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DEARTH OF PERSONAL INITIATIVE

The old pioneering spirit of individual initiative that found enough satisfaction for a task in a sense of satisfaction in a job well done, is rapidly disappearing from the North American scene.

In its place is developing a mercenary, "glory-seeking" attitude that blinds a person to all but the material advantages of a job. To this may be attributed the decline in religion, for when money can do anything, man ceases to wonder about the miracles of nature. Grain is no longer a wonder produced by a man in co-operation with the Almighty, but a commodity, the price of which affects financial empires.

This "what-can-I-get-out-of-it?" attitude is noticeable of late even in our universities and other centres of learning, from which such material considerations have been supposedly excluded from time immemorial.

In the Good Old Days a player took part in a sport in hopes of "making the Team"; if he failed to do so he felt he had failed personally. The emphasis was placed upon personal accomplishment.

Nowadays, however, athletic prowess is no longer the criterion, in all too many cases, but instead, what credit the athlete will get from his fellow students who are less fortunately endowed by nature to engage in such exercises.

Then, the Team was the thing. Now, each player hopes to perform so excellently that his superiority to the rest will be noticed, and he will be honoured as a "Star".

This psychology is not limited to the field of sports. In many other campus organizations the first question a newcomer asks about a particular position is not, "What good can it do for the students?", but, "How many points towards a gold D will it give me?"

The natural reaction of any organization head is to thrust any person who asks such a question into outer darkness, but, as there is no other material available, he has to smile sweetly, and convince the hesitant applicant that work on his organization is easy and profitable. Fortunately there is little such hesitation in those who come to work for a college newspaper; they know in advance that the work is hard, but if they have any sense of achievement, they are satisfied with doing their job efficiently in comparative obscurity.

This problem, merely annoying while at college, assumes greater proportions when the graduate seeks employment after he has gained an "Education". If he approaches a prospective employer with the same attitude, he might just as well have stayed away from University, for all the good it did him. Any young person who never learned to work with others and feels that "The World owes him a living" will never get any place unless, of course, he has the good fortune to have a wealthy relative who is operator of a business.

However, most students will find that university is much like the outside world in that they cannot gain any reward or acclaim unless they first accomplish something.

Students come to college to get an education, not merely to absorb "Book-Learning". While there, they should learn how to work and get along with others. This is an essential part of everybody's education, and there is no better way to learn this than to engage in some extra-curricular activity.

Character is as important as knowledge, even in this modern world of high finance and Atom bombs. The future of the world depends upon how the next generation deals with its problems. If they meet their problems with a selfish, shallow attitude of mind, civilization will face another Dark Age, devoid of individual moral stability and initiative.

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

Editor's Note: We wish to draw the attention of our readers to this story which illustrates the passing of the twentieth century.

by A. J.

The Century's first half was a wonderful thing. It was full of anguish and magic and fury, and man never came to know it as it was until it was gone from him forever. It was a sick world whose symptoms were war and poverty. Yet it was an era whose passing man watched with sorrow and regret, for it was a period of sinful pleasures that he could never afford to live again. As Gibbon has said: "The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more, and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful". Today we can stand listening to the echoes of yesterday and knowing that they are but the forecast of our 'dark and doubtful' tomorrows. Our hearts are full of twisted memories, our souls of frustrated hopes and dreams. We are tired, disillusioned and bewildered, because of the heritage of the past, and we are fearful of the threshold that is 1951. This is the story of that heritage of tinsel. Through the arches of the years come down with me.

Although the disintegrating effect on general morals of Freud and World War I had lessened by 1930, the debris was still in evidence. No longer in obsessive stages it lingered on as an accepted theory of poisonous secularism throughout the forties, and 1950 found it well established and resupplemented by the callous thinking of a second World War. Once more the disillusionment and faithfulness of the first post world war decade came. So, to the exclusion of the first few years of the century, the general theme of the era was constant: live, for tomorrow you die. It is against this background that our ultra modernistic way of life is projected. It is this materialism, this utter disregard of values, that created the neon wilderness in which 1950 finds us. It is the cause of fifty years of blood and poverty; and it is the sum and substance of the decease from which, in various ways, we sought escape and laughed and said, "We're healthy!"

In 1919 the memory of the Marne and trench warfare was still too vivid. It was the year when a man named Wilson, full of ideals that were thirty years late, dreamed a dream of a league of nations, and died of heartbreak when his people turned it down. It was still-Britannia's world,—her Empire was global, her flag subdued all oceans. English imperial blood had dripped open the twentieth century on African veldt—fifty years later it was drenching the soil of Korea, but in a world that belonged to Russia and the U.S.A. 1919—the legacy of steel that was the industrial revolution, had by now begun its wild race of scientific progress and suddenly the spotlight was on America, her turn was at hand. In Europe the Treaty of Versailles was born, while the U.S. stayed home and watched Chaplin's comedy or Swanson's romance on the silver screen. And autos multiplied, and jazz was born. New Yorkers watched a play called "Up in Mabel's Room". The twilight was over and a dawn of fury was certainly dawning.

The new decade arrived with all the frenzy of a typhoon's rage. People talked of the Big Red Scare and the Wall Street explosion. In Boston the police rioted with chaotic results. In the south the Ku Klux Klan began its amazing reign of intolerance, and in Chicago the rising tide of colour was manifested in the bloody race riots. In the home the radio made its debut; and the Dempsey-Carpentier fight gave the Golden Age to boxing. The serious began reading an eye-opener called "Main Street", while the frivolous sang earnestly, "Yes, We Have No Bananas Today". Here was the generation that was to play too hard and lose itself in gaiety. Later Fitzgerald wrote of it: "Here is a new generation, grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought and all faiths in man shaken". They called it the "Passionate Twenties". An author named it "The Plastic Age." In re-

trospect, it was the age of flaming youth.

What was this reckless era whose effects lingered on to the fifties? It was the aftermath of war, the teachings of Freud, the breakdown of all time-honored conventions. It was the new materialism, the revolution of manners and morals. The cynicism was seen in novels like "The Sun Also Rises". It was reflected in the bland when a girl named Caroline told a judge that all girls carried contraceptives in their vanity cases. There was sin in parked cars—"Prostitution on wheels!" wailed the righteous. There was open discussion of sadism, masochism, incest and Oedipus complexes. Jazz bands blared and in the cafes torch singers sang, "I've Got A Feelin' I'm Fallin'". Everywhere was sex and the promotion of lust: movies, confession magazines—and all was escape, emotional retreat. The shapeless flapper said to the male: "You are tired and want excitement. I will give it to you but I will be free."

Along this same road the fickle public swayed from sensation to sensation. When not engrossed in the cross-word puzzle craze, or lost beneath a Whalen-sponsored ticker tape reception, the public fed sadiistically on the endlessly dragging Marathon Dances. They lapped up the cosmograph obscenity of Peaches and Daddy Browning, or watched lazily the latest data of the flagpole sitters; or went fanatic over Red Grange's latest gridiron exploits; and found a new idol in Lindbergh. Headlines erupted with the story of the Pig Woman in the Halls-Mills murder case, while under Dayton's sweltering sun a lawyer named Darrow defended evolution against Christianity.

Since the debacle of idealism in 1919 the rebellion against religion and old moral codes had gone on. It was a sad rebellion. The rebels had no faith in it from the start. They distrusted the new freedom for it had brought them no solid realities as had been expected. The intellectuals had failed and

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failing, fled to London, Paris, anywhere, to find what they know they could never find. They now were the 'sad young men' of Fitzgerald? They had thrown over mediocrity and Babbity, but they did not find peace. It was this wreckage of ideals, this agnosticism, this despair, that was to linger through the rest of the half century and on.

What did all the frenzy and unrest mean? To the U.S.A. under Harding it meant corruption. To the young people it meant all night escapades in a speakeasy, or the hip-flask at the football games, or a bathtub full of gin. To Florida it meant a frantic real estate boom until the hurricane of 1926 levelled all. To Capone it meant millions in the rackets that prohibition bred. To the public it meant vice. To the third-rate gangsters in Chicago, it meant the machine gunning of 'Al's' men and the violence and the killings of gangs at war—and the St. Valentine's Day massacre. And finally, to the basis of the world's economy, Wall St., it meant the stock crash with its ruination, its suicides, its lost fortunes and its resultant depression.

There was starvation in the thirties and glamour; there was war and luxury. It was the time for the glamour girl and Jean Harlow. It was the time for the last of the violent criminals—'Pretty Boy' Floyd and 'Baby face' Nelson. It was time for Lindbergh to come back in to the news, not as hero this time but as the centre of the sensational kidnaping case. These were the days of "Tobacco Road's" poverty; of the depression's street peddlars, and hobos who rode the freights at night, and of the dust bowl in the South West. It was the age that glittered and boasted of America's greatness. The huge sham of pretense — The Great White Way, the tall slim skyscrapers reaching to the sky—cried to the world "We are the greatest nation that ever was". The long trains, the tremendous suspension bridges, the great liners bellowing mournfully in the

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