistered thoughts among
Your books; allow
Nor beating rain nor creeping mist to start
Their quick spring madness in the blood and flout
Your sedentary days; but shut the spring winds out —
Too late for loving now.

Shut the spring world out!
The warmth that surges through the mortal heart
Will play you false ere half the year is done;
And what's begun
In joy will end in gnawing sorrow.
For you the scholar's vow!
Keep to your books, nor borrow
For your role sad Dido's part.
Quick, shut the spring night out —
Too late for loving now.

Get Ready for World Problems

JOHN W. DAVIS, ΦBK *Washington and Lee*

Lawyer, Former Ambassador to Great Britain

Digest of a radio address delivered on April 14, 1939, in the series, "Get Ready for Tomorrow"

IT is a saying as trite as it is true and as true as it is trite that we live in troubled and confusing days, days in which no single brain is powerful enough to encompass what is going on. There is a great wind sweeping across the world, so great that no man knows whence it comes or whither it is going. None but the deaf can fail to hear the noise of its passing, while to those who have ears to listen its roaring seems to speak the ominous words: "Get ready! Get ready!" What does it mean? Get ready for what? Get ready how? Get ready why?

Men differ in their answers. Some think it means get ready for universal wars. Get ready to fight for a larger place in the sun, get ready to defend the rights you have. Is it possible that the great wind has only this despairing message? It is a terrible and bloody wind, if this is true.

Some pretend to think the wind has a milder prophecy to deliver; that it really calls us to get ready for security and a more abundant life, a life where toil will be less and leisure will be greater and the needs of the body will be within easy reach of every man. No one will deny that it is good to be sheltered, clothed, warmed, fed. But those who read the wind in this fashion do not take occasion to remind us that the cattle standing to their halters in their narrow stalls have all of these things. Make no mistake, however, the wind that offers this and no more is a false and a deceiving wind.

Is it not more than possible that neither of these interpretations can be true? Granted all the present turmoil in men's minds, is it not possible that when the wind has quieted down men and women will continue to live on the self-same planet upon which they were born and the eternal verities will still hold sway? I venture to think that the wind, with all its violence and power, is saying, especially to the young men and women of the country, to get ready to play their independent parts as free men and women should; to get ready to use and not abuse the great gifts which science is pouring forth; to get ready with character, wisdom and valor to defend and enrich the inheritance of

culture and liberty into which a benevolent God has permitted them to enter!

Phi Beta Kappa's motto runs: The love of wisdom is the helmsman of life. It plays its part by encouraging and rewarding the love of wisdom and promoting the intellectual freedom necessary for its life. For wisdom and freedom are not mere chance acquaintances—they are inseparable companions. We speak of a "liberal" education and of the "liberal arts," rarely stopping to inquire how that adjective crept into the educational field. We take it direct from the Romans, who called those things "liberal" which were befitting to men of free and not of servile birth; and the "liberal" arts, those branches of learning which only free men were permitted to pursue. The world has moved since that day, but it still remains true that a liberal education, based on the study of the liberal arts and sciences, alone can free the minds of men and keep them free. Vocational and technical instruction and training in mechanical skill are well enough in their way, but there must be a broader education if richness is to be given to the individual life and an intelligent outlook gained on the problems of a troubled world. It is this sort of education of which it has been said that "it teaches men to do the things they have not been taught to do."

I would not have you think, when I speak of a liberal education, that I am talking only of what can be gathered inside college walls. Some of the most genuinely educated persons I have met on my journey through life never stepped inside a college door. There is nothing new about that. With our public libraries, free lectures, cheap books, plentiful magazines, and a free and uncensored press and radio, no one can say that learning has passed him by unless he wills it so. Moreover, in this free country he is free to take as much of it as he will, without a by-your-leave to anyone. When we look elsewhere, we see a different picture.

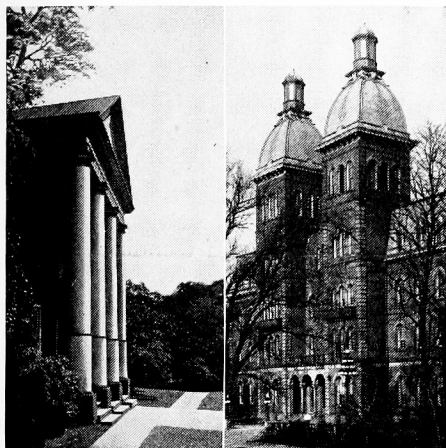
I question whether in all the history of mankind there has been any time when intellectual freedom has been under more open and direct attack than it is today. The creed of the to-

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From Log Cabin to ΦBK

ALFRED H. SWEET, ΦBK *Bowdoin*

WASHINGTON and Jefferson College, with a corporate existence of a century and a half and with yet earlier memories of log cabin academies established west of the mountains, belongs to the older generation of American institutions of higher learning and owes its origin to that belief in religious piety and sound learning which was characteristic of the pioneers and early settlers of this country. Washington Academy, for which a grant of 5,000 acres of land was secured and to which Benjamin Franklin gave £50 for the purchase of books, was chartered in 1787 and became Washington College in 1806. Four years earlier the academy at nearby Canonsburg had become Jefferson College. For some years the rivalry



*Administration Building and Old Maine
Washington and Jefferson College*

between the two colleges served to block the progress of both; and ill feeling was not lessened when in 1817 Dr. Andrew Wylie, President of Jefferson College, was called to the presidency of Washington and, subsequently, Dr. Matthew Brown, first President of Washington College, became President of Jefferson. In 1829 Washington College was forced by financial need to suspend its sessions and to close its doors. Shortly after this, however, and before the period of stress was ended, the College established in 1831 a professorship of English language and literature, one of the first of such chairs to be established in any American college. The two institutions were united at Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1865.

For at least a quarter of a century members of ΦBK on the faculty worked to hasten the day when a chapter of the

Society would be established at Washington and Jefferson College. The installation finally took place on Homecoming Day and Founders' Day, October 30, 1937. President Graves came to Washington to install the chapter and to be the orator of the Homecoming Day exercises. "The Creation of Leaders" was the subject of his address, and ΦBK Senator Roscoe Pound spoke briefly on "Rationalism and Realism in Relation to the Motto of ΦBK." That evening Senator Pound was the chief speaker at the alumni banquet, delivering an address which was an example of monumental erudition lightly borne and gracefully delineated.

Omicron of New York

PERCY W. BIDWELL, ΦBK *Yale*

"AVERAGE individuals can for a while conserve the achievements of the race and keep the activities of everyday life in operation, but they must ever look to their intellectual superiors for new steps in progress, which alone can keep the world from stagnation," said Dr. Frank Pierrepont Graves, President of ΦBK, when speaking last spring at the installation of the Chapter at the University of Buffalo. At the ceremony of installation the charter was presented by President Graves and received for the 38 charter members by Dr. Julius W. Pratt, Professor of History at the University.

Four prominent educators were elected to honorary membership: Mr. John Lord O'Brian, one of the regents of the University of the State of New York, formerly Assistant Attorney General of the United States; Dr. Bapst, chairman of the Board of Education of the City of Buffalo; Dr. Michael Gelsinger, Professor of Classics, University of Buffalo; and Dr. Fritz Machlup, Professor of Economics.

The installation was followed by a joint banquet of the new chapter and the Phi Beta Kappa Association of Buffalo. Dr. Edward Schaubroth, the president of the new Chapter, greeted the new members and guests in fluent classical Latin. His humor and eloquence delighted his audience.

The University of Buffalo, chartered in 1846 as a non-sectarian coeducational institution, now has a total registration of approximately 5000 students, of whom somewhat more than 700 are enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences. Under the able and inspiring

leadership of Dr. Samuel P. Capen, the College has attained a position of distinction among American undergraduate schools. It has attracted scholars of distinction to its faculty and under the



Aerial view, University of Buffalo Campus

tutorial system of instruction introduced in 1930 has set up and successfully maintained high standards of accomplishment among the undergraduates.

Of 1,000 students who enter the public schools, 610 reach high school, 260 are graduated, 160 enter college, 50 graduate from college, and 1 walks away with a ΦBK key.

Get Ready for Tomorrow

A SERIES of six weekly ΦBK broadcasts was begun April 14, when the Honorable John W. Davis spoke over the National Broadcasting Company's coast-to-coast Red Network on the subject "Get Ready for World Problems." The series is broadcast over WEAF and affiliated stations on Fridays at 6 P.M. Eastern Daylight Saving Time. A digest of the address given by Mr. Davis appears in this issue (page 2), and digests of subsequent addresses will be given in later issues.

April 21. "Preparing Young Men for Tomorrow" by Dean Christian Gauss of Princeton University.

April 28. "Get Ready for Tomorrow's Printing Press" by John H. Finley, Editor Emeritus of *The New York Times*.

May 5. "Get Ready for Public Leadership" by Roscoe Pound, formerly Dean of the Harvard Law School.

May 12. "Get Ready for Expression through Art" by John Erskine, author, and formerly President of the Juilliard School of Music.

May 19. "Get Ready for Living Tomorrow" by Chancellor Harry Woodburn Chase of New York University.

Educators' Sponsoring Committee

PRESIDENTS OF Φ B K INSTITUTIONS

Additions to list in Spring issue, making a total of 131

Richard C. Foster	University of Alabama
John C. Futrell	University of Arkansas
Clifton D. Gray	Bates College
Irving Maurer	Beloit College
Raymond R. Paty	Birmingham-Southern College
Donald J. Cowling	Carleton College
Franklin W. Johnson	Colby College
George B. Cutten	Colgate College
George Norlin	University of Colorado
Nicholas Murray Butler	Columbia University
Herbert J. Burgstahler	Cornell College
Ernest M. Hopkins	Dartmouth College
William P. Few	Duke University
Edward Conradi	Florida State College
Harmon W. Caldwell	University of Georgia
Henry W. A. Hanson	Gettysburg College
John S. Nollen	Grinnell College
William W. Comfort	Haverford College
Eugene A. Colligan	Hunter College
H. Gary Hudson	Illinois College
Herman B. Wells	University of Indiana
Eugene A. Gilmore	State University of Iowa
Isaiah Bowman	Johns Hopkins University
Frank L. McVey	University of Kentucky
William Mather Lewis	Lafayette College
Arthur A. Hauck	University of Maine
Aurelia H. Reinhardt	Mills College
Frederick A. Middlebush	University of Missouri
John C. West	University of North Dakota
Walter Dill Scott	Northwestern University
William McPherson	Ohio State University
Edward L. Rice	Ohio Wesleyan University
Ralph D. Hetzel	Pennsylvania State College
Charles K. Edmunds	Pomona College
Edgar O. Lovett	Rice Institute
Rigor McKissick	University of South Carolina
I. D. Weeks	University of South Dakota
Homer P. Rainey	University of Texas
George Thomas	University of Utah
John L. Newcomb	University of Virginia
Louis B. Hopkins	Wabash College
Ralph Cooper Hutchison	Washington & Jefferson College
Mildred H. McAfee	Wesley College
Charles F. Wishart	College of Wooster
Charles Seymour	Yale University

the impression that Φ B K was mobilizing literally to march 83,000 strong against the dictators. But Φ B K had a more effective procedure in mind; namely, to strengthen the Society in its invaluable function of dignifying the humanities and pure sciences in the estimation of high school and college students and of recognizing and encouraging high scholarship, in order that democratic society may be blessed with adequate leadership, and individual life with the most satisfying creative accomplishments.

However, the increase in interest, in financial support, and in volunteer service enables Φ B K to revitalize and extend its work. Chapters and associations report larger attendance at meet-

ings for which more interesting speakers and programs have been provided. Members in various communities are organizing associations. Radio companies are now glad to get Φ B K speakers and programs. The press is increasing its already large amount of space given to Φ B K news. Parents are inquiring more frequently concerning Φ B K institutions, and colleges are increasingly eager to qualify for chapters. Many excellent suggestions for the work of Φ B K and numerous offers of cooperation from groups and individuals are being made. All this is but a part of Φ B K's opportunity to encourage that enlightenment which makes any sort of intellectual or political dictation intolerable in our democracy.

3,000 at Φ BK Dinner

IN THE words of Dr. John H. Finley: "The Φ B K Defense Dinner was an extraordinary affair. It surpassed the expectations and even the hopes of those who had a part in its planning. Moreover there has been a widespread national interest in the purpose of the meeting and in the program which was brilliantly presented."

This program was carried out on February 20 at the Hotel Astor in New York, as announced in the last issue, except that over 3,000 were present where 300 had been expected. More than 60 chapters and associations appointed official representatives and many colleges sent banners. The symposium and round table discussion on "The Crisis of the Humanities in the Fight for Intellectual Freedom" was broadcast to millions of listeners and has been reported by hundreds of newspapers and magazines.

The headlines occasioned by Dean Gauss' address and by Dorothy Thompson's report a few minutes after she had been expelled from a meeting of the German-American Bund, gave many



A partial view of the Speakers' Table and of the more New York, on February 20, 1939, at which the Society

Unsolicited contributions ranging from \$1 to \$1,000 have come in and more than 700 members have volunteered as campaign workers in the New York area. Unfortunately space does not permit the listing of all the names. Every chapter is represented. The New York Chairman is Dave Hennen Morris, Harvard Φ B K, recently Ambassador to Belgium. The chairmen and workers of the various divisions and college groups include many well-known men and women. This group of members and similar committees to be formed in other cities will continue to see the members and friends of Φ B K until everyone has had an opportunity to learn about the Φ B K program and to contribute to the Defense Fund. In

order to attain our \$300,000 goal many large gifts of \$500 to \$25,000 will be necessary. Any member or friend who can send in such a contribution, perhaps to create a memorial or other special fund, will greatly encourage the chairmen and others who are devoting much time and money in this effort to revitalize and strengthen Φ B K at this crucial time.

The fourth annual Φ B K-A.A.A.S. lecture, which President Frank Pierrepont Graves delivered last December before an audience of 1,200 at Richmond, Virginia, was published as the leading article in the February issue of *School and Society*.

Humanities or Absolutism?

(Continued from page 1)

human spirit seeks to be and is able to be free. A politically organized society may coerce or restrain my physical activities. It cannot coerce or restrain my mental activities beyond the untoward expression of them. But if man shall not live by bread alone, he cannot live without satisfaction of material wants. The spirit urges him in one direction, his material wants pull him in another. Experience developed by reason has called for a balance, and the humanities are concerned with that balance as a legacy from the past which it is our task to preserve and use for the maintaining and furthering of civilization.

From the later years of the nineteenth century there has been increasingly a swing away from the humanities. The continually greater mastery over external nature through the development of the physical sciences has turned men's thoughts to the material existence. We have seemed to be forgetting that the harnessing of physical nature to men's use has been made possible by the harnessing of internal or human nature which is the concern of the humanities. With the rise of the material sciences to dominance, the growth of an economic interpretation, and the cult of satisfying economic demands, we come to forget how freedom made material progress possible and how balance and law, by which freedom is maintained, are basic to civilization.

Throughout the world today the recrudescence of absolutism is expressed in philosophies regarding efficient satisfaction of material wants as the highest good. Political absolutism in Europe, a growing fashion of administrative absolutism in the English-speaking world grows out of a quest for efficiency in satisfying material wants to which for a time men have seemed willing to sacrifice the values of the spiritual existence.

If we are troubled by the political phases of this quest for efficiency, if we fear the spread of political absolutism and all that it implies, let us bear in mind that behind them is a mode of thought making for absolutism in all directions; a mode of thought which would commit not merely material and institutional but spiritual and intellectual waste. Nothing less than this is involved in any giving up or even diminished cultivation of the humanities.



Guests at the Phi Beta Kappa Dinner in the Hotel Astor,
celebrating the humanities in the fight for intellectual freedom

Know of an Opening

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

COMPANION

41. (Miss, S. D.) A.B., Northwestern '13; M.A., Univ. of Washington '31; majors, English, classics. Exp. — teaching secondary school English and classical lang.; girls' adviser. Interests — amateur gardening, literature, languages, music. Wants also tutoring, assistantship to dean of girls.

EDITORIAL, PUBLISHING — See also 200, 207

197. (Miss, N. Y. C.) A.B., N.Y.U. '36; M.A., Columbia '38; major, zoology; minors, English, chemistry, mathematics; has completed course work for Ph.D. Exp. — typing, free-lance writing, teaching business English. Wants also college teaching or assistantship, laboratory or library work, writing in scientific field.

198. (Miss, Vt. & R. I.) Ph.B., Brown '12, A.M. '16. Exp.—high school teaching, clerical, research, writing, editorial. Wants—manuscripts to prepare for publication, proofread, and see through the press.

LAW

199. (Mr., N. Y. C.) St. Lawrence '34; Columbia Law School '37. Exp. — trial and preparation of Supreme Court cases, preparation of involved appeals. Wants — employment as attorney in law firm or corporation.

RESEARCH — See also 203

200. Charles Freedhand, 2708 Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. A.B., Yale '35; Yale Grad. School '35-'37; major, Latin; minor, Greek; also French, German. Exp. — research, sales, clerk, tutor, librarian. Conn. certificate for teaching Latin, Greek, German, history, philosophy, mathematics. Wants also secretarial, journalism, publishing, translating, libr. teaching, tutoring.

SECRETARIAL, BUSINESS — See also 200

201. (Mr., Brooklyn, N. Y.) A.B., Cornell Univ. '35; major, history; yr. at Harvard School of Business Admin. Exp. — accounting, editorial, sales. Wants affiliation with business, book publishing, advertising, and management.

202. (Mrs., N. Y. C.) A.B., Washington Univ. '37; major, English. Exp.—secretarial, statistical. Certificate for teaching high school English, general science, biology. Wants position as medical or psychiatric secretary.

TEACHING, ASSISTANTSHIP — See also 197, 200

203. Miss Elizabeth S. Avery, 197 East Post Rd., White Plains, N. Y. A.B., Syracuse '34; M.A., Columbia Teachers College '39; majors, English, nutrition. Exp. — 5 yrs. teaching high school science. Wants college or research assistantship in nutrition.

204. (Mr. N. J.) A.B., Wesleyan '32, A.M. '33; A.M., Princeton '39; major, French; minor, Spanish; working for Ph.D. Exp. — yr. teaching preparatory school French. Spanish, Latin; 3 semesters and 2 summer sessions teaching college French; travel in France. Wants college or secondary school teaching.

205. (Miss, Ohio) Flora Stone Mather '35, M.A. in French '37, work on Ph.D.; major, French; minors, Spanish, Italian, English, history; now at Western Reserve Library School. Exp. — tutoring, high school teaching, translating for commercial correspondent and law firm. Wants college, private school, or high school teaching; translating; librarianship.

206. Paul J. DeSio, 122 High St., Norwich, Conn. A.B., Ohio Univ. '36, A.M. '37; majors, French, Spanish, Italian; minor, social science. Exp. — tutoring, teaching, concert band. Ohio, Conn., New York teaching licenses. Wants college, academy, or secondary school teaching.

207. (Miss, Ohio) A.B., Western Reserve '29; M.A., Cornell Univ. Exp. — 8 yrs. teaching high school English; stenography, book selling. Wants junior college teaching in English, publishing.

208. (Mr. N. Y. C.) A.B., Columbia '38, honors in philosophy; candidate for M.A. in English '39; knowledge of German, French. Exp. — summer camps, language tutoring. Special interest — Romantic Movement. Wants secondary school, college, private, or public school teaching; translating; writing.

209. (Mr., Va.) A.B., Brown; R. I. College of Education '35; M.A. pending, Columbia Teachers College '39. Exp. — 5 yrs. teaching French, English, history; training teachers.

162. Osborne R. Wheeler, 2065 Cherry Ave., Long Beach, Calif. A.B., Univ. of Washington '35, M.A. '37; major, French; minors, German, mathematics, English; reading knowledge of Latin, Spanish. Exp.—secondary school teaching, teaching fellow. Wants secondary school or college teaching, translating.

GENERAL

210. (Mr., N. Y.) S.B., Boston Univ. '38; major, biology; now first year medical student. Exp. — clerical, biological research, anthropological field work, chauffeuring. Wants summer position.

211. George H. Chadwick, 175 Bridge St., Catskill, N. Y. Ph.B., Rochester '04, M.S. '07. Exp. — geological examinations, reports; editorial, museum, library, lecturing, writing, fieldwork.

212. (Miss, N. Y. C.) A.B., Smith; majors, English, psychology; minor, history of art. Course in restaurant management. Exp.—apartment, club, hotel, restaurant work; renting, management; teaching; publicity; household management; private secretary.

First \$1,500 Φ BK Award

(Continued from page 2)

“mention très bien” from the University of Paris. As the highest ranking senior Miss Critchett was awarded the Sarah Williston senior prize scholarship. The Bardwell Memorial Fellowship from Mount Holyoke made it possible for her to pursue her studies at Radcliffe during the year 1933–34, and in 1934 to 1936 she was awarded two grants from the Green Fund at Radcliffe and a prize from the Italian government for her study of Italian literature. In 1936 she returned to Paris for study, after having received the Mary E. Woolley Fellowship from Mount Holyoke. She was given a Ph.D. in Romance Philology by Radcliffe College in 1937 for her thesis *“Anatole France and Christianity.”*

Miss Critchett, who is now an instructor in French at Mount Holyoke, will be granted a year's leave of absence for her research in Paris and will return to this country in September of 1940.

The formal presentation of the award of this \$1,500 Fellowship, which represents the income from a bequest to Φ B K by Dr. Isabelle Stone in honor of her mother, was made to Miss Critchett at a dinner meeting of some 160 Φ B K members at New York City's Town Hall Club on Monday, April 24th. Dean Marjorie Nicolson of Smith College, Chairman of the Fellowship Committee, made the presentation in the name of the Society. The other members of the Fellowship Committee which made the selection from the large number of applications, are Dr. Mary E. Woolley and President Guy Stanton Ford.

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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.

Seasoned Timber

By DOROTHY CANFIELD. *Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1939. \$2.50.*

In her latest novel Dorothy Canfield runs very true to form. The setting is high Vermont, the subject a double-barreled ethical problem, and the main character a middle-aged, slightly wire-edged intellectual. We expect to encounter the cold and rarefied air of upland winter twilights, the astringent shrewdness of country judgments, and the New England gift for spiritual and moral discrimination. In no respect are we disappointed.

The book centers on a schoolmaster, Timothy Coulton Hulme by name, a Scotchman thoroughly acclimated in Vermont, where he has been for twenty years or so the head of a struggling local academy. Flint has come home to granite. But at forty-five he falls in love, in spite of his better judgment, with one of his teachers, a country girl aged twenty-four. There is no earthly reason why he shouldn't marry her; he can give her everything but youthful companionship. He dallies with the thought of bridging the gulf of years between them, but before he can persuade her that his intentions are more than fatherly, a young man whose middle name is Virility cuts in and "old T. C." must reconcile himself to being "Uncle Timothy." To do him justice he does it beautifully, for he is very, very good at renunciation.

The author's tendency to glorify woman betrays her, I think, into taking this part of the novel too seriously. Crabbed middle-age and youth, when they threaten to fall in love, do not precipitate a solemn moral issue, except on the assumption that the world owes every nice girl a perfect mating. The world's view, however, is more apt to be: let her take what she can get and be thankful. Disparity in age may be a subject for high comedy, as in Howell's *Indian Summer*, but surely not for serious concern. The Spaniards say, "Money is always young," and let it go at that.

The second part of the story raises a more real and timely problem. One of the three trustees of Clifford Academy dies and bequeaths a million dollars to the old school on condition that it change its name, become a high-priced, exclusive boys' preparatory school, and exclude Jewish students from its halls forever. Timothy Hulme sees snobbishness and race-prejudice threatening to undo his life work, and with the help of a good Yankee trustee goes about to persuade the village to refuse that million dollars on principle. Of course Vermont can be counted on to be itself, but not without a heart-thrilling contest. This part of the novel glows with genuine fervor.

Dorothy Canfield knows her Vermont. She also knows her schools. She has caught perfectly the tone and spirit of a small New England community, and she has pictured understandingly what a country academy may mean to the pride of the district that supports it. She has effectively buttressed the imaginative validity of Americanism. Though her story is a bit frosty for the suggestion of "sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses" that the title from George Herbert calls up, it exemplifies finely the strenuous liberty that Milton declared was the condition of a people's freedom.

GEORGE F. WHICHER,

Author and professor of English, Amherst College

Reaching for the Stars

By NORA WALN. *Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1939. \$3.*

Nora Waln spent four years in Germany — four years that extended from that first mass murder called the purge of 1934 to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1938. Partly through the many Germans she and her husband had known in the Orient, partly because the *House of Exile* proved popular in Germany, but most of all through the gentleness and understanding of her own Quaker spirit, she came to know intimately Germans in all walks of life and in all parts of the Reich. Musicians and farmers, scholars and peasants, Hitler youths and village patriarchs, storm troopers and exiles from the fatherland were numbered among her friends; and she found them, one and all, reaching for the stars.

In simple, matter-of-fact language, unmarred by words of censure or of

blame, Miss Waln has recorded what she saw and heard. Though she has written a tragic and terrible story, its essence is not despair, but a calm sure faith in the ultimate goodness and humanity of the German people.

Throughout the book there are tales of barbarism and of cruelty — tales of men taken from their homes, and of coffins returned to sorrowing wives and children after months of silence; tales of men who go for walks and do not return, and of men and women who flee hysterically from all they hold most dear. These things are not mentioned in the German press, but they are known and deeply felt by the German people.

Once, after an indiscreet question at a dinner, Miss Waln was reminded by one of her fellow guests of the story of Faust who sold himself to the devil but lived to regret his bargain; and her informant added: "Faust is us — us in a way perhaps no foreigner can understand." On another occasion she visited an old professor whose only surviving son was in a concentration camp. She found the father not embittered but proudly likening his son to Florestan, the hero of Beethoven's opera *Fidelio*, who symbolizes truth in chains.

These Germans who live in Miss Waln's pages are neither barbarians nor supermen. They are a people of rich culture and high ideals, gentle, friendly, and peace loving, but sorely distressed by circumstances they do not know how to control. What could be more revealing than the story of the vineyardist who had saved from the harvest enough for a badly needed new coat but bought instead a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony? Or the Hitler youth who knocked down a fellow Nazi for baiting an aged Jewess, and the policeman who led him up a side street, shook his hand, and bade him Godspeed? Or the news vendor who denied the charge that his papers did not bear out his oral version of the news by explaining that what is printed in German papers is the opposite of what should be there?

There is an old German proverb that politics spoil the character, and that perhaps is the clue to post-war Germany. Democracy came suddenly to a people unprepared, with no background of experience in managing their own affairs. Through their own unwillingness to accept the responsibilities of citizenship, and because the democratic powers failed to understand their plight, they have fallen on evil times. They are

bewildered, and for the moment helpless; but if Miss Waln's picture is a truthful one, and in every line it bears the stamp of authenticity, the present darkness will pass. The spirit of Luther still lives in Germany, and it is roused anew by every act of violence and injustice. In every part of the Reich today men and women are working silently for a "cause" and it is not the cause of National Socialism.

CHARLES M. WILTSE,

Author of "The Jeffersonian Tradition in American Democracy."

The Tree of Liberty

By ELIZABETH PAGE. *Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1939. \$3.*

The conflict between Hamilton and Jefferson, and between the things for which they stood, has furnished the theme of many novels, but nowhere in our imaginative literature is that conflict more sensitively understood or more vividly described than in Miss Page's *Tree of Liberty*. Her story, immense in substance as it is portentous in theme, embraces the half-century between Braddock's defeat and the Lewis and Clark expedition, introduces almost every important character in this period, presents most of the dramatic episodes, and argues most of the significant issues. This is a heavy burden of history for one novel to carry, and sometimes, it must be confessed, the novel sags under its burden. But for the most part it moves with spirit and vigor, though always on the surface.

The Howard family of back-country Virginia furnishes the vehicle for the historical argument — Howards clinging to Jefferson, Peytons to Hamilton, and the children and grandchildren dividing their allegiance between the two leaders. At times the members of the family become merely mouthpieces, but individuals among them achieve life and authenticity. The most successfully realized of all the characters, however, is Thomas Jefferson. Nowhere in fiction, indeed, does Jefferson come more convincingly to life than in the pages of this book. The portrait is not only accurate in detail, but faithful in spirit, and the spirit of Jefferson hovers over the whole of the story.

Miss Page's sympathies, indeed, are unflinchingly with Jefferson and his followers, and so strong are those sympathies that they prevent the author from doing entire justice to the Hamiltonians.

In seizing upon Jefferson as the significant figure for this period of our history, Miss Page is unerringly right, but her one-sided interpretation of the struggle between the two factions and the two philosophies mars the narrative.

The Tree of Liberty is an old-fashioned costume-piece, closer in manner to the stories of Winston Churchill and S. Wier Mitchell and Paul L. Ford than to the modern historical chronicle. In its presentation of historical material it strikes beneath the service to realities, but the story itself is romance and the characters superficial.

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER,
Professor of History, New York University

World Problems

(Continued from page 2)

totalitarian state threatens not only the political liberties of its subjects, but the freedom of their minds and souls as well. This is a stand which any and every totalitarian regime, every regimental state, must take to preserve its existence. It dare not leave the thought of its people unchained. For I still have enough faith in human nature to believe that there does not exist in all the world a race or a people so servile and so base as to choose political and personal slavery, with all it means, if their minds are left free to learn and their tongues to speak.

Get ready, says the wind, get ready for world problems. Get ready with better trained minds, more knowledge of the past and reverence for its lessons, higher courage for the future, and a deeper devotion to the cause of human freedom. May it prove forever true, as George William Curtis has said, that "every great crisis of human history is a Pass of Thermopylae and there is always a Leonidas and his Three Hundred to die in it if they cannot conquer."

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