

«The Relations of Learning»

Reviewed by Dr. MELL A. NASH, '19,'27

The Relations of Learning, A Series of Addresses on University Education in a Changing World, by William Bennett Bizzell, University of Oklahoma Press, 1934.

THE much beloved and highly respected president of a large state university, himself a gentleman and a scholar, an administrator of long and successful experience, has permitted some of his lectures and public addresses to be grouped and published in book form. The whole thirteen are easily and logically integrated as that many chapters under the significant book title as given.

The format of *The Relations of Learning* is attractive in its simplicity of design, choice of binding and type selection, reflecting most creditably on the University of Oklahoma Press which, during its young life, has always shown good taste both in choice of publications and its fitting formats. Dr. William Bennett Bizzell is a most appropriate essayist for the theme of this book. His wide experience as college administrator in the southwest, his observation of and participation in nation wide American university problems, his good will and friendly co-operation with the other institutions, and his successful efforts to build at Norman a respected graduate school,—all qualify the author admirably.

If "the style is the man," as critics have said, Dr. Bizzell's style illustrates the progress in our philosophy of education in the past seventy-five years. Cardinal Newman wrote his *Ideas of a University* in the nineteenth century in long, easy flowing but rather involved sentences which appealed to the scholars of his day. Dr. Bizzell writes in the short, terse, concise words of the practical leader of modern education, talking to all citizens who support education for the masses. Like Bacon in his forceful sentences, Dr. Bizzell gives a "little Bible of earthly wisdom" in language understandable and readable by the parents whose sons and daughters attend American colleges. The average citizen will better understand the function of a university in its relationship to the future as measured by each succeeding freshman group and subsequent senior class.

The author states that these addresses are presented in this form with the hope

that they may make an appeal to a larger public than merely collegiate audiences. Should they serve "to stimulate academic idealism, to impress students with the primary purpose of college life, and to promote interest in scholarship," the author will be gratified. We think they will so serve every reader.

Laymen will do well to note the real reason why all our foremost colleges have become great schools in the real sense, as expressed for the state university which "has been fortunate in its teaching force. There have always been strong men and conscientious women identified with the university, who have set good standards of academic instruction. Throughout the history of the institution earnest and unselfish men have guided its destinies." What finer concept of service is there than this?

The pupil can hardly gauge the work of the teacher, nor the student measure the handiwork of the scholar; yet, every citizen of a democracy likes to philosophize on education, and most Americans do it. So it is that the average man can read *The Relations of Learning* with interest, and he will not find himself in disagreement with much of the philosophy of education expressed there. In fact the reader will pause often and reflect with satisfaction that here and there in the pages of this new book, are expressed those ideas and ideals of public education, on all its levels, which each reader has sometime had sub-consciously, but which rarely took definite form or were expressed in words.

Dr. Bizzell said, in his inaugural address delivered early in 1926 at Norman, "A change of administration in an important educational institution always creates problems and results in anxiety and uncertainty. It usually means some lost motion and more or less disorganization. There is no standard type of college or university administrator. Institutions differ just as men differ. This means that every time there is a change of administration it is necessary for the official to learn to work with the several faculties and they must learn to work with him. A college organization is composed of many types of personalities. As a rule the university president is also a distinct type of personality. The general public has no conception of how many adjustments need to be made in a transition of this kind." This statement has proven quite significant for

Oklahoma since statehood, in view of our many changes.

What are the objectives in education? What should the colleges try to accomplish for society through our complex educational organization? We believe that these objectives listed by the author will stand the test of time:

1. "The development of a more versatile and more conscientious citizenship.
2. "The attainment of a more stable and a more satisfying social life.
3. "A human product better fortified against human ills and physical deterioration.
4. "A widespread dissemination of a knowledge of rational living.
5. "Insuring to society a surplus of material goods and social advantages."

In this book the taxpayer should find sufficient consolation for his expenditures for schools because the author has certainly expressed the ideals toward which we aim. Weaknesses, shortcomings, failures, criticisms and warnings are frankly stated as he takes inventory of attributes of American higher education, desirable and undesirable. Co-workers of the author accord him the privilege of speaking with authority in this field. He is regarded with the highest esteem by our citizenship. The average citizen can afford to accept his philosophy.

Professors will be wiser teachers because of their perusal of this book. The students who read or who, by the thousands, have sat in annual convocations to hear these expressions of common sense, can hardly do otherwise than profit thereby.

Any effort to present briefly a review of this volume can be served best by citing a few of the many representative statements which might be selected at large:

"We must never forget that the essential justification for education at public expense in a democracy is training for good citizenship."

"I have been convinced for a long time that something should be done to improve the quality of college instruction." . . . "The increase in the number of so-called 'extra-curricular activities' is largely the result of mass education." . . . "Demands upon the schools increased with the growth in population." . . . "Conditions of life produce a conflict between qualitative and quantitative values." . . . "The problems of society at large have been reflected in our school system." . . . "Every time we lift the intellectual level of any class or group, we enhance the intellectual opportunities of every other class or group." . . . "Thoughts and habits are changing so rapidly today that it is impossible to appraise their consequences." . . . "The essential reason for attending college is for the purpose of enlarging human experience under conditions where every mental and physical activity can be measured in terms of its consequences."

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Mrs. Carrie Majors Cox,'19ex, and Roy W. Cox,'14as,'16law, a daughter, Mary Louella, November 29. Home, Blackwell.

Mrs. Dorothy Champlain May,'31as, and Ralph J. May,'31law, a son, November 29. Home, Oklahoma City.

Deaths

Mrs. Irene Ambrister Jones,'31as, died November 21 of heart failure at her home in Oklahoma City.

Marion R. Estes,'23ex, was killed November 15 in an automobile accident near Tyler, Texas.

Year by Year

1908

Tom F. Carey,'08as, was recently elected president of the Oklahoma City Society of Certified Public Accountants at the annual convention in Oklahoma City. Carey is an income tax expert.

1911

Dr. E. E. Dale,'11as, head of the department of history at the University, has accepted an appointment as professor of history at Ohio State University for the 1935 summer session. He will teach a special course concerned with recent history of the west.

1912

J. B. Newby,'12as, has been elected president of the Oklahoma City Geological society. R. W. Camp,'29bs, was elected vice-president and A. L. Montgomery,'28bs, was named secretary-treasurer.

1915

Roy Hazeltine,'15as, is now engaged in the ranching business in Dee, Oregon. Before going west he lived in Kansas City.

1917

David M. Warner,'17as, is an aeronautical mechanical engineer in Dayton, Ohio.

1919

Paul Eldridge,'19as, assistant professor of English at the University, is on leave of absence this year. He is staying at DePoe, Oregon, where he is engaged in creative writing.

1922

DRENNAN-ASKEW: Miss Elcanor Drennan,'25as, and Julius Floyd Askew,'22ex, November 28. Kappa Alpha Theta. Home, 1133 North Robinson, Oklahoma City.

1924

Harrington Wimberly,'24as, Altus editor, has been elected president of the Oklahoma Society for Crippled Children.

1926

CHADD-WILLIAMS: Miss Helen Chadd,'26as, and John Michael Williams, November 24 at Garber. Home, Dodge City, Kansas.

1927

WILLIAMS-CORBIN: Miss Winogene Williams and Dr. Damon E. Corbin,'27as,'29med, December 5 in San Diego, California. Phi Gamma Delta. Home, San Diego.

Miss Jean M. Holland,'27as,'29M.A., has returned to Alva where she is a member of the Northwestern State Teachers college faculty after spending several months visiting her brother, R. G. Holand,'29eng, and his wife, Mrs. Mildred Pyle Holland,'31home-ec, at Caripito, Venezuela, South America. Holland is associated with the Standard Oil company of Venezuela.

1929

HURT-JOHNSTONE: Miss Louise Daggett Hurt and John Johnstone, Jr.,'29bus, October 6. Phi Gamma Delta. Home, Bartlesville.

1930

TRENT-O'DONNELL: Miss Dorothy Lee Trent,'30ex, and Fred C. O'Donnell, November 17 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Home, Los Angeles, California.

WILKINSON-TUCKER: Miss Josephine Wilkinson,'32as, and Charles B. Tucker,'30ex, November 29. Delta Delta Delta-Alpha Tau Omega. Home, McAlester.

1931

EMENHISER-BERWARLD: Miss Cleta Emehiser,'31ex, and William Bennett Berwarld, November 10. Pi Beta Phi. Home, 1420 Oak, Bartlesville.

THOMAS-RAY: Miss Bonnie Thomas,'31ed, and Wesley Ray, November 5. Alpha Xi Delta. Home, Oklahoma City.

CRABTREE-LEONARD: Miss Wylla Louise Crabtree,'31as, and Hugh Leanord,'34bus, November 29 in St. Louis, Missouri. Delta Delta Delta. Home, Duncan, after February 1.

1932

MARLATEE-FUSON: Miss Juanita Marlatee,'32ed, and T. J. Fuson,'34eng, November 29 in Oklahoma City. Phi Kappa Sigma. Home, Louisiana.

FARRAR-HAMPTON: Miss Virginia Farrar and Gilbert Hampton,'32as, November 9. Home, 2548 Northwest Eleventh, Oklahoma City.

1933

WATSON-BIGELOW: Miss Martha Eleanor Watson,'33as, and Donald Lindsay Bigelow, November 28 in Chicago. Pi Beta Phi. Home, New York City.

THOMPSON - McCOWN: Miss Mary Frances Thompson,'34ex, and Charles H. McCown,'33ex, November 29 in Norman. Home, Enid.

KYLE - WHITE: Miss Laverne Kyle and Eric White,'33as, October 20 in Pauls Valley. Home, 427 Northeast Twelfth Street, Oklahoma City.

HOLMBERG-CRAWFORD: Miss Louise Holmberg,'33as, and James Crawford,'34eng, November 7. Kappa Alpha Theta-Alpha Tau Omega. Home, Logan Apartments, Norman.

ELLIS-STEWART: Miss Mabel Atmar Ellis and John P. Stewart,'33bus, September 30 in Oklahoma City. Acacia. Home, Duncan.

PITTS-REED: Miss Gertrude Mae Pitts,'34ex, and Glade Coates Reed,'33ex, November 17. Home, Oklahoma City.

1934

HUTCHINSON-COKER: Miss Joyce Hutchinson,'34, and Jeff Coker,'34, November 5. Delta Gamma-Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Home, Oklahoma City.

MINNICK-SOMMERFRUCHT: Miss Blanche Elizabeth Minnick,'34ex, and James R. Sommerfrucht,'34eng, November 18 in Norman. Alpha Chi Omega. Home, Gladewater, Texas.

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"THE RELATIONS OF LEARNING"

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"Teaching is the method of disseminating knowledge already acquired. Research is the systematic investigation of phenomena by experimental methods to discover facts or co-ordinate them into laws." . . .

"Scientific synthesis and the prevention of waste are the objectives of research."

"There is a widespread opinion throughout the country that there has been a decline in the standards of integrity and efficiency of public officials. Office holding must ever be regarded as a public trust. It is not sufficient that our officials be honest; they must be intelligent and well qualified for the services they are called upon to render."

"It is equally necessary to train our people to follow wise leadership. Society has not done enough for any man if he has not taught him how to discriminate between the demagogue and the honest political leader. The common task of all of our schools is to supply the kind of education that will improve the quality of citizenship."

"Our institutions must see to it that religious faith is not undermined by the content of courses that we offer or the attitude of those who impart knowledge to the student."

"Education is under fire from many angles today. The charges include over-emphasis of athletics; waste of time, money, and effort on boys and girls not inter-

ested in acquiring a college education; profitless courses of instruction; misplaced emphasis in the curricula; and numerous other indictments of more or less validity or justification. Honesty compels us to admit that some of the criticisms are supported by undeniable facts."

The content of *The Relations of Learning* includes interesting and important comment on scores of current topics related to college, such as adjustments necessary for the student, his hazards, distractions, tragedies, valuable experiences and tests of character; evaluation of content of courses, reasons for attending, measurement of accomplishments, use of leisure time and study preparation for classroom work; obligations to society, predictions for the future of learning, duties of instructors and moral, social and economic obligations. These topics and dozens of others impel the intelligent reader to follow through to the last page.

Every Oklahoman can point with pride to this product of the University of Oklahoma Press.

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