

The Mercer Cluster



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CLUSTER POLICY

"We are the sum of all the moments of our lives . . ."—Thomas Wolfe

It shall be the policy of the Mercer Cluster to record these moments honestly, focusing upon them without distortion.

Complaint

We always did believe in exercise. It is an excellent formula to drive away that pale and jaded look, and to give vim, vigor and vitality to the body. We want to continue to look at our knees without the aid of a mirror. We certainly do not want to look like a pear with four matchsticks stuck into it. So exercise, we conclude, is a good thing.

But when we exercise, it is highly desirable to get under a hot shower afterwards. There's a lot of sweat and grime on the skin that cold water can't cleanse. Boils often result from uncleanness, especially if the skin is broken. So we would like to have some hot water after the workout in the gym and on the field. Give us some warm water in the Co-op showers, please. Cleanliness is next to Godliness.

—Mike Warr.

Hot Dogs or Bananas

In a recent address, made to a group of local business men, the Dean of Women made a statement which has bolstered our heretofore rapidly dwindling faith in the Mercer faculty.

The statement, in regard to the American idea of forcing its ideas and "civilization" on foreign countries, was: "Did it ever occur to you that the Hottentot might not like hot dogs? He might prefer bananas?"

It is very difficult for the average American (this is us speaking now, not Miss B.) to realize that the country, which we are all so fond of, is not too well liked throughout the world. It wasn't in their seventh grade American History books, so they blithely refuse to believe that the U. S. has been involved in shady deals, such as the Panama Canal incident and the Spanish-American War.

One of the cruelest examples of Anglo-American Imperialism is in regard to the Orient. We of America must learn that those people with their ancient culture can be perfectly happy without automobiles, and landscapes dotted with smoky industrial plants. But can we greedy American business men be content to see the wealth of the Orient stay out of the American pocket-book? Apparently not.

Central and South America must be pretty well fed up now with the American business man who commutes between an office in New York and a factory, using cheap native labor, in Guatemala; with the profits eventually winding their way out of the country into a New York bank.

If we are going to play the role of big brother and helper to all, let's learn the part.

In Other Words

By Mike Warr

FUNNY MAN—

From all indications, Mercer students like humor in their Monday morning chapel programs. It was a 76-year-old professor who furnished the laughter on Monday last, while Mercerians went into convulsions, spasms, and almost hysterics over his jokes. According to my count, the good doctor told eighteen jokes, stories, and anecdotes. It took him twenty-two minutes to tell the jokes and twelve minutes to make his speech, but no one objected to this lop-sidedness, judging by the thunderous applause when he sat down.

Never have I heard a speaker tell jokes in such rapid-fire fashion. As far as I could tell, Dr. Daniel used no notes at all. He had two pairs of spectacles dangling by his side, but he never used either pair. Incidentally, that sort of puzzled me. Perhaps he didn't like to wear bifocals. I guess he wears both pairs at once on different sections of his nose.

SCANNING THE NEWS—

A press report says that a Massachusetts baby born recently whistled before he was a day old. Doubtless, some platinum blonde passed by the hospital window.

Headline says: "Woman Regains Voice after Seven Years of Silence." I'm glad I wasn't around to hear her catch up!

'Tis said that if the shortage of suspenders continues, we may have a lot of pin-up boys.

According to a report in the Atlanta Journal, there is an English law forbidding a man marrying his mother-in-law. This is, without doubt, the height of uselessness. Wonder if the law has ever been broken?

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS—

Just to prove that old maid school teachers are not doomed to spinsterhood for the balance of their days, the following letter was received by a Cedartown school marm:

"Dear miss—

"When i seen you walking to school so purt i decided i wanted you for a wife. i got meat that ain't et, syrup in the jug; i ain't no hand to spend. i go barefoot in the summer. if you ain't goin to have me Don't norate it around. i got my eye on three others."

This should be encouraging to all future school teachers.

Strictly From Hunger

By Floyd Wade

A visit to the barber shop can be a very stimulating experience, not only to the scalp but to the reason. The whole atmosphere of the little parlor is one which is quite provocative of meditation and contemplation.

From the moment the tonsorial artist points directly at you and says, "You're next," your separation from the masses is sharply outlined, and instead of functioning as a part of a machine, you instantly become an egoist, thinking not of mankind but of man. And with the first snip of the scissors, you are cut off from society, severed from the raging mob, and left to contemplate your destiny.

These thoughts are invariably interrupted, however, by the conversation of the barber, which usually runs something like this:

"My boy, have you read Dostoyevski's 'The Brothers Karamazov'?"

"No sir, but I won \$17 on the World Series this year."

"Are you a philosopher, or do you believe in the maxim, 'primum vivere, deinde philosophari' (for math majors, 'one must live, then one may philosophize')?"

"My parents are devout Baptists and discourage my reading metaphysical and epistemological treatises. Life is very perplexing. How is the barber business?"

"I'm earning a paltry pittance from my labors. But my father, and his father before him, pursued this trade. I do it in memory of him. I'm a social misfit. Please don't make the same mistakes I made. Just remember that no one can tell you anything about how to live your life. The most important things you will ever learn will be those you learn by just being alive. Do you want a shave?"

"No sir, my goal now is a commission in the Navy."

"It is unimportant. Don't worry about it. Do you think a uniform can change a man in the slightest? The war may change the luxuries of life, but not the essentials."

"Will you please trim the temples?"

"Temples, bah. You certainly do not think that people judge you by the cut of your hair. They listen to what you have to say. What do you have to say?"

"Are you nearly through? I've got to resume my life as one of democracy's guardians."

"Don't be bitter. Hurry up and get into the battles being fought. You'll hate yourself if you don't. And if you do you'll become a zealous cynic—the epitome of one desiring to lead the good life. Don't worry about being killed, if you believe that you will leave a good memory. That is the only way you will ever have life after death—in the minds of those who knew and loved you. That'll be fifty cents, please."

Picking up a copy of "The Barber's Weekly" with which to amuse my friends, I re-entered the world of cold reality.

And In This Corner . . .

By Ben Griffith, A.S., U.S.N.R.

THE NOISE THAT ANNOYS

We have always been classed as a conscientious objector when it comes to practical jokes, mainly because they are so impractical. Out of the chaos of last weekend's pranks, which ranged all the way from the conventional tack-in-the-chair to the more technological cigarette explosives and lowly-charged time bombs, we have gleaned one gem which posterity will have to contend with.

The little p. j. that Joe Harrison, gracious and very Suth'en, suh, ex-Sea-Bee, had inflicted upon him last weekend is enough to drive a less Bacchanalian individual to drink, and a more sadistic one to take up oriental torture as a hobby.

It seems that young Harrison arose at his usual Sunday morning hour, pried his eyelids open with a pair of spasmodically trembling hands and noted that he had his usual forty-five minutes in which to dress for the Sunday noon ration of yardbird.

Our hero, being a slave to the vile weed, and wishing to give his thickening tongue that colorful combination of smoke grey and amber brown, made a slow calculating navigation toward his Pall Malls. (He once posed for a Pall Mall ad, sitting around in his Sea-Bee uniform comparing king size to some Samoan brand.)

After feeling about the room for a match, and steeling himself for the task of lighting the thing, he sat back with half closed eyes, feeling the aromatic smoke nip playfully at his jittery nerves.

Then without warning—it struck! Exploding like an 80 mm. trench mortar, the cigarette burst and threw ashes and bits of tobacco all over the deck and into the dishevelled hair of our hero's oversized head. Young Harrison then dashed out of Room One, Columbus Roberts, screaming like a dipsomaniac, and later turned up in the head, where he spent the remainder of his day beneath a warm, soothing shower, far from the madding crowd.

—NOR IRON BARS A CAGE

To anyone who finds himself weary of life's little pleasures, we would advise a life of total confinement, either voluntary or involuntary, as a complete cure.

Since that ill-fated night when time seemed to stand still and then made a mighty swoop forward, leaving us with lots of time to mull over the phenomena, life has taken on a new meaning.

The tiny, once unimportant things such as a barbecue sandwich at the Pig, the new Bob Hope movie, or the lecture on the sex life of a male dolphin at the public library, have suddenly loomed up as the most momentous occasions of our rapid life.

Now we must content ourselves with other things. We can put all our time and energy in trying to figure out what "dash-dot-dash, Lucky Strike, MFT, dot-dash-dot, Lucky Strike, MFT" means. The crowning blow to our own little intra-barracks air castle came last week. The thing we had been dreading most, finally has happened. Something has gone out of our day. Dick Tracy has captured Mrs. Pruneface.

COMPLETE WITH WHITE CANE

We've heard lots of different ways to describe blind dates. The one which we are usually confronted with is: "She has a wonderful personality."

"Yes," we reply, "but—er—how does she look?"

"Oh, she's lots of fun—real sweet—obeys her mother," and so forth, far into the night.

The most original one we have heard yet occurred on the first floor of Sherwood Hall Saturday night. Phones were ringing and wolves in dress blues were filing past the desk procuring their liberty cards.

Suddenly someone yelled up the stairs, his hand tightly cupped over the telephone receiver. He was yelling to an unidentified gob on the second deck.

"Would you be interested in just a plain date? She's not pretty and she doesn't have much personality, but she's a helluva nice girl!"