

History Tests Indicate "Social" Students Not Prepared For University Courses

Winston Churchill was the Prime Minister of the United States before Eisenhower.
Karl Marx was a leader of the German Reformation.
Disraeli was the Prime Minister of Canada during World War I.
Oliver Cromwell invented the printing press.

These were among the answers to a test given at this University in September 1960 to determine the background knowledge of history possessed by first year students. According to the two Department of History professors who set and marked the examination "the most significant fact revealed by the test was the appalling ignorance of the students."
Dr. W. J. Eccles and Dr. R. H. McNeal set the exam to check upon indications that graduates of Alberta high schools were "woefully unprepared for the study of history at the University level." On the basis of the test results, they claim 85 per cent of the students presently enrolled in first year history courses are inadequately prepared.

A report was compiled of results of the test, and circulated to various Albertans associated with education. This report was designed to serve as a starting point for reform of the teaching of history in the province's high and ultimately, secondary schools.

The test, given to 461 students, asked the identification of four dynasties, 23 individuals, and nine battles important in Western history, of five present-day heads of state and eight capital cities.

SCHOOL SYSTEM BLAMED

Most students answered the current events questions well. But only one student—who took his course by correspondence and is thus self-taught—could satisfactorily identify all the references from History. More than half the students failed the strictly history selection of the exam.

Professors McNeal and Eccles blame the poor results directly upon the teaching of history in Alberta schools — the schools "fail abysmally to provide anything even approaching the background of knowledge necessary."

The professors say students who did well on the paper credit their performance either to excellent teachers, or to homes in which reading was encouraged.

According to the Eccles-McNeal report, the low standard of historical education in Alberta's public schools can have one of two immediate results—it can force a lowering of University standards, or it can retain the University requirements and flunk the ill-prepared students.

EFFECT OF IGNORANCE

Even if the University attempted to avoid a high failure rate by teaching in first year what should have been

taught in high school, the professors feel "it would not be possible for most of the students to make up in one short academic year."

Both professors contend that the immediate affect upon the University is insignificant compared to the long-range effect of such ignorance upon society.

They ask "in critical times, such as are the present, how can those who must defend our civilization and inherited values . . . do so if they do

not understand what these things are, nor how or why we came to have them?"

The report points out that the danger to society becomes much more apparent when it is realized that the students tested are "supposedly the academic elite." The level of historical ignorance must be considerably higher among students who did not enter University or who are not sufficiently interested in history to study at University.

AFTER EXAM BALLOT

Student feeling as indicated by the survey run before the "Christmas" exams indicated considerable disfavor of their location in the University year. Although tabulated results have not been run there was only one person in favor of the after Christmas examinations.

With exams over, and the exams tried, The Gateway wishes to determine, as accurately as possible, student feeling on the new exam set up.

Fill out the form below and forward it to The Gateway office as soon as possible.

Would you prefer exams before Christmas? Before— After—

Was your study more effective for the January exams than for exams in December? Jan.— Dec.—

Did you lose continuity in class work due to the break for Christmas and for the January exams? Yes— No—

Were all your exams in exam week? Yes— No—

2500 Attend Symphony

Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, with Guest Conductor Boyd Neel. The University Singers and The Music Division Chorus, Conducted by Richard S. Eaton.
Overture to Russian and Ludmilla Glinka
Introduction and Allegro, Op. 47 Elgar
Symphony in C major, No. 97 Haydn
Te Deum Kodaly
Lieutenant Kije Suite, Op. 60 Prokofieff

Sunday's symphony concert, as much for the discerning critic as for the uninitiated greenhorn, was a delight and a promise of a great future for this growing centre of the arts. Large audiences continue to come, and the symphony's popularity with the Edmonton public was attested by the presence of 2,500 people in the Jubilee Auditorium.

Some, but not all of the glory of course must go to the visiting conductor, Dr. Boyd Neel and also to Professor of Music, Dr. Eaton.

Dr. Neel disciplined the orchestra as one has been led to expect from past experience of the Boyd Neel orchestra. The strings noticeably sounded better than at any other concert in the current year's series and crescendo were handled especially well. Dr. Neel's sensitive quickening of the musicians was due no doubt to his understanding of the anatomy and physiology of music arising from his medical background.

The first half of the program was a demonstration of the fact that unemotional, unemotional conducting can produce from three very different composers—Glinka, Elgar and

Haydn—a highly satisfying quality of music. This was clearly dependent on precision timing and detailed memorized knowledge of each score.

Just over half of the orchestra played in the Haydn Symphony, which was written for the smaller orchestra of its day. In this symphony brass and winds are used as support for the strings rather than as equal sections of the orchestra.

The Elgar composition was a more difficult work, and not entirely successful in this performance: the sound was at times strained and the individual notes not always clearly separated from each other. In this work for strings alone, a solo quartet is contrasted with the rest of the orchestra, giving the players a vast range in the possibilities of tonal shading.

Kodaly's "Te Deum" was the main feature of the second half and was an experience new to most of the audience, although marred by the incongruity of the dresses of the female chorus. The balance of orchestra and voices was all controlled by Dr. Eaton and in places the unusual contrast of flaming brass with human vocal chords became an auditory feast.

As was pointed out in the program notes the unusual combination of almost a tonal melody with traditional harmony was much less surprising than expected. Some small children observed in the audience were entranced beyond their usual restlessness. We are indeed fortunate in Edmonton that the future is certain to hold similar extravagances of delight at the hand of Dr. Eaton.

The program ended almost in a joke with Prokofieff's suite "Lieutenant Kije". The music is taken from a 1930 Russian film. However its background music can stand alone, and one could without the aid of the program notes follow the embarrassment of those who, for fear of the Czar's displeasure, had to invent this fictitious army career. Mention must be made of the cornet player's portrayal of the personality of the lieutenant. The "Lieutenant" never existed, but an army officer ad lib Kije's life story in an effort to cover up a mistake made in a military report. As Kije never was, the music describing him appropriately returns to oblivion as the muted cornet fades into silence.

The large audience was a credit to its orchestra and for once the performance was not marred by ill-timed applause. G.L.S.

Baroque Trio Plays Concert Sunday

The Baroque Trio of Montreal will perform at the University Music Club's concert in Convocation Hall this Sunday. Sponsored jointly by the Music Club and the Extension Department, the Baroque Trio is making its second Canadian tour.

Harpichordist Kelsey Jones, a graduate of the Mount Allison and McGill Conservatories, now teaches

at the McGill Conservatory. Besides composing a great deal of piano and ensemble music, he plays modern jazz on the harpsichord quite often on the CBC.

Flautist Mario Duschenes studied at the Geneva Conservatory where he received the "Prix de Virtuosite". He toured Europe for two years with the "Ensemble Ars Antiqua", then came to Canada. He has recorded various chamber works with other well-known musicians.

Melvin Berman, the third member of the Trio, is oboe soloist of the Montreal Symphony and the CBC Orchestra. He is a member of the Faculty of the Quebec Conservatoire and Hartt College, Conn.

The trio will perform works for recorder by J. Fischer, Byrd and Purcell; Sonatas by Telemann and Leollet, two Bach works and Kelsey Jones' "Sonata da Camera" (1957).

Tickets can be bought from members of the Musical Club.

Show Boat Following Guys And Dolls

The Edmonton Civic Opera Society, which produced "Guys and Dolls" last year, is presenting "Show Boat" this year. The cast of 80 actors, singers and dancers will perform for four successive nights, Jan. 25 to 28, in the Jubilee Auditorium.

The music for this 1927 musical is a Jerome Kern score, while the book and lyrics of Oscar Hammerstein II are based upon an Edna Ferber novel. The plot tells of Cap'n Andy of the "Cotton Blossom" show-boat and his troupe on the Mississippi.

On hearing the name "Show Boat" many think of "Ol' Man River", which was sung in the original pro-

duction by Paul Robeson. Some of the other famous songs from the work are "Why Do I Love You?", "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man", "Only Make Believe" and "Life Upon the Wicked Stage".

The musical was revived on Broadway in 1932, 1945 and 1952, and many remember the 1950 film starring Kathryn Grayson, Ava Gardner, and Howard Keel.

This Edmonton production stars Crystal MacDonald Fleutya as Magnolia and Ernie Chrustawka as Gaylord Ravenal, the light-hearted gambler. Paul Hervieux and Dorothy McKernan compose the father and daughter team of Cap'n Andy and Julie.

Tickets, costing \$2 and 3, are available at the Allied Arts Box Office in Heintzman's Music Store.

GARNEAU UNITED CHURCH

11150 - 84 Avenue
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Minister: REV. BLAKE M. PRITCHARD

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22nd

11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship.

7:30 p.m.—Service for Students and Nurses.
Coffeetime and YPU after the service.

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St. George's Anglican Church

87th Avenue at 118th Street

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22nd

8:00 a.m.—Holy Communion

9:30 a.m.—Holy Communion—
Corporate for Canterbury

11:00 a.m.—Morning Prayer

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