

THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

Published Monthly from October to June, inclusive, at 12-14 Lawton Street, New Rochelle, N. Y., by the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College of the City of New York.

Entered as second class matter, 1895, at the post office at New Rochelle under the Act of March 3, 1879.

VOL. L

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., APRIL, 1945

No. 4

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF HUNTER COLLEGE

By E. ADELAIDE HAHN

Hunter's Diamond Jubilee opened on the birthday of the Great Liberator, an appropriate date for an institution that is free in every sense of the word—free in that the students equipped to avail themselves of its opportunities may do so without charge, which is of the very essence of democracy; free in its conduct of business and free in the pursuit of truth, which is of the very essence of scholarship; and dedicated to that type of training which has ever been deemed the suitable one for free men and women, a liberal education.

The opening was in the form of a radio address by President George N. Shuster over Station WNYC, "Seventy-five Years of Hunter College Students". The President described the type of girl that Hunter College trains, and the type of training that it gives her. Sympathetic understanding of the student body, and an unswerving determination to give them of the best, characterized his speech, which could not but make the Hunterites in his unseen audience proud to be so ably and so nobly represented.

This address, on the eve of the celebration proper, opened a week of festivities. The seventy-five-year-old College proper—faculty, students, alumnae—had its big two days on Tuesday, February 13th, and Wednesday, February 14th (the day itself); the Elementary School, founded soon after the College, celebrated on Thursday, and the High School, youngest of the three, on Friday; the Alumnae had a Jubilee Tea for their members on Saturday, and a Jubilee Canteen for the armed forces on Sunday. Meanwhile, the Hunter Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa had its own special Silver Anniversary Celebration on Thursday. All these events are chronicled below.

OPENING OF THE LIBRARY EXHIBIT

As at its Golden Jubilee, so at its Diamond Jubilee, the City's great public college for women was honored by an exhibit at the City's great public library. This exhibit, consisting of pictures, documents, books, and personal mementos of various kinds, mainly connected with Thomas Hunter, shared the honors with another of equal interest, which showed graphically the absurdity of discriminations based on the fallacious notion of "race". Could finer partner be found for our own institution which has always been happily free from any taint of discrimination?

The official opening of the exhibit, on Tuesday, February 13th, was in the form of a program that began promptly at 10:30 A. M.,

with President Shuster as chairman. In the absence, due to illness, of the Director, Franklin F. Hopper, the Library was officially represented by Mr. Paul North Rice, Chief of its Reference Department, who greeted the audience on behalf of his institution. The Board of Higher Education was represented by its Chairman, Dr. Ordway Tead, who urged that "new times demand new measures and new men"; and the Associate Alumnae by its President, Dr. Ruth Lewinson, who outlined the interests and vocations of our graduates, including various professions, motherhood, and war work. The students had a part in the program through the melodious singing of Ruth Kleinman, accompanied by Ruth Pressburg.

The City of New York had as its representative its Chief Magistrate, Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia, who delivered a dynamic speech. He urged that in our studies we must not forget the past; we must study it in order to keep what it had of good, to avoid its mistakes, and thus to use it as a guide in charting the future. Subjects should not be eliminated or discarded because difficult. "And now," he said solemnly, "I am going to shock some educators; I know of no better exercise for the mind than mathematics or one of the dead languages." To judge by its applause, the audience was not deeply shocked.

In conclusion, the Mayor declared that he was proud of Hunter and of his own part in the improvements of the last ten years. He explained that he was not referring to the new building, but to the fact that the College had been given a new soul, new life—and Dr. Shuster. And the audience showed by its prolonged applause that it shared this pride.

OPENING OF THE COLLEGE EXHIBIT

A goodly audience of which a large part had hastened up from the Forty-second Street Library for the purpose, filled the Hunter Playhouse—alias the Auditorium—for the official opening, at 12:30 on February 13th, of the Hunter College Exhibit, "As We Were and As We Are".

After the singing of the National Anthem, President Shuster, who presided, read from the Scriptures, and then presented the heroine of the occasion, Professor Edna Wells Luetz of the Art Department, who, as Chairman of the Brochure and Exhibit Committee, and with notable assistance from Mrs. Alva Critchley Cooper, Secretary of the same Department, had spent many weary hours on "the double shift" that the Exhibit might achieve the artistic beauty and fascinating interest which all have found in it. Professor Luetz, "covered", as she put it herself,

THE CONVOCATION

As the Dinner was the great social event of the Jubilee Celebration, so the Convocation was the great academic event. It took place on the real Jubilee Day, February fourteenth, at twelve noon, opening with an impressive academic procession of faculty and distinguished guests; and as the long line in cap and gown filed in to their places on the stage and—for the overflow—in the front rows on the floor, accompanied by the solemn strains evoked from our precious organ by Miss Louise J. Talma, one could not but think of that other, oh so different procession, of teen-age girls marching demurely through the city streets behind their stately leader Lydia Wadleigh, just seventy-five years ago. Few in that huge Assembly Hall were born then; and yet in spirit we were all there with that early pioneer band, and they were here with us to mark the fruition of the seed that they had sowed.

Some in that original procession doubtless were present to hear the address that the then Mayor delivered on the occasion of the dedication of the "New Building" of the Normal College in 1873. Those in the 1945 procession heard it now, as read by President Shuster, and realized how fully applicable are its closing words to-day: "Let every wise man give earnest thought to the welfare of education."

After reading this address, and expressing regret for the illness that necessitated the absence of Mrs. Marion Mack, Chairman of the Hunter College Administrative Committee, the President introduced "an old and trusty friend of the College of whom we see a great deal but not enough, a distinguished historian and Dean of Columbia College," Dr. Harry J. Carman, who now took the chair and presided with his usual combination of serene dignity and warm friendliness. Dean Carman said a few words on the subject of woman's education, and then read a letter of congratulations from our good neighbor President Roosevelt, who was prevented from attending by affairs of state of great import, and another from Governor Dewey, advocating a flexible classical training in liberal arts.

Dean Carman then introduced his own old student Professor Frank Tannenbaum of Columbia University, who spoke on "Cultural Relations with Latin America". Throughout his speech ran the theme of friendship in race relations. The United States, he said, would be poorer if stripped of its Indians and Negroes; in this hemisphere of immigrants (and we are all immigrants except the Indians), we can observe that amazing phenomenon a mixed race; and the basic elements that belong to us all are more important than differences in language or the country we came from.

A pendant to Professor Tannenbaum's speech was that of Professor Arnold Wolfers, Master of Pierson College, Yale University, whose subject was "Cultural Relations with

European Nations". He opened with the question, "Do we need Europe any longer in the cultural field?" On the stream of European scholars lately come to our shores, the impact of American civilization came as a surprise. They had expected us to be waiting for them with open arms, but this was not the case; we were self-sufficient. There is a danger in this—the danger that this country may go nationalistic in culture instead of realizing that if ever a civilization was humanitarian, it should be that of a country composed of streams of culture from all over the world. Nor should we strive to Americanize Europe; that is not what Europe wants, though it is beginning to respect our civilization (despite the bad impression unfortunately made by the Hollywood movies). The final lesson of all this is that we should come out of our sad isolation and seek fuller coöperation across the seas.

After these two very fine addresses, as Dean Carman rightly termed them, came the happy time of the giving of gifts. Dr. Lewinson announced that the Silver Class had presented \$600 for the needs of the Music Department, that the Golden Class had already collected somewhat more than \$1000 for an as yet undesignated purpose, and that the Alumnae as a whole were giving \$7500—which would be increased in the course of the year—to be used as the College should desire. She read a pretty little valentine verse that she had just composed, and received much applause. Miss Joan Martin, President of the Student Self-Government Association, then presented the Student Gift of \$675. President Shuster expressed gratitude for all these valentines, and particularly thanked the alumna who had been so generous with her time and energy in collecting the Alumnae Gift; he then announced the Hunter College Jubilee Essay Contest with most generous prizes to be conducted by Lane Bryant throughout the high schools and colleges of the country in honor of Hunter (here's hoping a Hunterite wins that thousand-dollar War Bond), the collection of \$1000 by the Sara Delano Roosevelt League for maintenance of the Roosevelt Houses, the renewal by the Westchester Alumnae of their gift to the Dean for student aid, the gift of \$1000 from the Kindergarten Mothers of the Elementary School, and a supplementary gift of \$75 from the Class of June '44 in addition to their generous contribution to the Alumnae Fund.

The College Choir, which had earlier given under Mr. Anders Emile's inspiring direction fine renderings of Brahms' "Ave Maria" and "Reveille" by Hunter's own Professor Walter Helfer, now led in the singing of the College Song and the National Anthem, with the rest chiming in. The Rev. Henry P. Van Dusen, President-Elect of the Union Theological Seminary, pronounced the Benediction. And with the stately Recessional, the great Diamond Jubilee Convocation was at an end.

Meanwhile the Freshmen in the Playhouse,

and the Juniors in the Large Gymnasium, had been attending programs of their own; for only Sophomores and Seniors could be accommodated in the Assembly Hall. These programs included a Dance Recital by Pearl Primus, Hunter graduate whose striking success in the professional world has not diminished her generous readiness to share her talent at all times with her Alma Mater; a skit called "Hunter on Parade" performed by the Little Theater Workshop, and another called "Physical Education—Then and Now" presented by a group of students under the direction of Professor Anne D. Mackey of the Physical Education Department; and Songs of Seven Decades.

A Luncheon for Honored Guests followed the assembly in the Faculty Commons; and in the afternoon the students, in coöperation with the Student Staff Social Committee, entertained at tea in the Hunter College Lounges.

And so on this joyous St. Valentine's Day of 1945 the College's part in the celebration came to a happy end.
