Honor System as a Remedy for Dishonesty in Class Work in the District Public Schools

Educators Here May Adopt Plan Now in Vogue in Prep Schools and Some Universities.

By JOSEPH R HARRIS.

Is the standard of morals in respect to general honesty in application to work in the high schools of the District of Columbia improving, deteriorating, or is it going along on the same low level as in previous years? If it is deteriorating, or if there is still room for improvement, what is the remedy?

As to the first question, educators connected with the high schools are unanimous in the opinion that inasmuch as such things as cheating and general dishonesty are being corrected to such an extent that a great improvement is noted each year, yet there is still room for much improvement in this line. The old system of attempting to impress on the student that honesty is the best policy, while it has ameliorated conditions somewhat, has not accomplished what it might.

As for the remedy, an honor system seems to be the only recourse. While the high school principals are not agreed as to the success of such an institution, yet there is a certain feeling of conviction among several of them that this would be a plan worthy of trial.

Honor systems are in vogue in thirteen universities and in several preparatory schools in this country and they have been administered with great success. Of course the universities greatly outnumber the prep schools, but this is because the honor system is a matter of student government, and this form of government has not been practiced in prep schools as much as in universities

Dr. William M. Davidson, superintendent of schools in the District, asserts that the success of student government and the honor system depends entirely on the spirit in which the principal and faculty of the high schools would go into the matter. If the entire faculty was in hearty sympathy with the honor system, then it would be a genuine success, according to the superintendent. Under other conditions it could not succeed.

How Honor System Works.

High school principals and school officials agree that honor in the high schools has not attained the highest standard that is possible.

Thirteen universities and several preparatory schools have ameliorated conditions by the installation of an honor system.

The success of an honor system depends on the principal and faculty, according to Dr. William M. Davidson, superintendent of schools.

School officials admit that high school students are as capable to be taught under an honor system as university students.

High school principals are carefully considering the installation of such a system.

Virginia System One of the Best.

The fact that the honor system succeeds in universities does not augur for its success in preparatory schools is a thought that many cherish. Supt. Davidson, Superintendent of Intermediate Instruction A. T. Stuart, and Dr. Willard S. Small, principal of Eastern High School, are of the opinion that this system under proper conditions would be as successful in the prep schools as in the universities. According to these authorities, a boy or girl of fifteen has attained just as high a standard of honor as one of twenty.

If an honor system is installed in the high schools, it will be patterned after the one at the University of Virginia, which is generally recognized as being the ideal system. At Virginia, a pledge

System at University of Virginia, with Some Modifications, Is Considered the Most Workable One.

is requested to be signed to every paper written by the student, whether it be in the class-room or at home.

The student certifies on his honor that he has neither given nor received assistance in the writing of his paper. The success of the entire thing depends on the students, whose duty it is to report any violator of a pledge. Punishment for violation is dismissal from college.

The fact that high school boys and girls are reluctant to report a fellow student for a breach of conduct may make a failure of the system. It is difficult to tell just what they would do after the system had grown into the school and they did not know how to live under any other. It would probably be a year or two before the students would become imbued with this duty, but when they had all would be smooth sailing.

Dr. Small suggests that if an honor system was instituted, some means of punishment for violators would have to be provided, and that the posting of the violator's name on a bulletin board as one who had been the perpetrator of a dishonest deed would be sufficient. This milder form of punishment would have to be undertaken in preference to the more stringent form in practice at Virginia, that of forcing violators to leave college. It would be only human nature for a student to feel chagrined at being called dishonest in black and white.

Should Have Trial.

In connection with the administration of the honor system, opportunity would be granted the students for self government. It is only fair to give a violator a chance to prove his innocence, and in giving him a trial, much practical experience would be gained.

There is little reason to believe that the honor system in the high schools could not be developed as extensively as the one at Virginia. At the Southern institution, the spirit of honor prevails not only in the classroom, but it has extended itself to every phase of student life, and even to the entire city of Charlottesville. Afer a professor gives a class an examination, he leaves the classroom and does not return. Talking is heard now and then, but it does not pertain to the examination. Honor is held too high.

The benefits that the honor system would confer would affect the faculty to a great extent besides the students. It does away with the eagle-like watching by professors during examinations. This in itself is important, for when students are watched they are expected to cheat. When they are left alone they are expected to be honest.

By not having to keep close vigil over a class during examinations, a better feeling between faculty and students is promoted. When an instructor watches a class closely, students, in a majority of cases are under the impression that they are considered dishonest, and mortals naturally dislike one who accuses them of dishonesty. The honor system not only makes students honest during their school days, but its spirit and influence is carried into the world after school days. No better proof of this statement is to be found than an alumnus of the University of Virginia.

A. T. Stuart, former superintendent of schools, declared "An honor system patterned after the one at the University of Virginia but with a milder form of punishment for violators, is a splendid plan and one worthy of a trial. There is nothing I like to see so much as something that will put a boy or girl on his or her honor. High school boys and girls have about as high a sense of honor as older university people, and if approached properly the project should be a success."

In the interim all the high school principals are considering seriously the introduction of such a system. All have thought it of deliberately, and it would not be at all surprising if one high school at least would start its next scholastic year with something that would improve its standing as a school 50 per cent.

A tank vessel with a capacity of 15,000 tons and driven by oil motors is building in Germany for an American oil company.

WHALE HUNT IN RIVER.

From the Scout Press.

An extraordinary event is reported from Sin Anju, a railway town in North Pyongan province. About noon, when the tide was high, villagers of Wangpong Li, Tong Kyon, in the Kasan district of the same province, were amazed to see a big black object swimming in the River Tailyong, running near by.

They did not know what the monster was, and watched its movements with great excitement and interest. Soon after the monster sent up a column of water and disappeared.

The following day at about 7 o'clock Tomizo Tashiro, a Japanese railway linesman in service at Sin Anju station, while patroling the line, was astonished to see a whale struggling to go down stream at a point about five cho above the railway bridge on the Tailyong River. It was low tide and, the water having considerably receded, the river was only about five feet deep. The whale had evidently stranded on a shallow place and was unable to move.

Tashiro was overjoyed to find the unexpected spoil, and tried to kill it by firing at it with a fowling piece he was carrying. He fired at it eighteen times, but the whale seemed none the worse in consequence. Tashiro concluded that it would not do to try to kill it in that way, and running to the nearest village collected several Koreans, told them of his find, and each armed with an ax they returned to the spot.

The whale was still there, the water having further receded. They rushed into the stream, and by striking the monster on the head with the axes, they at last succeeded in killing it. The whale was about thirty-five feet in length and was valued at about 1,000 yen.

Short-lived Giants.

From the Chicago Journal.

The tallest woman in the world died recently. She was 8 feet 3 inches in height, but she lived only 38 years.

This calls attention to one of natures curious contradictions. Giants are notably short lived. Not long since, a boy nearly eight feet died soon after his eighteenth birthday; and instances where men much above seven feet in height have reached the age of 50 years are almost unknown.

Length of days does not go with excessive length of limb. But tallness which stops short of giantism usually is a sign of vitality. Tall recruits in continental armies—provided they are of proper weight—give least trouble from sickness and gain most from physical training. It must be remembered in this connection that "tallness" is not the same everywhere. Men accounted tall in Southern Italy would be rather short in Western Scotland or among the native stock of America.

It is as if nature had fixed a standard height for each race and punished by some physical shortcoming those who varied much from that standard in either direction.

Snake and Goose Fight.

Elwood Correspondence in the Indianapolis News.

Donald Murray, a boy, obtained a fine wild goose in a peculiar manner, and will have the bird for his dinner. Donald heard a "honk, honk" overhead and looking up saw a wild goose about 200 feet in the air struggling as if its wings were partly bound or entangled in something.

A moment later the bird took a dive for the earth and landed in a stubble field about 300 feet from where Murray stood. He ran to the spot and found the goose fighting with a big blacksnake, which had entwined itself around the neck of the goose. The boy killed the snake and caught the goose.

It is thought the snake wound itself around the goose while it was on the feeding grounds north of the city, where hundreds of geese alight to rest and feed on their way South, and the goose was unable to throw off its unwelcome companion when it took to the air.

About Bagpipes.

From the London Chronicle.

The Bulgarian delegates would have been interested if they had heard before leaving that the Prince of Wales was learning the bagpipes. For the pipes are the Bulgarian national instrument, as Sir Charles Eliot shows by a striking illustration. Until lately, at any rate, the servants who waited at the porte on the grand vizer were mutes, though not, as in former times, persons specially mutilated, but children born deaf and dumb. They used a language of signs, with a special gesture to describe the representative of each nation. To indicate the Bulgarian agent they imitated a man playing on the bagpipes. It was not the Bulgarians who invented the pipes, however. They are among the oldest of musical instruments. An antique gem shows Appollo with them, and two instruments in the Book of Daniel were almost certainly bagpipes.

The lard used in the United States in a year would fill a pail 295 feet in diameter and 334 feet deep.

OLD BONES AND COINS FOUND.

Thought to Be Relics of an Early French Expedition.

New Jersey Correspondent New York Times.

Within the past few years parts of human skeletons and old coins have been washed out on the beach at Spermacete cave near the old Highlands. The bones and other relics come from Skeleton Hill. The winds and tides acting on the base of the hill cause the land at the top to slide down to the beach, thus unearthing the bones and other relics.

Although many stories are told of how the bodies came to be there, the one receiving the most credence is that the men were part of the expedition sent out by France to avenge the capture of Louisburg by the Colonists and English troops. This expedition left France in 1746. During the voyage several of the warships carrying the troops were wrecked. Later a pestilence broke out among the crew, killing hundreds of men. The admiral in command in despair, committed suicide, as did his successor.

It was planned to attack the Colonists in Massachusetts and then to devastate all the settlements as far as Georgi. Most of the coins found were dated about the time this expedition started. It is generally thought that the bodies found were those who died from the plague and were buried by their shipmates.

Skeleton Hill is owned by the government. No one is allowed on the property without a permit. But for this fact the place no doubt would have been dug up long ago by treasure hunters.

A Seven-years' Language Course.

From the Springfield Republican.

There are perhaps some outsiders who may be tempted to envy a class of twenty in Philadelphia which has undertaken a seven-year course in languages under the most favorable conditions, with a good teacher, plenty of leisure, quiet, freedom from interruption, and with ample inducement not to leave. The class includes Greeks, Italians, Lithuanians, Poles, and Germans, but all twenty are alike in having at least seven years to serve in the Eastern penitentiary, and for just that length of time they are assured of the services of their teacher, a real estate man, highly educated and a linguist, who is serving a term for forgery. The Young Men's Christian Association is to supply the class with books and will provide assistant teachers. Warden McKenty has taken much interest in the class, which is a vast improvement on the "silent system" one in vogue in model prisons.

"Votes for Feyther."

From the Manchester Guardian.

The other evening one of the ladies distributing handbills outside a suffrage shop observed a small girl stand in long and rapt contemplation of the picture posters covering the shop window—"Anti" Mrs. Partington trying to mop up the rising tide. John Bull helplessly stirring the Reform stew, and so forth. To her it was a mystifying array of dramatic scenes. Then her look brightened. "Are they giving it inside just now?" she asked. It was explained to her that it was not a picture theater. Another evening outside a suffrage shop in another part of Manchester a poorly-clad little girl not more than seven years old came up to the lady distributing handbills. She glanced approvingly at the posters, and with a smiling look held out a small dirty palm with a copper coin. "Please may I join for a penny?" "Why do you want to join?" asked the amused and cautious handbill lady. "Becauthe I'm a Thruffragette," she lisped confidently. But how classify the boy who rushed to the suffrage shop door and shouted: "Mother's dead! Votes for feyther!"

Saving Waste Products.

From Nation's Business.

It will be read with interest, and possibly with some doubt, that the Navy Department has gone into the scrap metal business. But it is true, nevertheless, and never was illustrated more forcibly the truth that much lies in small things. Formerly a great deal of scrap metal was wasted or else sold unsegregated and hence at a fraction of its real value. A similar condition existed with reference to other waste products. They were not considered capable of being used. But now this is changed. Scrap metals are carefully gathered and sold after segregation and classification, or else are sent to founderies to be reworked by commercial smelters and then returned to the government to be further utilized. And other by-products are as carefully watched and handled after their kind. The result has been to bring absolute waste to what is called by the diplomats "an irreducible minimum." A scrap expert is employed by the Navy Department whose sole duty is to superintend salvage operations of this nature. The saving thus effected throughout the entire naval establishment, covering as it does practically the whole world in its operation, is a large one. The leaks were comparatively small at any one station, but the total was great.

Scott's Last Message.

From the New York World.

Capt. Scott's last message to the world, written when the antarctic cold was gripping his heart, stands as a great human document.

In the narrow tent, with the gale raging outside, death sat face to face with him and dictated the words. As a final act of grace it permitted him to leave a record of his triumph—then required him to confess the ruin of his hopes.

The leader and his companions had wrestled with fate and been thrown. They had reached the pole and turned homeward. One died from a fall. A second staggered out into the storm and perished no man knows where. Against destiny the three surviving fought on. A few miles away lay the depot where supplies had been stored that they were doomed never to reach. Exhausted and frozen, they lay down to die in nature's prison like brave men.

If ever a gallant soul merited success and the honors of victory it was Scott.

What a message and inspiration to those who fight the great battles of life in these sentences: "We took risks. We knew we took them. Things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last."

In Fourteenth Century Frame.

M. Jusserand.

Then came the carriage of the fourteenth century, a sort of wagon in a Sunday-best embroidery. Thus traveled the noble lady, slim in form, tightly clad in a dress which outlined every curve of the body (a hobble, in fact, and 'tis over 500 years since), her long, slender hands caressing the favorite dog or bird. The knight, equally tightened in his cotehardie, regarded her with a complacent eye, and, if he knew good manners, opened his heart to his dreamy companion in long phrases like those in the romances. The broad forehead of the lady, who has perhaps coquettishly plucked off her eyebrows and stray hairs, a process about which satirists were indignant, brightens up at moments, and her smile is like a ray of sunshine. Meanwhile, the axles groan, the horse shoes—also heavily nailed—crunch the ground; the machine advances by fits and starts, descends into the hollows, bounds altogether at the litches, and falls violently back with a dull noise.

The Evil Stars.

From Judge.

"The stars," said he, "are all aglow,
Which ones are evil? Do you know?"
"Oh," she replied, "I surely think
The evil stars are those that wink."

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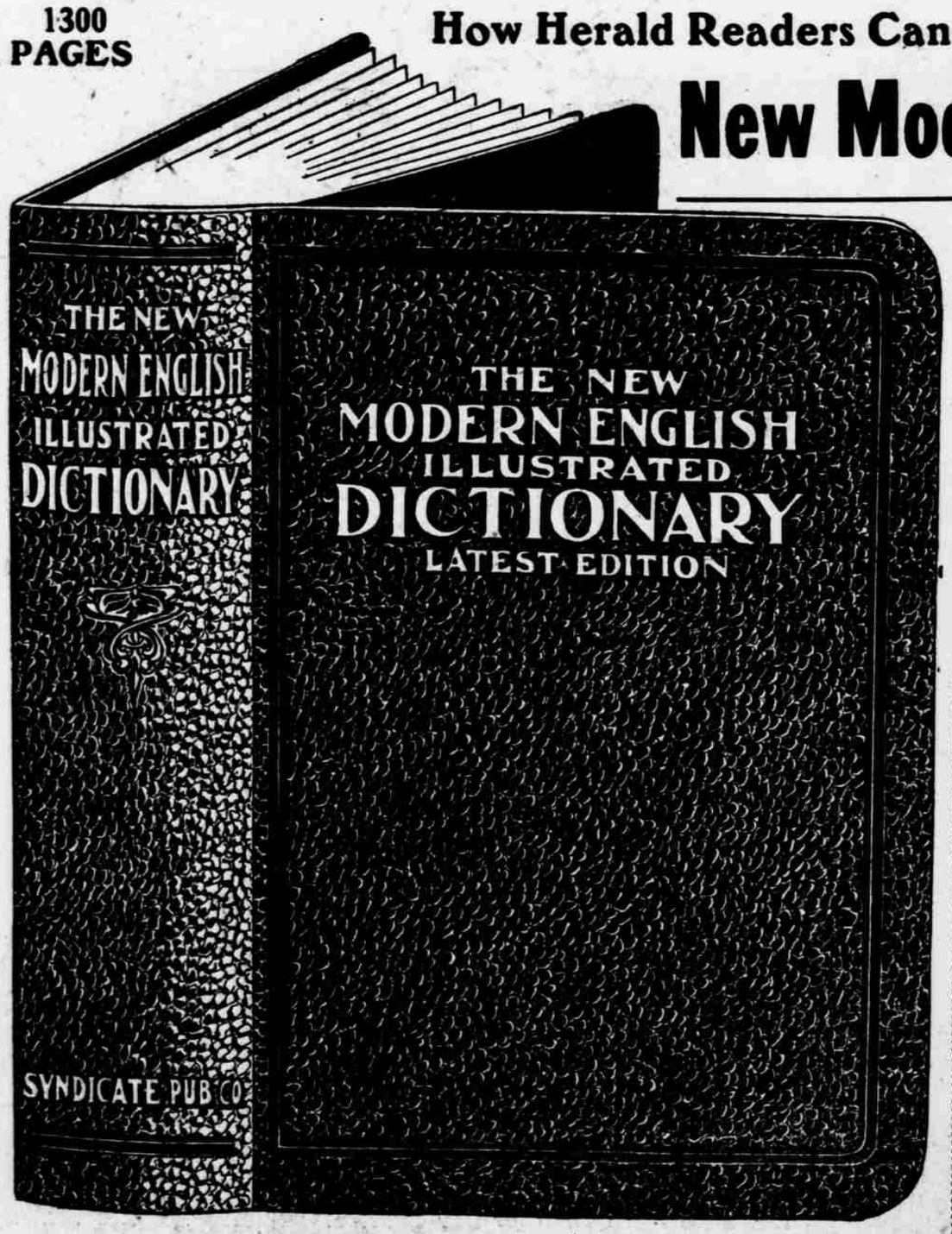

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