

THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATE HONOR SYSTEM

DR. A. T. BAWDEN COLLECTS INFORMATION CONCERNING PROPOSED SYSTEM

President of Princeton Writes That Student's Administration of Honor System There is Their Most Highly Treasured Tradition

"Aw, I can't use that o' stuff. "At's all we hear about. Blankety-blank. cling Clang. "

Yes, it is being heard about a great deal, but it's surely one of the most vital things that have to do with bettering the moral condition of college life. Morals the bunk? Say, listen! Without morals, you, and you, and you wouldn't even approach the high state of civilization that students of today are privileged to enjoy. Now, that's settled. All right, get ready

The much-discussed, often-despised, but vitally necessary "honor system," seems, generally speaking, to be coming into its own. Many colleges, both large and small throughout the country, have adopted it, and the majority of those who do use it, are considering its adoption as part of their curricular activities. In other words, so vast a project is the "honor system," that in a short time, it will form one of the major programs of every aggressive and progressive school. It certainly is here to stay!

The "honor system" is a great deal like Christianity. There are many non-Christians in this old world, and those that come under this heading believe they're happy. They think their way is the better. They are unable to imagine, possibly, how anyone, who is such a fool as to become a Christian, can get any "kick" out of life.

But, say—right there is where they make their big mistake. They don't know the joys of being a Christian, the immense "kick" in the self-knowledge that their lives are as good as they can make them. They don't know how much personal satisfaction they are missing.

However, after the heathen have tried Christianity, they invariably like it. It's a challenge to them to do their best, to put forth every effort to better themselves, physically, morally, mentally and spiritually.

The same is true of the honor system. Those, as a rule, who have not tried it, think it is entirely "the bunk." But those that have tried it and are using it, feel its great worth, and appreciate it for the great good it is doing.

But it is every man's privilege to guide his own thoughts, to form his own opinions. Before he is in a position to do this, if he is wise, and wants to form those judgments on facts, and not hearsay, he will investigate carefully and as thoroughly as may be possible, the facts of the case. He will carefully weigh other persons' experiences, take them for what they are worth, and then he will attempt the hardest part of his task—that of creating his opinion.

In order that students of Ottawa University, where the honor system is more or less of a "joke," where cribbing is used without hesitation, where honor in school work is regarded as a heavy section in Whiz Bang, where the motto of a great many is "I'll get my work, fairly if I can, but at any rate, I'll get it;—in order that the student body may become acquainted with these experiences, the following information is presented.

This information was collected by Dr. Bawden, head of Ottawa's department of chemistry, who recently attempted to collect a wide variety of data among educational institutions, not only of a larger type, but also of the size and type of Ottawa University, in order that O. U. might be compared fairly and squarely, with other institutions in her own class.

The method of "honor system" used at the University of Chicago, is that of an honor commission, consisting of five students elected by upper classmen and five instructors appointed by the president. All cases of suspected dishonesty are reported to the dean, who in turn submit the evidence to the honor commission. The findings of the commission are sent to the dean and vice-president of the university for approval. The penalties attached with the various offences range from requiring a new examination to expulsion from the university. But, according to an official of the University of Chicago, this system is "purely negative," and they are now attempting to find ways of promoting honor as well as punishing dishonor.

Park College, an old "friendly enemy" of O. U., replies in their letter of recent date: "We have at the present time a type of student body government. This has a representation from the various student organizations and classes. They have at the present time several commissions who

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are making a study of the various phases of college life. The matter of handling any case of student honor may be a responsibility of this body. They have at various times in the past reported cases, but not always."

It is understood that the honor system at Park is far more successful than the above letter indicates. Rumor has it that the students are very efficient at reporting dishonor, a very necessary cog in the wheel of a perfectly working honor system.

The system used by Princeton University has been in successful use for twenty-nine years. The Princeton plan is operated entirely by students, mostly upper classmen. It is every student's business to report cases of dishonor, and the accused person or persons are taken before a committee, who in turn handle the case very similar to a court trial. Witnesses against the accused person are heard first and their testimony taken in full. The accused person is then called separately and allowed to make his statement, presenting witnesses for his defense if he is so able. The "jury" is composed of seven students. Six of the seven votes is necessary to conviction.

According to the Princeton system constitution, "Violations of the Honor System shall consist of any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids or from any persons or papers, or in any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his own paper or not. This rule holds both within and without the examination room during the entire time in which the examination is in progress, that is, until all papers have been handed in."

Further, at the end of each examination paper, the student is required to write and sign this pledge "I pledge my honor as a gentleman that during this examination I have neither given nor received assistance." If this pledge does not appear on the examination paper, the instructor is required to notify the committee and the cause of the omission is investigated and found.

In the letter from the president's office at Princeton, it is said that "its (the honor system's) administration is in the hands of our students and we regard it as the most highly treasured of our Princeton traditions."

The biggest thing in effecting successful operation of the honor system at Ohio Wesleyan University, according to President John W. Hoffman, is to get the student body one hundred percent back of the idea, and this sentiment, along with faculty "backing-up," and an Honor Court of invincible and staunch purpose, gives splendid results.

"Furthermore," says President Hoffman, "I believe the Honor System is much better than the old method of having the professors in the room. There is less cheating in my judgment under the present system than there was under the old. Incidentally, the University of Illinois, that threw it out in the last published report I saw, was (get this!) seriously agitating its return."

Possibly the oldest Honor System in existence in American Schools still in existence today, is that of the University of Virginia. Their system has been in successful operation during the past eighty-four (84) years, and still is going strong. Dr. Alderman, president, says in part in his letter to Dr. Bawden:

"From the beginning the administration of the system has been under the responsible direction of the student body with no interference by the faculty. The penalty which they inflict for violation of our written pledge is dismissal from the University. The students impose it and the students supervise its execution. When there is adequate proof of guilt this punishment is always inflicted and is always the same. If the proof is not adequate the charge is dismissed and there is no penalty."

These brief specimens of actual cases of the Honor System's operation, will give the student a bird's-eye conception of the success of the system. As was said at the beginning, it is necessary for every man to form his own opinion. The evidence has been presented. Now, do a little thinking for yourself.