

# THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

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## PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S VISIT

On October 28 Hunter was honored by a visit from the President of the United States.

The President and his entourage arrived at about one, and were entertained at luncheon by members of the Board of Higher Education and representatives of the Faculty. At two the group mounted the platform of the Assembly Hall, before a mammoth audience of staff, students, and alumnae. Meanwhile an overflow of girls crowded into the Auditorium and the Lounge to listen to the exercises on loud-speakers. Classes were of course suspended to give all a chance to hear, and if possible see, their Chief Executive.

The general air of happy excitement was refreshing. At the President's arrival, throngs of girls filled every vantage-point in halls and on stairs, and even on the sidewalks outside—all well-behaved despite the great pressure and discomfort, all charming in their youthful enthusiasm.

President Roosevelt entered delightfully into the infectious spirit of the day. He must have sensed the eager expectancy that electrified the air during the brief introductory words of President Shuster and Dr. Tead, the latter of whom referred to the "hope deferred" at the time of our Dedication that had now become "hope realized"; and to his expression of pleasure at attending "the final Dedication of Hunter College", he added the assurance that this was not his final appearance there, since he had not seen enough of the students or of the building.

After a gay reference to the Mayor's skill in "wangling" millions for the City, he showed a sympathetic understanding of the overcrowding in the teaching profession in New York, but added encouragingly that in many parts of the country there is still need for more teachers and better-qualified teachers. As for our College, he declared that, as a neighbor, he knew Hunter well, and knew that "there is no question about its usefulness in the community".

Then he repeated his promise to come back and look over Hunter completely, "modern lighting" and all; for, though "an old man of 58", he was still "young enough to take an interest in this generation and advocate changes". He reiterated his belief, with a good-humored reference to the "razzing" occasioned by his original use of the phrase, that nation and state and city did not want to return to "the horse-and-buggy days"; and then, growing deeply and impressively serious, he declared that we do want to maintain one thing alive in the "horse-and-buggy days", patriotism. "For some things that are old *are* worth preserving—life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness; our form of government; and America!" E. ADELAIDE HAHN.

## DEDICATION WEEK

By E. ADELAIDE HAHN

Not since its Golden Jubilee, over a score of years ago, has the Alma Mater known such a week of celebration as came to its share last month. Classes were suspended on October 8, 9, 10, and 11; and Hunter gave herself up to ceremonies and festivities. The Grand Marshal, Associate Professor James M. Hendel of the Chemistry Department, together with his diligent and devoted band of co-workers, had planned the program with zeal and care; and the result was a succession of events to be recorded in red letters in the Annals of our College.

The dignified and impressive invitation sent to "the Colleges, Universities, and learned Societies of the Western Hemisphere" over the signatures of Professor Hendel and Dr. Tead announced that it was being issued "in recognition of the vision of Thomas Hunter, his associates, and the City Fathers who in the year 1870 founded the first free college for women in order that those who did not share in this world's goods might claim their birthright to the riches of the mind, and that this institution, known as Hunter College, might fruitfully symbolize that basic article in the creed of the American nation, to wit, equality of opportunity for all, regardless of race, position, color, or creed; the great work accomplished throughout seven decades in preparing thousands upon thousands of students to give of their best efficiently to insure the progress of an increasingly complex civilization, and in maintaining, while so doing, standards of discipline and culture transmitted from the great colleges of the past; the devoted series of graduates who have taken their places in many fields of public and private endeavor—in teaching and law, in government and social welfare work, in medicine and philanthropy, in the arts and letters, in business and journalism—and who have manifested unstintingly their abiding affection for the College which trained them; the coöperation of City, State, and Federal Governments in the erection of a new setting for Hunter College endeavor—a modern structure in the heart of New York, sixteen stories in height, equipped with lecture halls and auditoriums, gymnasiums and laboratories, roof terraces and gardens, all beautiful and useful alike; the hope for a bright future under the leadership of President George N. Shuster". This invitation was accepted by 164 institutions of higher learning (including five South American universities), 25 learned societies and educational associations, and several civic and professional organizations of various types.

## STUDENT-PARENT DAY

On Wednesday, October 9, the students, of necessity but meagerly represented at the other events, had their day. With grace, dignity, and efficiency they played hostesses to visiting parents and alumnae, who, together with the hardly better-informed faculty, had a welcome opportunity to make themselves acquainted with the New Building "from turret (if it had one!) to foundation-stone" as well as with the manifold and paramount activities carried on within it. On every floor there were exhibits and demonstrations of curricular and extra-curricular work provided by the departments, clubs, and publications of the College. Special events sponsored by individual departments included the following: Classics, scenes in Greek and Latin, a Greek dance, a Roman style show, lantern slide lectures; English, an original student play; Geology, travelogues; Music, orchestra selections; Physical Education, games, dancing, swimming; Physiology, moving pictures; Psychology, lantern slide lectures; Speech and Dramatics, choral reading. The Gilbert and Sullivan Society presented "Princess Ida", and the Make-Up Box a series of short performances.

At four o'clock came the main feature of the day, the Student Council's assembly in the Main Hall, presided over by the President of the Student Self-Government Association, Miss Bella Savitzky. Clad in cap and gown, the Student Council members entered in dignified procession to the strains of the Orchestra, led by Miss Beatrice Brown of the Music Department, and took their places upon the platform. The program included an earnest and sincere talk by Miss Savitzky, further numbers by the Orchestra, vocal selections by Miss Regina Resnick, and, in lighter vein, a "miniature Sing" rendered by a group of students massed upon one of the side stair-cases.

The large audience, which included President Shuster and Mrs. Mack, could well take pride in the decorum and ability with which the students met their opportunity and fulfilled their responsibility.

## THE ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM

On Friday, October 11, a good-sized audience of faculty members and delegates occupied the Auditorium to listen to what President Shuster, who opened the meeting, said he hoped would be the first in a continued series of academic symposia. After a word of welcome to the distinguished guests, he presented Professor Philip R. V. Curoe, the able chairman, who proceeded to suggest the various possible interpretations implicit in the stimulating topic of the day, "The Rôle of the College Woman in a Shaken World".

The first speaker, Mr. Stewart G. Cole, Director of the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education, spoke of the recurrent cycles of security and scarcity, and the impossibility of tracing any similar curve rep-

resenting the ups and downs of our intellectual and social development. War, progeny of fear, force, and fascism, has sprung up to-day; and man is once more on the march. Whither the march, and does it bode well or ill for mankind? Man suffers to-day, in Mr. Cole's opinion, from two types of weakness: (1) from rootlessness, from drift, from "popular agnosticism or vulgar epicureanism"; (2) from escapism, the protest against the discipline of social adversity, as manifested in many reactions, including surrealism and swing in the arts, the dole in economic life, social satellites and alcoholism in society, isolationism in international politics, divorce in private life. To combat this, education, which he accused of ivory tower procedure, must change its method and content so as to stress historical perspective, clarify democracy, awaken a sense of cosmic kinship, and identify personal duty with collective wellbeing. If this can be done, these desperate days may make our youth and remake our country.

The next speaker, Dean Margaret Morriss of Pembroke College, Brown University, began by looking back instead of forward. In 1914, she declared, American history for most of us ended with the Civil War; in 1917 our illusions of safety and security were shattered, and women like men were sucked into the maelstrom. She expressed the belief that educated women worked bravely then, but failed to realize the implications of what was happening; and that to-day's builders must be educated to-day, to a sense of social responsibility, and a fitness for carrying on woman's historic rôle, to heal the suffering of an anguished world.

Miss Eleanor C. Dodge, the Warden of Vassar College, introduced herself felicitously as the representative of the *second* largest college for women in New York State. She then discussed the special training needed by women as members of the family and as citizens of the community (business and professional training she omitted, as similar to that given men), and made especial and explicit reference to the program of Vassar's School of Euthenics. She ended up by urging that women who had defended new ideals must now take up the cudgels for the old, and, stressing the same three-fold goal as Dr. Tead had discussed, insisted that women must forge the defences of the nation, integrity and the moral fiber of its citizens, and that the college must be a liberal institution devoted to the quest for truth and the love of beauty.

Miss Freda Kirchwey, Editor of the *Nation*, began as Dean Morriss had with a backward glance. Her generation of college girls, living in the age of innocence, took it for granted, she said, that questions involving the status of women were forever settled; but now we know that democracy must continually be created and defended, and that the greatest danger to it is such complacency. On the other hand, an apathetic

mood of defeat is a form of national suicide. We must merge and prosecute two struggles: to save democratic society from fascist assault, and to make this society more sturdy and equitable. For this we need hardheaded understanding of the totalitarian nations, which France did not learn, Britain has been learning, and we can learn. She reminded us that in Germany woman can bear children and (despite Nazi dogma) take man's place in factories, but the college woman need not exist. In our own country, it is the rôle of woman to make democracy strong and fit to survive. Miss Kirchwey declared she had no doubt of our country's courage and vitality, its ability to carry on a gallant and stubborn resistance; and she concluded with the assertion that the battle of freedom cannot be evaded.

The final speaker was Professor Robert Ulich of Harvard University, who began by saying that in general the dogma "mulier taceat in ecclesia" prevailed until a comparatively recent date (1821). According to him, the civilization moulded by men is not so superior that men have reason to boast of it, and women have been too willing to accept it; their work has been primarily imitative and adoptive, and not sufficiently independent and original. Apparently assuming the optimism that was Miss Kirchwey's in 1911 to 1915, but that she now considers premature, he declared that all arguments concerning woman's inferiority or superiority to man are obsolete; what is important is her difference from man, difference in ideals and attitudes as well as in physical make-up. He queried whether American educational institutions for girls consider the future rôle of their pupils as citizens, wives, and mothers, and why they conform so completely to the standards of institutions for men. Apparently with special reference to our women's colleges, he warned that the highly trained intellect which does not rest on a sound emotional basis is more of a danger than a blessing.

With the conclusion of the five set speeches, the morning session ended, and the audience adjourned to the Commons for lunch. Here occurred the one hitch of the week, for the service of those in attendance involved considerable delay and crowding. However, there proved to be plenty of time and plenty of space, so the inconvenience was not really serious.

It had at first been intended to hold the afternoon session in the Commons around the tables, quite in keeping with the etymology and history of the original Symposiums; but it was decided that this arrangement would involve too many acoustical difficulties, so after luncheon all were invited to return to the Auditorium. The various speakers now responded, with more or less directness and with complete courtesy and comity, to the questions which, at the Chairman's invitation, the audience had submitted in writing at the close of the morning meeting.

There was then an opportunity, of which, however, the group in general did not avail itself, for further questioning from the floor.

If the reporter may be permitted to editorialize for a moment, she would like to voice her impression that the speakers were most convincing and helpful when, and in proportion as, they discussed the needs and diagnosed the ills of this unquestionably shaken world; and her conviction that, while educated persons of both sexes undoubtedly have a large part to play in meeting these needs and remedying these ills, any attempt to differentiate in general terms the rôle of the college woman from that of the college man is, no matter by whom undertaken, doomed to futility and failure. But this personal opinion does not prevent her from having thoroughly enjoyed a most provocative program, and from sharing the President's hope, doubtless together with many others, that a new tradition for Hunter has been instituted, and that the Academic Symposium of Dedication Week will have many happy returns.

#### THE DEDICATION WEEK COMMITTEES

Among Professor Hendel's co-workers must be listed first and foremost the Committee on Public Relations (which has as its Chairman President Shuster himself). The members of this committee are Professors Busse and Cohen; Associate Professors Burns, Helfer, Luetz, and Temple; and Assistant Professors Evans and Weintraub. The members of the committees responsible for individual events were as follows:—Committee on Dedication: Dean Egan (Chairman), Professor Chase, Associate Professor Grady, Assistant Professor Hughes. Committee on Student-Parent Day: members of the Committee on Student Activities (Associate Professors Grady, Lynskey, Woehl, and Yarborough; Assistant Professor Levy; Dr. Chenault and Mrs. Trinsey; also a group of students) and Associate Professor Neidhardt. Committee on Inauguration: Professors Curoe, Hahn, and Moore; Associate Professor Rees. Committee on Academic Symposium: Associate Professors Jewell, Hughes, Bushey, Clum, Dupont, Lynskey, Michels, O'Gorman, Thompson, and Wyman; Assistant Professors Goebel, Gold, Otis, and Stern. Committee on Dinners and Luncheon: Assistant Professor Greene, Chairman; Mrs. Wilde, Treasurer; Assistant Dean Anthony; Professor Reilly; and, for the Alumnae, Mrs. Crotty and Mrs. Simis.

Because of our desire to include an account of President Roosevelt's visit to the College, the appearance of the NEWS was delayed. Because of the large number of important events to be chronicled, several items have had to be postponed until next month. We crave our readers' indulgence, in view of the unique character of the contents of this issue.