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Editorials

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DRAMA FESTIVAL

It has been said so often that the words have almost lost their meaning, but the fact still remains that it takes courage for a man to stand in front of an audience and speak. It is a training that can be gotten only through practice and it is a training that we must have in order to be able to refute accusations and the attacks

against our beliefs, religious, political, social, or otherwise, that we are sure to meet in our life outside college. Too often we are content to let pass unchallenged statements that may be irreligious in content, or based on false or untrue philosophies, to which we, in view of our Catholic training and background, should be the first to take offence. Too often we feel a sense of inferiority after we have heard a speaker who, actually, may have very little matter in his speech, but whose deportment on the floor—his manner, delivery, posture, and voice modulation—is such that we are fooled into believing that he really is saying something worthwhile. It is easy to sit back and enjoy a speech when the speaker shows confidence in himself and we feel sure he'll make a good job of the speech, but we must, at the same time, be sure that the man's thinking is correct, and that he is not moving us to accept false ideals by playing on our emotions with his fine figures of speech and his arm-waving. In other words, we must not let our emotions prevail over our intellect. We must be capable of putting aside the superfluities and dissecting the content of his speech.

When a man is making a speech he is acting, whether he knows it or not. Today a speaker may be an Antony holding an agitated mob in the palm of his hand; tomorrow he may be an Aeneas, leading and encouraging the long-suffering Trojans on to Carthage; again he may be a Mark Twain bringing laughter bubbling from the lips of his audience. But one thing is certain—the man is an actor.

The ability to act, we believe, is one of the more desirable traits in a speaker. Not the flamboyant acting of the old "meller-drama" actors, but that of the great speakers, such as Churchill, who uses his gestures and inflections of voice to their best advantage. This is acting at its best—acting that loses itself in its part.

All of which may seem a long way from the Drama Festival. Actually, it is not. Remember we said we want men with the courage to speak and speak forcibly; men who can dissect and refute arguments while on their feet; men who can take the floor before an audience and throw themselves into what they have to say.

You will say that this is a lot to expect from our Drama Festival. It is, we admit. Naturally, we don't expect to produce a St. Thomas or a Fulton Sheen or even a single Mark Twain from the students taking part in the plays, but we hold that the value of such a Drama Festival goes far beyond that of entertainment. We hold that such a Drama Festival teaches a student how to capture an audience, how to hold their attention, and how to speak with assurance. We

hold further, that more such Drama Festivals together with the training received in public speaking classes would do much to give we students an armour of self-confidence which would be one of our greatest weapons, and the lack of which is one of our greatest defects.

THE ALUMNI BULLETIN

Following the trend of many other universities, and with the intention of keeping in contact with her "old boys", St. Dunstan's University Alumni Bulletin came into being in September of this year. A meeting of the Executive of the Alumni Association on July 15th authorized the publication of this Bulletin, hoping that it would "foster interest on the part of the members of the Association in St. Dunstan's, in the work of the Association itself, and in particular to assist the Association in realizing its pledge of an Alumni Gymnasium and Auditorium." It further points out that, "St. Dunstan's . . . needs the support of her former students, not primarily their financial support, but their moral backing, their moral support first, and secondarily their financial assistance." The work of the Bulletin is to keep alive the interest of the Alumni in what is happening at S.D.U. to-day, but in particular to revive their memories of past days spent in the hallowed halls of "old St. Dunstan's."

The first issue of the Bulletin is an attractive, slick-paper one, with a proposed sketch of the new gymnasium and auditorium on the front page. It includes notes on some members of the alumni, on the meetings of the Alumni Association and Executive, on the annual Lay Retreat, the Extension Department, and promises us in the Bulletins to come an Alumni Forum which should prove interesting to both Alumni and present day students. All in all, the Alumni Bulletin should prove to be a magnetic force to keep the St. Dunstan's "old boys" united to the St. Dunstan's of to-day.

TOO MUCH LETHARGY

One trait peculiar to most of our undergraduates is their seemingly disregard for their vocation in life. This thoughtlessness and laxity is, without doubt, of a more serious nature when it is found among those who are nearing the completion of undergradu-

ate studies. It is to be expected that the students in high school are more or less unconcerned about their particular calling for they have not as yet been introduced to those studies which concern in a more direct way the various professions, but when this same disregard for the future is found among those who are destined in a very short time to be educated citizens in our society, the situation becomes serious. That there is a great deal of this same lethargy prevalent among the students is forced upon us from our associations from day to day. Many, too many are "drifting, drifting freely." Furthermore, among those who set their thoughts to the future, there is indecision. A brief survey of the biographies of our seniors from year to year gives substantial support to our claims. We find that many of them are "undecided" as to future undertakings; many voice no mention whatever of the future; occasionally, not however, frequently, we are told of a decision. Again, from our associations in the past, we are forced to the unpleasant conclusion that among those who are undecided and mentionless of future pursuits, are those whose drifting bark suddenly struck a jutting rock—Graduation. Hastening to adopt a decision they arrived at naught but indecision. All, we believe, are rightly aware that they must perform some task throughout life; but where in society are they capable of fitting? What are their aptitudes, their interests? In what state or occupation can they contribute most to society as educated citizens? These questions are left unanswered in the majority of cases. In other words we observe that there is little consideration by students of their respective vocations.

Now, one's vocation is not something to be shirked, but something to be met honestly and seriously. Vocation, one's calling, implies a tremendously important decision in life. It asks us these questions. What are you able to do? What would you like to do? These are good questions, practical and all-important. An answer to the former requires merely a survey of our ability. It demands that we be honest with ourselves. That, following the advice of the wise Socrates when he exhorted "Know Thyself," we subject ourselves to a complete self-analysis. Response to the query as to what we would like to do, should come as a result of an organized numbering and grading of our interests. Needless to say, interests vary with personalities; but we are capable of knowing our own; our likes and dislikes are of assistance in summing up these inherent interests.

Vocation, we are told, is primarily a matter of personal concern. We alone are capable of discerning our interests. However, when the matter of estimating our abilities looms up for answer, we are

often insufficient or worse still, too generous in our reply. Experience has taught us also that interest and ability must go hand in hand in any profession if there is to be success. Undoubtedly, there must be guidance if a person is to choose what is suitable for him. For lack of guidance in the choice of careers in life often results in misfits, which, it is commonly agreed, must be prevented from occurring as such situations are detrimental to the individual from point of view of happiness on this earth, and to society which suffers from the inefficiency and blunders resulting therefrom.

There should be no argument to our statement that guidance is necessary if the student is to adapt himself properly in society. Continuing on this subject of guidance, we give voice to our observation that this required assistance in choice of vocation is at present inadequate. We realize also that present circumstances prevent the adoption of guidance schemes followed in many other universities and colleges but we urge that more attention be focused on the means we do have at our disposal. We have all the advantages of a small college; students, for the most part, have intimate relations with the faculty—at least they should have, and the comparatively small number of students also makes the “foster-father” system possible. However, we believe the main obstacle to successful guidance measures on the campus is the prevalent attitude of the majority of the student body. We urge them first to awaken to the reality that attention must be given to their vocation in life. When this present lethargy and laxity in this regard has been remedied, then only can we hope for a more active interest and search for guidance which, we feel, can and should be supplied to a great extent, by the members of the teaching staff.

BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE . . .

On the first Christmas Day occurred the greatest event in the history of mankind, for the Christ-Child Who was born on that day amid conditions of poverty and chaos similar to those in the world today, gave a new dignity to man. Man, by himself, did nothing to deserve this gift, which now gave a meaning and a direction to his actions. He was totally unworthy of the new life opened to him by Christ. Living in a jumbled world, with no apparent end in view, he had suddenly revealed to him the hope of another world after death—a world he had done nothing to merit and which was opened to him only by the most supreme act of love the world has experienced or can hope to experience.

Because of this fact, man should spend this time of year in reflecting on this great act of God. He should be mindful of man's unworthiness. That God should take the body and soul of man and live among men is an act attributable only to God's goodness and love for man. He should be aware of the sacrifice made by God's divine Son, Jesus, in leaving the atmosphere of Love in Heaven to come to an atmosphere of sin and hatred on earth. Before Christ's coming there was no love in man. Christ brought love to earth.

Just as it is the custom to prepare for the Resurrection by sacrifice during Lent, so also, and to just as great a degree, we should prepare for the coming of Christ by sacrifice. The period of advent—the coming of Christ—should be a time of penance and prayer and not a time of revelry, as our pagan-like customs have made it. And Christmas Day, itself, should not be spent in more of our follies but in thanksgiving to the Saviour Who has come amongst us.

Not only is Christmas a time of love on God's part, it is also a time of love on our part—love of God and love of our neighbour. It is customarily thought of us a time of gift-giving. But how often at Christmas do we offer gifts to Christ? Or how often at Christmas do we offer gifts to those dearest to Christ—His poor ones?

Let our Christmas this year be filled with Charity. Let us not offer gifts in the spirit of "you give and I'll give", but rather let our gifts be to those who are deserving of gifts—the poor. Let us give out of a feeling of charity and brotherly love. First of all, let us offer our gifts to God and secondarily, let us offer our gifts to those in need, through Christ, Whose birthday we are celebrating.

Let us, while the spirit of Christmas is upon us, make a Christmas resolution. Let us resolve to live a life of love all year—of love for God, manifested in avoidance of sin and acts of virtue, and of love for our neighbour, manifested in acts of good will and charity. Christmas should be the time for resolutions for Christians, for it is the time for renewing our Christianity. We should not wait until New Year's when our resolutions are meaningless.

Red and White takes this opportunity to extend to its readers best wishes for a happy and holy Christmas.