



# Almanac

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TO

Sec. 34.65 E, P. L. &amp; R.

## Faculty Forum: What Steps Can Be Taken To Improve Jim's Writing?

Everyone has heard about Johnny's reading problem, and almost everyone has a solution for it.

What about his compositional ability? Can Johnny write?

As a matter of fact, can his older brother Jim write now that he has enrolled in college? According to the findings of a one-man poll conducted by the Editor, Jim has serious difficulties with everything from organizing letters into words to organizing words into sentences and paragraphs. His spelling indicates a sense of ragged in-

dividualism. His syntax is often as defective as his diction is inexact.

What can be done to improve Jim's writing?

Some representative answers are given below by six professors drawn scientifically at random from the Faculty family:

*From DR. LLOYD W. DALY,  
Dean of the College, Professor of Classical Studies*

The ability to write well, *i.e.*, clearly and effectively, can be achieved only through rigid self-discipline. The first step in this direction is copious reading in authors who are themselves able writers. This reading must, of course, be done with a keen eye on the manner as well as the matter, for if you read only for content, that is certainly all you will get. The second step is to try to imitate the manner one has observed. These steps, when repeated frequently enough, are bound to approach the goal. The worship of originality at any cost has led to a contempt for imitation, but if you are able to imitate and have any originality in the first place, there is little fear that you will be unable to liberate yourself from your models.

This path to able writing, now a bit mossy from lack of travel, is an old and well-worn way. It was established in antiquity, rediscovered in the Renaissance, and followed for hundreds of years. It was long used in Latin composition and had a powerful influence on the development of English style. It was the method followed by Benjamin Franklin, as described in detail in his *Autobiography*.

*From DR. ALLAN G. CHESTER,  
Professor of English, Chairman of the  
Departmental Committee on English Composition*

It is perfectly true that Johnny's older brother Jimmy can't write—not very well, at any rate.

But neither could Jimmy's father; and my older colleagues say that even Jimmy's grandfather was a poor speller, a catch-as-catch-can punctuator, an indifferent grammarian. But if Jimmy's talent as a writer is inferior to that of his forbears, his trouble can be attributed to a complex of reasons—the decline of the systematic teaching

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## Dr. Burdick Offers Views On Fringe Benefits

A non-disabling head cold did not, we thought, disqualify us from visiting Dr. E. Douglass Burdick, chairman of the Faculty Senate Committee on Disability and Health Insurance.

We'd heard something about disability and health at the last Faculty Senate meeting, and wondered what the Committee was up to now.

"Let's say we're quiescent," said Dr. Burdick, "until necessary readjustments to Faculty salaries have been made. After that I have no doubt that everyone will be interested in additional fringe benefits."

Our interest, we said, was as much present indicative as it was future.

"Well, the immediate future," said Dr. Burdick, "turns around the \$10,000 per year that President Harnwell suggested setting aside to help individuals on the staff who are over-burdened with medical expenses. Our Committee has, in fact, recommended to him a method of administering that proposed fund."

And what about what might be called the intermediate future?

"Speaking for myself—and after Faculty salaries have been scaled up to the Ivy League level," he re-emphasized, "I believe that the first critical problem is the formalization

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## The Witness Box

### Question:

"Recently I have heard repeated mention of the Benjamin Franklin Associates. What exactly is this organization and who comprises its membership?"

ARTHUR H. DOYLE,

*Instructor in Romance Languages.*

### Answer:

"In the June, 1955, issue of *The Almanac* there was a pretty comprehensive definition of Benjamin Franklin Associates which said, in part, that B.F.A. 'is composed of individuals who have attained success in their chosen fields and who realize the many necessary costs in the operation of the University which cannot be met within the stipulated limits of special funds, endowments, public moneys, and income from students. They are people who are aware that today, as in their day, tuition and fees meet only about half the actual costs—that they attended Pennsylvania at the cost they paid because others before them had given funds to meet the difference.'

"Benjamin Franklin Associates was inaugurated only last May. By the end of 1955, it boasted a membership of 189 men and women. With a membership requisite of one thousand dollars or more, these Charter Members contributed more than \$220,000 in unrestricted funds.

"For its first annual dinner, held on January 14th at the Warwick Hotel, Benjamin Franklin Associates came from as far away as Texas, Canada, and Puerto Rico. Special guests, including the principal speaker, Dr. T. M. Knox, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of St. Andrews, came from as far away as Scotland and England.

"Now, as the Benjamin Franklin Associates enters upon its second year of service to the University, the original members are rededicating themselves to the educational and philanthropic principles of Franklin. They and future members will seek to provide a significant proportion of the necessary unrestricted funds which the University needs to maintain and improve its tradition of educational leadership. Names of others who might be interested in becoming members in the Benjamin Franklin Associates will be most welcome."

CHESTER E. TUCKER,

*Vice-President for Development and Public Relations.*

## Memo For Statisticians

According to Information Leaflet No. 52, December 28, 1955, circulated by the University of Pennsylvania Libraries, the Main Library held a total of 842,706 volumes as of June, 1955. The total represents a net addition of 14,065 volumes over the previous year. The combined University Libraries (26) held a total of 1,475,243 volumes, a net increase of 33,710 volumes within the same dates. Periodicals currently received, exclusive of non-periodical serials, number 6,493.

## Bradley Named Editor

Dr. Sculley Bradley, Vice-Provost of the University and Professor of English, has been appointed Associate Editor of *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman*, to be published by the New York University Press.

The first definitive and scholarly collection of Whitman's works, this edition will require from twelve to fifteen volumes for its completion. Professor Bradley has begun work on the first three volumes, which will contain a strictly edited text of Whitman's major poems, *Leaves of Grass*, together with a Variorum of the variants in the nine successive editions, and in all extant manuscripts.

Much essential textual material is available in the extensive Whitman Collection of the Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

In preparing the Variorum, Professor Bradley will have the collaboration of Professor Harold W. Blodgett, Chairman of the English Department, Union College. Professor Gay W. Allen, of New York University, is Managing Editor for the *Collected Writings*.

## Liberal Education Defined

"The aim of liberal education is human excellence, both private and public (for man is a political animal). Its object is the excellence of man as man and man as citizen. It regards man as an end, not as a means; and it regards the ends of life, and not the means to it. For this reason it is the education of free men. . . . The method of liberal education is the liberal arts, and the result of liberal education is discipline in those arts. The liberal artist learns to read, write, speak, listen, understand, and think. He learns to reckon, measure, and manipulate matter, quantity, and motion in order to predict, produce, and exchange."

From *Great Books: The Foundation of a Liberal Education* by Robert M. Hutchins (Simon & Schuster, Inc.)

## Medical Professors Honored

Two professors from the University's School of Medicine have been named to the 1956 honor roll of medicine selected by *Modern Medicine*, a professional journal of diagnosis and treatment. They are Dr. I. S. Ravdin, John Rhea Barton Professor of Surgery and chief surgeon to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Paul Gyorgy, Professor of Nutrition in Pediatrics and chief of the University Hospital's Department of Pediatrics.

Dr. Ravdin was cited "for his application of surgical physiology to surgical treatment in military and civilian practice and his contributions to medical education."

Dr. Gyorgy was cited "for his fundamental work in the sciences of pediatric nutrition and metabolism with relation to growth and development."

Among the eight other physicians and surgeons cited for awards this year is Dr. Jonas E. Salk of the University of Pittsburgh.

## New Provost Discusses the Job

The Statutes of the University define the Office of the Provost as the chief educational officer under the President. The Office of the Provost is responsible for the undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools, as well as for the libraries, museums, and institutes of the University.

The University's new Provost, Dr. Jonathan E. Rhoads, stated in an interview with the Editor that the functions of the work of his Office would be broadly shared with the Vice-Provosts. Whereas in the past the Vice-Provosts have carried chiefly staff responsibilities, it is now planned that major segments of the work of the Provost's Office will go to them in the first instance, so that they will henceforth carry line responsibilities as well.

The Provost is acutely aware of the fact that by 1970 the number of young Americans seeking higher education will be doubled. Under such pressures, he says, the University will have to plan wisely and quickly to fulfill its public responsibility in a manner consistent with its resources and its tradition. "We shall have to devise policies and programs meeting new circumstances and new knowledge," he points out. "Traditional areas of knowledge must be freshly evaluated, and newly discovered areas must be criticized and developed — even while the professions of teaching and scholarship are seeking adequate tools for the new tasks.

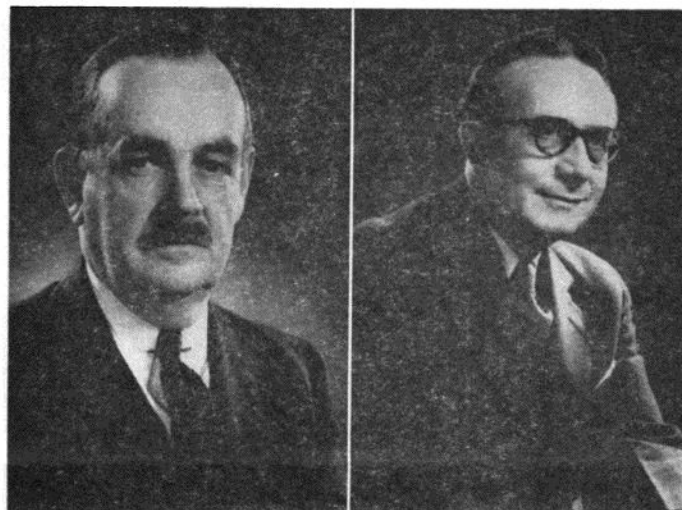


JONATHAN E. RHOADS  
Provost

Provost Rhoads emphasizes that matters of educational policy "should involve the entire University family in a very broad sense—and especially students and Faculty.

"Channels already exist for gathering and focusing opinion on educational programs and policies. Many student organizations, The Committee on An Affirmative Policy for Student Personnel in the Educational Survey, the several Faculties and their committees, the Senate, the Educational Council and the Educational Policy Committee (which affords close liaison between the Senate and the Council) are such channels. The Educational Council and the Committee of Deans are channels through which the Administrative opinions in these fields are coordinated, and the Committees of the Trustees and the several constituent boards provide senior counsel, not only from members of the governing board of the University, but from a number of other leaders in the community with broad experience.

"I hope that by a full use of these channels, the Provost's Office can act on the best informed opinion at the University continuously to improve the opportunities the University provides for learning, for teaching, and for seeking new knowledge and new insights."



ROY F. NICHOLS

E. SCULLEY BRADLEY

*Vice-Provosts of the University*

## The Book-Of-The-Month Club Offers Library To Faculty

President Harnwell has informed *The Almanac* that the Book-of-the-Month Club has offered to give the proposed Faculty Club a library of some two hundred volumes whenever it is convenient for the Faculty to receive it. The gift also includes a continuing complimentary subscription to the Book-of-the-Month Club, which means an annual increase to the library of twenty-five to thirty books.

The offer has been made by Harry Scherman, founder and chairman of the board of the Book-of-the-Month Club, and an alumnus of both the Wharton and Law Schools. Mr. Scherman's attention was attracted by two items in the December issue of *The Almanac*: the story concerning the Faculty Club and the announcement of WCAU-TV's gift of 150 books about the broadcasting industry to the University Library.

The Book-of-the-Month Club gift includes Churchill's six-volume *History of the Second World War*, Sandburg's four-volume biography of Lincoln, the recent Yale University facsimile edition of *Shakespeare's First Folio*, *Art Treasures of the Louvre*, the two-volume edition of *The Complete Stories of W. Somerset Maugham*, the four-volume *Family Mark Twain*, *Ulysses*, *Andersonville*, *The Day Lincoln was Shot*, *The Faulkner Reader*, *Inside Africa*, *Marjorie Morningstar*, *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, *A Stillness at Appomatox*, *The Saturday Evening Post Treasury*, *The New Yorker Album*, *The Mature Mind*, *The Collected Tales of A. E. Coppard*, *The Oxford Book of American Verse*, *No Time for Sergeants*, the four-volume *American Guide*, *What to Listen for in Music*, *The Caine Mutiny*, Edgar Johnson's two-volume biography of *Charles Dickens*, and *The Hemingway Reader*.



## Fringe Benefits (Continued from page one)

of a disability scheme which heretofore has been taken care of by *ad hoc* decisions as individual cases have arisen. Although few people are affected by permanent and complete disability, any person may be the individual in that catastrophic position. It would be a real boost to one's sense of security if one could be assured of some replacement of income in that event."

What about temporary disability?, we asked.

"To a lesser degree," Dr. Burdick continued, "the same thing may be said for temporary disability. It should be publicized now that an act of Congress has recently made available to the Faculty member, among others, relief from income tax payments on the first \$100 per week of income during disability provided he is receiving disability payments under a plan. I believe that it is the policy of the University at present to continue full salary in the case of disability until the end of the semester in which the disability occurred. This is classified as a 'plan,' and the Faculty should be informed of this privilege."

Shouldn't it be relatively easy to formalize a disability plan for the University? Don't first class insurance companies make suitable plans available?

"That's the difficulty at present," said Dr. Burdick, "they just don't. Haverford College, I'm told, did get a bid from a good insurance company on such a plan, but the premium was about double the anticipated benefits. As a result, a proposal to the Board of Managers at Haverford is under consideration—one that I think appears to be very satisfactory. If the plan is adopted, we should keep ourselves informed of its cost."

Could Dr. Burdick offer any of its details?

"Yes. As I understand it, the plan calls for self-insurance in the sense that the Board of Managers would undertake to budget the payments each year. The plan works like this: During the year when an eligible employee becomes disabled, full salary would be paid. This means an increase in disposable income over the regular salary because of the \$100 a week tax provision I just referred to. The next year the payment would be reduced, on the average, to 82% of the previous year's salary, which makes the disposable income about equal to that before the disability. After the second year, payments would be reduced in varying degrees depending on the length of service preceding disability—with a minimum cash benefit of 50% of salary at the time of disability. Because of the tax provision, this would mean that the disposable income was much more than 50% of the original salary. In the meantime, an additional benefit would be provided; namely, that the college would pay all the employee's T.I.A.A. retirement premiums. Then at age 65, if disability lasted that long, the institutional responsibility would be ended and retirement benefits from T.I.A.A., and, I presume, social security, would begin. Such a plan, it seems to me, would be ideal from the Faculty point of view."

We couldn't help wondering about its costs.

"That's a problem, of course, and at present they're not well known. But they'd undoubtedly be less variable in a large institution like Penn. And one of the advantages that must not be lost sight of, even under self-insurance, is that

a reasonably definite cost for the succeeding year would be known when the budget was being made up."

What about major medical insurance?

"That, of course, is the second important coverage in the intermediate future. Here, I think, the best plan I've observed is that at Wesleyan, underwritten by the Connecticut Life Insurance Company. This plan covers the University employees and their families. It's difficult to know what the Wesleyan employee pays for specific benefits because there is one payment for all Wesleyan fringe benefits—and I think that here I should indicate Wesleyan's total program because I believe that it is the most generous now available. Wesleyan pays 15% of the salary of eligible Faculty, administrative officers, and editors toward T.I.A.A. All other eligible members of the staff have 10% of salary paid by the University to T.I.A.A. Obviously, the Faculty member may choose to contribute toward his retirement in addition to this 15%, but it is not required. Furthermore, Wesleyan has the usual social security program to which the employee must contribute.

"The rest of the plan is contributory and I will give one example on the assumption that the salary is \$8,000 and the employee has two or more family members.

"For \$7.92 per month, he gets these benefits:

"First, life insurance of \$8,000 with a disability clause. In case of permanent and total disability the \$8,000 is paid in cash or in annuity; but the payments are in lieu of death benefits.

"Second, daily hospitalization benefits to employee and family members up to \$15 per day—the ceiling being \$1,050 during any period of disability.

"Third, hospital and surgical fees up to \$300 each per period of disability to employees and family members.

"Fourth, major medical insurance for each employee and family member up to \$5,000 per disability.

"What proportion of the total cost is borne by the University I do not know. Haverford, incidentally, has instituted a major medical plan somewhat similar to Wesleyan's with a maximum of \$2,500, including maternity benefits."

We then asked Dr. Burdick what he thought of periodic health examinations as part of a comprehensive plan for the intermediate future.

"By all means," he declared strongly. "It's fair to say that most Faculty members probably don't consider this to be nearly as important as I do, but I believe it's to the self-interest of the University to provide periodic examinations at the Diagnostic Clinic, with special emphasis in trying to find those ailments and disabilities whose early diagnosis and treatment will represent savings to us in material and human resources."

And the long-run future?

"With the excellent medical facilities available at the University, it is inevitable that some Faculty members would hope eventually a complete medical care program in terms of services should be instituted, presumably on a pre-payment or fixed fee per year basis, with services available to families of employees. Some, if not all, of the costs should be paid by the employee."

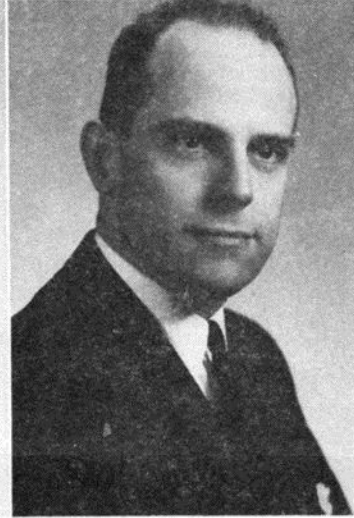
Dr. Burdick reminded us that he was available for any further questions the Faculty might want to put to him, in person or via the pages of *The Almanac*.



**DONALD K. ANGELL**  
has been appointed Vice-  
President and Assistant to  
the President



**JOHN C. HETHERSTON**  
has been appointed Secre-  
tary of the University



**WILLIAM G. OWEN, JR.**  
has been appointed Assistant  
Secretary of the University



**E. CRAIG SWEETEN, JR.**  
has been named Director  
of Development for the  
University

## Faculty Queried About Club

Assistant Professor Edward L. Brink's senior class in Marketing Research is currently undertaking a survey of the Faculty in an effort to determine the exact nature of their desires with respect to a Faculty Club. The research is being conducted on a scientific sampling basis by questionnaire and personal interview. Results are expected to be made public toward the end of March.

## Senate Agenda Announced

Among the Committees expected to report at the next meeting of the University Senate (February 27, 4-6 P.M., W-51 Dietrich Hall) are the following: Faculty Club Committee, Committee on Manual of Operations, Committee on Financial Problems and Procedures, and the *ad hoc* Committee on Charitable Fund Raising on Campus. An invitation has been extended to Dr. Joseph H. Willits, Director of the Educational Survey, to report on the accomplishments of his mission to date. Nominations for the Educational Council for 1956-1957 will be held. Any Faculty member who would like to add an item to the agenda is requested to consult with Dr. Edward L. Brink, Secretary of the Senate, in room W-207, Dietrich Hall.

## New Address Announced

The Development Program, the Public Relations Office and News Bureau, and the Alumni Giving Office are now located in their new quarters, The Development Building, 201 S. 34th Street.

## Incidental Intelligence

*From the confidential notebook of one of our campus agents:*

*Report on conversation overheard in the office of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences two weeks before the examination period began:*

*Distraught Voice:* "Can you tell me when the final examination in Botany 604 is to be given?"

*Secretary:* "I'm sorry but the Graduate School has no schedule of final examinations. Perhaps the Botany Department can help you."

*Distraught Voice:* "I called the Botany Department but no one there knows."

*Secretary:* "Then I suggest you consult your Instructor."

*Distraught Voice:* "But I *am* the Instructor!"

## Faculty Members

### Serve Social Workers

Several members of the Faculty of the School of Social Work of the University are serving as Commissioned members and officers of the new professional organization in social work, the National Association of Social Workers. Dean William D. Turner is serving on the Association's Commission on Social Policy and Action, Dr. Rosa Wessel on the Commission on Education, and Miss Helen U. Phillips on the Commission on Recruitment to the Profession. Dr. Ruth E. Smalley has been elected second Vice-President. The Association's membership approximates 20,000 professional social workers, engaged both in social work practice and in education for social work throughout the United States.

## Jim's Writing

(Continued from page one)

of composition in the schools (high school teachers prefer to teach literature—I do myself); the decline of foreign language study, which stimulated precision in the use of English; our own relaxed standards of admission; the decline of reading; the changing cultural pattern in Jimmy's background.

A partial improvement in Jimmy's writing might be effected if we teachers—all of us, not just English teachers—could persuade him that good, clear writing is important. Every time one of us says, before an examination, "I don't care how you write—just get the facts and ideas down," he makes himself an accessory to Jimmy's linguistic crimes.

Jimmy is inclined to believe that good writing is valued only by English teachers, peculiar fellows who don't make much money. If we could convince him that the ability to write clearly and correctly is highly valued in industry, business, and the professions, we might provide the motivation to make him write better.

Of course, we must not forget that there is a connection between the ability to write and the ability to think. Sometimes Jimmy doesn't think very well either. Maybe in that case he should have been persuaded not to come to college.

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From DR. LOREN C. EISELEY,  
*Professor and Chairman of Anthropology*

As a teacher whose specialty is the illiterate Stone Age past, I do not find this question an easy one. There are times when, to a near-sighted anthropologist, the students in the back row of even a graduate seminar blur oddly into the shapes of their Ice Age predecessors. I do not mind, they are good students and basically they want the same things man has always wanted, but their world is different.

There is now arising among us a culture in which reading and the ability to write are unconsciously taken as specialties, or at best reading is used to occupy a few minutes before one takes one's turn at the barber's shop. Our society has ceased to value both arts as an integral part of the creation of a cultivated man or woman. Because of the rising standard of living, more students with no family tradition of learning or admiration for books are pouring into the colleges. They are coming, unfortunately, just at a time when technical and compartmentalized training predominates over the contemplative and enlightened ideals of the past. The haste of the cold war and the demand for technicians in an increasingly machine-driven culture has created the student who is talking about security and retirement before he graduates and who will stand no nonsense about literature and the egg-head arts.

Frequently I find that students assume that grammar, spelling, and paragraphing, can be used in a slovenly, approximate way in departments outside the reach of their English professors. They seem, again unconsciously, to assume that clear, accurate writing is a fetish; a trick insisted upon in one department. Elsewhere it can be ignored. The student is thus reflecting a division between fields which has become so great that even the great universal means of communication—writing—is regarded as unimportant unless one is majoring in English. When I

mark upon a term paper or an examination, "Grammar! Spelling!" I find that some students feel I am taking a stuffy attitude. English is not my subject. Why should I bother with it? This infantile and premature desire to bury oneself in a specialty and to exclude the infinite magnitude of life from one's thoughts, is to acquiesce in a mean philosophy of existence. Yet there is something in the multiplication of our machines and inventions that steals our time and promotes in various subtle ways a physically comfortable and an infinitely barren life—a life often less touched by awe and wonder than that of the primitive savage painting beautiful magic pictures on the walls of a dark cave.

As an anthropologist, I find the propaganda-directed mass man who threatens to inherit this compartmentalized and shallow culture a frightening spectacle. Increasingly I prefer the Stone Age to what I can see of the future. The past contained at least the quiet illiteracy of a solitary human being contemplating the stars. The future — ?

On my desk lies a publisher's gift. A widely praised volume of shredded fragments wrenched from the great books. I presume the time saved can be applied to everyone's immediate satisfaction, but as our past vanishes the future ceases to have meaning. And this we have not learned, or at least not well.

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From DR. JOHN PERRY HORLACHER,  
*Professor and Chairman of Political Science*

After they arrive on the campus it is a little late to do anything about the students who can't write. The fact that courses in English composition are mandatory assumes the possibility of improvement in individual cases, but the number of bad writers who get through the composition courses suggests that the holes in the sieve are pretty large.

Should writing clinics be tried? We have speech clinics and reading clinics; why not an intensive application of remedial writing? This cure is doubtless illusory because a clinic is a bit inadequate for treating a whole population.

The short run remedy, whether in a clinic or a class room, is largely futile because writing well is partly a matter of thinking clearly and partly a matter of equipping the mind with good verbal patterns. These should be fundamental achievements of the educational system at the primary and secondary level. Instead they are fundamental failures.

Higher education can do something about this but not by trying to compensate for the inadequacies of lower education. Higher education can put more effective pressure on the elementary and secondary schools to do a better job. There is no reason why, if college professors are seriously concerned about the painful writing of their students, they cannot use their professional organizations to exercise a dynamic leadership toward accomplishing a badly needed and long overdue reform in the educational system.

Nor is there any reason, especially during the next decade or two when the pressures on admissions offices are expected to be enormous, why college and university administrators cannot tighten standards at one of the points that would pay the biggest dividends. A tougher admission requirement on verbal aptitude and specific ability to



write—with due notice to the secondary schools—would not only elevate the low level of current performance but might substantially affect secondary school policy and achievement in this area.

From DR. MALCOLM G. PRESTON,  
*Professor of Psychology*

To write with satisfaction to himself, and with joy to his professors, our Jim at the University must have something to say, and he must want to write about it. He also needs essential skills—in the beginning some skill in spelling, and in knowledge of words, and in syntax. And he must have criticism, especially self-criticism, if his writing is to increase in intelligibility.

It is easy to seize upon the obvious defects in his writing—the misspellings, the syntactical horrors, the incoherences and other evidences of inability to use the language at its most elementary level—as the crux of the problem. And how easy it is, and how quick we are, to identify the secondary school teachers and the section men in the courses in English composition.

The obvious evidences and the easy answer they provoke should be looked at with suspicion. It is not at all unlikely that Jim's poverty in the skills which provoke our outbursts against the secondary schools and the English departments finds its roots in Jim's not having much to say, and not caring much whether he says it or not. Mortimer Adler once suggested that anything worth reading at all should be read like a love-letter—with frequent pauses to consider how much the meaning was changed because she used a comma here or a semi-colon there. A similar principle holds for writing. Jim writing a love-letter seems to me to be the ideal which we need to approach—Jim filled to bursting with the unutterable; Jim worried because he has said too much rather than too little, and laboring to cut down the text rather than to pad it out; Jim having something to say and scarcely being able to wait to say it.

This implies the responsibility which all university professors share—to contribute to a University whose atmosphere promotes the appearance of students who suffer no poverty of ideas, who have something to say, and who are impatient to get it said.

From DR. ROY H. ABRAMS,  
*Associate Professor of Sociology*

The romance of the Little Red School House which is believed to have produced so many bright pupils, largely because of thorough drilling techniques, continues to bloom in the garden of American folklore.

Though we may discount the folklore, the fact is that today much is lacking in the preparation of many of our college students. The immediate problem is: What can be done on the college level to assist them, particularly in the use of the English language, the ability to read and understand the meaning of words, etc.?

The first suggestion would be to promote a closer relationship between all departments of the University and the English Department in developing a systematic and coordinated program based on the needs of students. At the present time the major responsibility is placed on the

English Department. It should be more widely shared.

While we may not teach composition and reading *per se*, it is possible to call attention to glaring errors and make constructive suggestions with respect to speech, as well as in written forms. A considerable proportion of our students have little comprehension of the meaning and usage of the simplest words in everyday parlance. For example, the word "majority" is frequently equated with "seventy-five per cent."

How often statements made by us in the classroom come back twisted and garbled! It all seems to be part of a larger picture of faulty study habits, of illogical and sleazy (or perhaps lazy) thinking, of lack of motivation and genuine interest in achieving a level of relative accuracy and dynamic understanding of thought forms and the use of the mother tongue.

## Library Acquires Archer Manuscript

The University Library has become the proud possessor of the 200-page clinical notebook of its first Medical School graduate, John Archer, M.B., 1768. The manuscript was recently presented to the Library by the Medical Class of 1916 in honor of their member, John G. Archer of Greenville, Mississippi, the great-great-grandson of the author of the notes. The manuscript is valuable for its general revelations about medical practice as well as for its particular case histories.

Apparently, Archer was a man of shifting ambitions. On being graduated from the College of New Jersey at Princeton in 1760 (one of his classmates was Benjamin Rush), he declared he was going to open an academy in Baltimore. But a short while later he was studying for the ministry—with a remarkable lack of success. After preaching one trial sermon, he was denied ordination by the Presbytery. The rejection, singularly untempered by charity, spoke of Archer's "want of knowledge in divinity and the other particulars he has been examined on, as well as . . . an incapacity to communicate his ideas on any subject."

Archer's capacities improved, however, following his medical apprenticeship to the famous Dr. John Morgan, Professor of Medicine in the College of Philadelphia. He was one of ten young physicians to receive his Bachelor of Medicine on June 21, 1768, first on the list by "accident of alphabet" ever to be awarded such a degree in America.

Later Archer became a Major in the Revolutionary Army, sat as a member of the Maryland State Constitutional Convention, helped to found the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland, and was elected to Congress (1801-1807). Five of Archer's sons became physicians.

Dr. Archer might not have been able to preach a sermon, but that the passage of nearly 200 years has increased rather than diminished our interest in his work suggests a certain competence in the arts of communication.

Dr. Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., Research Associate Professor of History, has written an interesting article about the Archer Manuscript in the January issue of the *Library Chronicle*.

## Among Other Things

The recent announcement by the Engineering Schools of the University that they are reorganizing their facilities and curricula to accommodate an increased student enrollment of 50% has been widely commended as a major contribution to the correction of the current scientific manpower shortage. How important this development is may be judged from the following quotation from a release being circulated by the Franklin Institute:

"The Soviet countries, Russia and China, have nearly three times as many technical students as we have. They recognize that the winning of vast underdeveloped areas is partly a job for engineers and scientists." . . .

In addition, the University's Summer School is offering to secondary school teachers willing to take graduate courses in the physical and biological sciences and mathematics double the amount of tuition aid it offers to those taking courses in other fields. In a recent news story *Dr. Harnwell* emphasized that the scarcity of qualified teachers at the secondary level must be corrected if expanded engineering and scientific programs are to be successful. He said that 53% of U. S. high schools do not teach physics and 50% do not teach chemistry. In 1890, he added, one out of every five high school students studied physics; today, despite the essentiality of such study, the ratio is one to twenty-two. . . .

*Franklin Shelf:* The University's extensive Franklin collections were among the eight sources acknowledged by *Life* magazine in its handsome picture-story text, *A 250th Birthday for Ben*, featured in the issue of January 9, 1956 . . . New issue: We were reminded in the pages of the special commemorative edition of the late *Carl Van Doren's* Pulitzer-Prize winning biography, *Benjamin Franklin* (Viking), that B. F. was the recipient of the first airmail delivery in history. The letter was handed to him in France by one of the two men who first piloted a balloon across the English Channel . . . New Book: Franklin is seen as master diplomat and military strategist in *Helen Augur's* excellent and briskly paced narrative, *The Secret War of Independence* (Duell-Little, Brown). . . .

*Names:* *Dr. Alfred Senn*, Professor of Germanic and Balto-Slavic Philology, has been elected, for a two-year term, national president of the American Association of Teachers of German . . . *Dr. MacEdward Leach*, Professor of English, is one of twenty-five leading Middle English scholars engaged in producing *A Manual of The Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500*. Sponsored by the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, the two-volume project will include a bibliography of literary works and a critical appraisal of all significant scholarship in the field. It will probably take five years to complete . . . *Dr. Chester Rapkin*, an authority on housing market analysis and urban land economics, has been appointed a research associate professor in the School of Fine Arts . . . *Dr. Eugene P. Pendergrass*, Professor and Chairman of Radiology, has been named Consultant in Radiology, 2nd Army Area, Headquarters, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. . . .

*Did You Know:* that the earliest catalogue of the University Library was in book form, date of 1829? Details

in the Winter, 1956, issue of *The Library Chronicle* . . . that George Washington, who frequently attended college functions during his residency in Philadelphia, was awarded an honorary degree in 1783? . . . that the University numbers some 82,000 graduates, a little more than half of whom live in the state of Pennsylvania? . . . that the Faculty of the School of Dentistry is composed of 72% Pennsylvania graduates, and that the next highest percentage of a university's graduates on that Faculty is represented by alumni of the Temple University School of Dentistry? . . .

*Anecdote Annex:* Making the proverbial ivy rounds is the story of the football star whose low grades drew a rebuke from the dean of his college. "Four F's and one D!" exclaimed the dean indignantly. "How do you explain this?" The football star studied his hands. "I guess I just put too much time on one subject," he replied. . . .

*Author! Author:* *Dr. W. H. Gottschalk*, Chairman of the Department of Mathematics, is the co-author of a new book titled *Topological Dynamics* (American Mathematical Society Colloquium Publications, Volume 36, 1955) . . . Another striking article by *Dr. Loren Eiseley*, Chairman of Anthropology, has just graced the pages of *Harper's Magazine*. See "The Bird and The Machine" in the January issue . . . *Dr. Robert Tauber*, Assistant Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics, is the author of *Basic Surgical Skills* (Saunders) . . . *Dr. Robert Strausz-Hupé*, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, is the General Editor of *Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, Foreign Policy Research Institute Series*. To be published in March under his direction: *The Current Crisis in Argentina*, by *Dr. Arthur P. Whitaker*, Professor and Chairman of History, and *Non-Economic Assumptions Underlying U. S. Economic Aid Policies*, by *Dr. Norman D. Palmer*, Professor of Political Science and Coordinator of the Karachi Project, *Dr. Froelich Rainey*, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the University Museum, and *Drs. Whitaker and Strausz-Hupé*. . . .

*Catching Up With the News:* *President Harnwell* appeared on WCAU-TV, Channel 10, on January 18th to receive a check for \$1,000 from Donald W. Thornburgh, president of WCAU. The money is to be used for the purchase of 150 books about the broadcasting industry, to be placed in the main library, and for certain electronic equipment for the University's new radio and television courses.

### THE ALMANAC

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