

This Month

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A view of the Petroleum Engineering facilities at the University.

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● Most novel item in this, the annual Engineering Edition of *Sooner Magazine*, is the article *Pampered Pets of Patagonia*, by Harve Loomis, '16, a geologist now working in Patagonia. In answer to the inevitable question, we add that Patagonia is in Argentina. The article is offered as convincing evidence that the oil industry has its lighter side.

● Readers of this issue are particularly urged to study a list of names on Page 33, under the heading, Engineer Addresses Wanted. The list presents the last known addresses of a group of engineer alumni whose present addresses are needed by the Alumni Office. Mail sent recently to the addresses given in this list has been returned as undeliverable. Your help in correcting any of these will be greatly appreciated.

● Perhaps worthy of some note is the fact that this issue of *Sooner Magazine* contains more paid advertising than any issue since before the depression of '33, and perhaps sets an all-time high. Number of pages was increased in proportion, so that the volume of reading matter is larger than usual.



Educational Frills

THE wide public interest in governmental economy in recent years has stimulated discussion about "educational frills" in grade schools, high schools and colleges. Many good citizens have taken pen in hand to write to newspaper editors a strong condemnation of this or that "frill" that might be eliminated in the interests of economy.

"The graduates being turned out today can't even speak good English, or spell—let's cut out the frills and get back to the fundamentals," is a familiar exhortation.

Of course the critics don't agree on what should be labeled frills. One thinks bands and orchestras useless, another finds physical education silly and still another might brand home economics courses as frilly nonsense that could better be taught in the home.

When the discussion turns to college and university courses, the critics have a large field in which to work. Some think practically all courses identified as "cultural" should be replaced by courses designed solely to enable the student to earn money. Others think research projects are nothing but idle hobbies of professors, and might well be eliminated entirely. Some would ruthlessly cut out athletics (forgetting that it is gate receipts that pay the bills).

However, the entertaining debate on the question of what constitutes educational frills misses the point entirely.

The very fact that our public schools and our state educational institutions have flexible and liberal curriculums that can be adapted to public demand is a basic privilege of Democracy—of the American way of living.

Those persons who demand that "frills" be rigidly banned from the schools and that education be given only according to a limited, set pattern, are unwittingly demanding just the kind of educational system to be found under a dictatorship. They are asking for a system where the people are told just what education they can have, and no more.

Frills in our Oklahoma schools? Probably there are some that might be eliminated, and certainly anyone has a right to express an opinion on the matter, and school authorities have an obligation to listen to such criticism.

But in dealing with this subject, let's never forget the importance of the principle involved—a free and independent school system, a system that permits the schools of a certain community or a certain state to answer the demands of young people and their parents for whatever kind of constructive education they want, regardless of whether it's tap dancing or differential calculus.

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