

Under Cover

By DAVID BURR, '52ba

THE FIRST semester of the 1954-55 school year has only a few more hours to run. As this is being written, students, who look like they have peered through a glass darkly, are huddled around coffee tables in the Student Union. Pausing before studying for the next exam, they seem to be there for mental comfort and assurance. The hot, black stimulant is only incidental.

As a habitual coffee drinker, I've seen many of them there before. Laughing. Discussing the state of the sexes. Telling a good one on that stupid, old teacher. Criticizing the level of intelligence of all they have been in contact with. Adopting a confident, self-assured pose.

But now the atmosphere has changed. Now they are discussing professorial wisdom. Wisdom that will see that student errors merely hide a great knowledge. Knowledge that on its merit, though safely hidden, is worth a passing grade. Now they're sober. Intent. Devoid of wit. Discussion centers upon their errors. Their failures. Their shortcomings.

Here and there you see islands in this ocean of despair. There's one. He's a good student who is shooting for an "A" in botany. And he's getting the cold treatment. Listen as he tells how that foolish mistake he made on the quiz will surely rob him of a well-deserved perfect paper. His companions, friends from the beginning of the semester but now near blood-enemies, say nothing. Perhaps their minds were never so over-taxed on studies as they are at this moment. How, they wonder, can they transform their puny minds into Davids to slay the mighty Goliath before them. There is no rationality to their thinking. Under these circumstances their drink is a cup of gall.

And there is another group of coffee drinkers who have a tired but triumphant look. They're the faculty. They can be excused for being glad that another semester is nearing the end of its course. It would be bad taste for them to seem too pleased in this river of torment, perhaps invite a lynching, but they can relax. And be gracious. And benign. The circle has run its full measure. They are no longer the ones being tested in the lecture rooms. They no

longer have to prove their intelligence and knowledge of a subject in the class rooms. They are no longer the tested.

The scene will change in a few days. A new semester will open and the place will be the same, the coffee dark and hot as usual, and only the people will be changed. A new circle is inching to be joined.

HOW MANY readers, I wonder, realize that President George L. Cross is a prominent scientist as well as college president?

What prompts the question is a clipping that I have before me, announcing his appointment to a top scientific post. The item reads in part:

"O.U. president George L. Cross has

been named a member of the Board of Directors of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, according to an announcement by William G. Pollard, executive director.

"The Institute is an educational corporation owned by 32 Southern universities and is aimed at developing peacetime uses of atomic energy.

"Members of the board, Dr. Pollard said, include many of the most distinguished names in the scientific field.

"Among the major programs . . . which Dr. Cross will help direct . . . are projects which enable university faculty members and graduate students to participate in atomic research at the Oak Ridge national laboratory where so much of the costly work in nuclear studies is being carried out."

I thought as I read the article that the appointment must hold a good deal of satisfaction for Dr. Cross. It is one thing to be recognized as a top administrator of a major university and quite another to be recognized as a top scientist.

President Cross was a teacher in bacteriology and botany at O.U. for ten years prior to his appointment as president in 1944. He still holds the title of professor of bacteriology and botany.



Marge and Gower Champion, stage and movie dance team, visited the campus January 4 for a performance of "3 for Tonight," the dance-drama-song production that is headed for Broadway. The outstanding show was the third offering for 1954-55 of the University Celebrity Series.