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A Critical Evaluation of Intercollegiate Forensic Contests in Terms of Educational Principles

By DR. LEROY T. LAASE

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(This is the first in a series of articles by Dr. Laase, National Vice-President of Pi Kappa Delta, on the general theme of "Obtaining the Maximum Educational Values from Forensics." Dr. Laase, who served as director of tournaments in the National Pi Kappa Delta Convention at Topeka last year, is Chairman of the Department of Speech and Director of Forensics at Hastings College.)

Much has been written about the values of intercollegiate forensics. Much has also been said in criticism of contest procedures. Both those who praise and those who condemn are equally sincere. Since teachers of speech themselves are not in agreement on the merits of contest procedures as now used, a critical evaluation is in order.

It will be assumed in this article that both those who condemn and those who defend contests are agreed that these procedures are to be evaluated in terms of educational objectives. It will be further assumed that if intercollegiate forensics are to be justified as possessing educational values, their aims must be in line with the aims of speech education and their methods must contribute to these aims.

It is not surprising that there has been much controversy among speech teachers over the merits of specific contest forms when it is

realized that teachers of speech have not always agreed as to the chief aim of contest participation. Three distinct aims have been championed as the primary goal in articles on aims and objectives in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*. These have been ably summarized by the late Charles A. Marsh of the University of California at Los Angeles as: "(1) to demonstrate superiority in forensic skill; (2) to provide a medium for arriving at truth; and (3) to aid in the development of speech skills of the individual."¹

A point of view which embraces all three of the above aims is expressed by Nichols and Baccus who hold that contests are "an educational process conducted as a game or sport, whose incidental purpose is to set forth the truth about . . . a controversial problem and whose primary purpose is the personal development of the persons participating."² The writer subscribes to this point of view as one which, while recognizing all three aims, has the merit of subordinating incidental and secondary aims to the primary purpose of developing the speech skills of the participants. It is the writer's opinion that the latter aim must remain paramount at all times and in case of conflict must be the one to govern the manner in which the training and contest is conducted. It is the aim which most directly supports the objectives of speech training, of overcoming inadequacies in speech, and developing proficiency in speech skills.

With the development of the student's speech skills as our guiding aim let us turn to an evaluation of contest methodologies. A survey of the literature on speech contests shows two principal points of view: (1) those who claim the evils warrant abandoning the system entirely; and (2) those who claim there are great benefits to be derived which justify its continuance. Occasionally an article takes a middle course, but most of the writers have contented themselves with a mere listing of benefits or evils with more attention given to the number of these than their inherent nature or importance. Since the burden is upon those who would abandon the system to show that the system is incompatible with educational objectives, we may well examine the criticisms first.

The objections which are made are many and varied. Out of the literature on the subject the writer has gleaned the following which were frequently and emphatically set forth:

- (1) A few selected students are trained while the great majority are neglected.

¹W. A. Cable, "A Program of Speech Education in a Democracy," Expression Co., Boston, 1932, pp. 227-233.

²E. R. Nichols and J. H. Baccus, "Modern Debating," Norton & Co., N. Y., 1936, p. 34.

- (2) Coaches do too much of the student's work.
- (3) Ideals are sacrificed in an attempt to win.
- (4) Speech contests are exploited for propaganda purposes.
- (5) Contests emphasize exhibitionism instead of communicativism.
- (6) Students in competitive speaking activities develop a forensic style.
- (7) Forensics usurp students' time from basic studies.
- (8) Contests subject students to injurious emotional strain.
- (9) Victories and defeats leave bad psychological effects upon the student.
- (10) Speech contests develop interschool ill-will.

Although some of these objections are more important than others, the list is impressive. Although not mutually exclusive, the criticisms are representative. The writer has observed instances of each. A re-examination of the list, however, has convinced him that these criticisms are not necessarily inherent in contest procedures. There is not one which he can honestly claim to have observed as present in all contests. This leads him to the conclusion that the criticisms are more criticisms of particular methodologies and specific directors than they are of contest procedures in general. But if the system lends itself easily to these abuses, the evils are none the less serious. The mere fact that the evils may not be inherent does not justify continuation of the program even under more favorable directorship unless there are educational values to be derived which cannot be obtained from ordinary curricular speech training.

The mere listing of values claimed for speech contests, although it has frequently been done, is no adequate justification of their continuance unless the values can be expressed in terms of sound educational principles which the contest procedures facilitate. The writer proposes to test contest procedures on this basis. The principles which we shall use as a basis for evaluation may be summarized as follows:

- (1) The problem to be solved should be commensurate with the ability of the learner. (Principle of individual differences)
- (2) Goal motivation will accelerate the learning curve. (Principle of goal-motivation)
- (3) Insight into the immediate and remote goals is essential to learning. (Principle of insight)
- (4) Transfer of training depends upon the relation of the

task to real life situations. (Principle of transfer of training)

It is upon these principles that the writer claims that the speech contest possesses potential educational values.

The first potential value which the writer postulates is that the speech contest may provide a medium for the training of skilled speech students. Since the advent of differential psychology, educational psychologists have more and more emphasized the necessity of adapting educational methods and contents to the needs of the students. Particular emphasis has been placed upon the gifted student. The project method has been hailed as a medium for such emphasis. Extra-curricular activities have been justified as a type of project which can be utilized. The speech teacher is confronted with a problem of providing training for talented speakers beyond that which can be provided in the classroom. Debate, oratory, extempore speaking, and public discussion provide such a medium. Intercollegiate competition may not be the only available medium but it is a convenient one, and one which if properly conducted should offer the possibility of contributing to the speech skills of talented students.

A second potential educational value is that the contest provides a means of motivating the student to strive for the greatest development possible. The importance of motivation in learning has long been recognized. The effect of motivation on problem-solving, which has been subjected to rigid experimentation in animal learning, has been found to apply with equal validity to human learning. Both reward and punishment have been found to increase the rate of learning. The speech contest may provide a motivation for the student who has developed proficiency in the fundamental speech processes to put forth his best efforts to develop speech skills. The success or failure of much speech training can be directly attributed to the lack or presence of sufficient motivation. The motivation provided by intercollegiate forensics may be entirely incidental to a more primary aim but it is never-the-less present. In intercollegiate forensics the student who may be superior on his own campus is brought into competition with superior students from other campuses. This higher level of competition should serve to motivate the student to greater efforts than he might otherwise put forth. If we are to accept the findings of experimental psychology, it matters little whether he is rewarded by victory or punished by defeat; the activity can be utilized under proper direction to accelerate the learning curve.

The third potential educational value in contest procedures is that they provide an opportunity for giving insight into the student's

achievement toward immediate and more remote goals. Gestalt psychologists have emphasized the importance of "insight" in learning. According to the Gestalt learning theory, the responsibility of the teacher is to give the student insight for the attainment of immediate goals and progress toward the ultimate goal. The remote goal in speech contests is the development of effective speaking ability. The immediate goal is the improvement of speech skills for a particular contest. The contest, if utilized properly by "coaches" and judges, can serve to give the student insight into his achievement in the performance; enable him to measure his degree of success in obtaining proficiency in the particular skills which were the immediate goal; and give him an understanding of the problem, the solution of which is to become the next immediate goal. Thus speaking contests provide a series of progressive speaking experiences which, if insight is given into the means of attaining the immediate goals, can be utilized to lead the student toward realization of the ultimate goal of effective speaking.

The fourth potential educational value which this writer sees in the speech contest is that it may provide training in an approximately real life-situation. The value of a discipline depends upon the degree to which it facilitates the solving of related problems. Thorndike has shown that there is a transfer of training only for identical elements. In so far as speech contests approximate a real life-situation in which these participants will later have to speak, their training value will be enhanced. It is at this very point that speech contests have been severely attacked. Nevertheless the contest does offer an opportunity to get the student before real audiences. It is true that entirely too many speech contests are conducted before an audience made up solely of judges and coaches, but it is equally true that many organizations welcome the opportunity of listening to a good discussion of current questions when the participants are well informed and can present their views effectively. The speech contest, then, does possess the potential value of providing an opportunity for training in an approximately real life-situation.

It is insufficient to merely say that the speech contest possesses potential educational values of great significance. The question arises as to how to realize the maximum educational values which they potentially contain. This subject will be treated in a subsequent article.

Negroes Can Think As Well As Sing

By PROF. BORIS G. ALEXANDER



The Jubilee Singers of Fisk University, followed by similar groups from other schools, have carried the Negro spirituals to the far corners of the earth.

The work of Negro poets and writers has been translated into many languages.



LeMoyne College debaters in front of the Hell's Gate, near Rotorua, N. Z. Behind this gate is located the most wonderful and awe inspiring thermal spot in the world.

Left to right: Prof. Boris G. Alexander, Mr. Charles W. Gilton and Mr. James S. Byas of LeMoyne; Native Maori woman guide without her native finery, as we caught her in the off-season; Mr. H. Tai Mitchell, high Maori chieftain, justice of peace and a national leader. He has arranged for our entertainment by the Maoris.

Paintings, sculpture and designs produced by Negro fingers have been exhibited in art galleries and museums throughout the world.

Numerous records made by the Negro athletes have been heralded by the newspapers and magazines in every country where written language exists.

Yet the ability of the Negro to express his mind on economic, social, international and interracial questions is known

only to a very limited circle even in our own country.

In order to demonstrate the powers of this unknown mind of some twelve millions of the Negroes resident in the United States, LeMoyne College of Memphis, Tennessee, has undertaken a unique program of the interracial debate tours which have carried the LeMoyne debaters not only into every corner of this country, but during the last six months of 1938 even to such distant places as Australia, New Zealand, Territory of Hawaii and British Columbia.

Since 1930 LeMoyne College, a comparatively young institution of higher learning for the Negro youth of Mid-South, has established a noteworthy record in intersectional and interracial intercollegiate debating.

In February of 1931 it met Shurtleff College, Illinois Lambda, in what is believed to be the first interracial intercollegiate debate south of the Mason and Dixon Line, if not in the entire United States. A brief note in one of the numbers of the *FORENSIC* soon after that debate asking whether any reader knew of any interracial intercollegiate debate prior to that date was left without answer, creating a presumption that LeMoyne and Shurtleff made a mark worthy of notice.

Realizing that only a limited number of colleges and universities would be able to send teams to the Southern city, LeMoyne College undertook a program of extensive debate trips designed to bring to the attention of the college students the progress that was being made by the Negro youth.

As the first effort in that direction a trip through Illinois was arranged in 1933. In 1934 another tour was arranged; this time the states visited included Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. In 1935 in addition to debating Northwestern University, the LeMoyne debaters took part in the debate tournament held at Iowa City, Iowa, where they were the only representatives of the American Negro colleges.

In 1936 a LeMoyne debating team went to California, meeting fifteen schools including the University of California at Berkeley, Occidental College at Los Angeles and Stanford University at Palo Alto. On the return trip the team debated with the representatives of Texas Christian University of Fort Worth, which thus became the first Southern white institution to accept an interracial invitation. It may be well to observe that Shurtleff College and Texas Christian University, both of which aided in the pioneering achievements of LeMoyne College, are Pi Kappa Delta schools.

In 1936 LeMoyne College ventured into the field of international debating when in December of that year a team from Oxford University visited LeMoyne and engaged in a debate which was attended by about 800 people of both races. The second international debate was held a year later when the representatives of the Anglo-Scottish Union came to Memphis.

In the spring of 1937 the Eastern states were visited with 24 debates, including contests with Amherst, Rutgers, Western Reserve, New York University and the City College of New York.

In the spring of 1937, realizing the vast possibility for the international as well as interracial debates, LeMoyne College sent a two-men debating team to Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. This

team was composed of Charles W. Gilton and James S. Byas, students at LeMoyne, and was accompanied by Professor Boris G. Alexander, the coach of debate at LeMoyne since 1930. Prof. Alexander is a member of the Illinois Lambda Chapter of Pi Kappa Delta.

Leaving Memphis on June 1st, the team traveled to Vancouver, B. C., where it boarded R. M. S. Aorangi for a journey to Auckland, New Zealand. The first stop was made at Honolulu, T. H., where the team was welcomed by Robert Stafford, the debate manager of the University of Hawaii, who made arrangements for LeMoyne's stop-over on the return voyage.

The debaters arrived in Auckland on June 26th, and were welcomed by a large delegation of the Auckland University College students, under the leadership of A. Patrick Blair, the President of the New Zealand University Student Association. The sincerity and generosity of the welcome of the New Zealand students, citizens and the government officials, as well as of the hospitality during the entire stay beggars adequate words of description.

The first official function held in honor of LeMoyne debaters was a luncheon tendered by the professorial board of the Auckland College on Tuesday, June 28. Until the morning of Thursday, June 30, the debaters were continually on the move seeing various sights of Auckland. In the evening, at their first debate, held before an audience of 1200, Messrs. Byas and Gilton established their reputation as dispensers of Yankee humor which has followed them throughout the New Zealand visit. In addition to the debate, the LeMoyne debaters addressed the same day several hundred secondary school students at a meeting held in the college auditorium, as well as visiting several secondary schools. These visits to the schools, addresses before the clubs, organizations and churches were an integral part of the trip and are responsible for a great deal of the good accomplished by Messrs. Byas and Gilton and Prof. Alexander. All together during the trip that lasted six months and ten days, about 220 meetings were addressed in addition to 36 formal debates. The team made also over 40 broadcasts, including 14 national network broadcasts in Australia.

Leaving Auckland on the morning of June 30th, the debaters traveled to Rotorua, the world famous thermal region in which several villages of the New Zealand natives, Maoris, are located. A special Maori concert was given in honor of the visitors, during which native songs were rendered and the LeMoyne visitors were treated to war and Poi dances. The week-end was spent at the luxurious Wairakei Hotel in a thermal resort by the same name.

Next on the schedule was a visit to the Hawke's Bay region, the

high light of which was a brief stop at TeAute College for Maoris. The debaters were given a ceremonial Maori reception which culminated in the rubbing of noses of the visitors with the noses of the welcoming committee. At the conclusion of the visit an unscheduled honor was given to the LeMoyne debaters when the entire student body burst out with the melodious strains of Po Aturau—the ancient Maori farewell song. According to the records of the TeAute College this honor has been given only four times in the past *eighteen* years. Next the LeMoyne debaters invaded Massey Agricultural College, where a very successful debate was held before an enthusiastic crowd of five or six hundred.

It was in Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, that the debaters from Memphis realized the full significance of their visit to the Antipodes when the Minister of Education, Hon. Peter Fraser, welcomed them at an official reception held in the Parliament Building. The visitors were welcomed by the Minister on behalf of the Prime-Minister of the Government of the Dominion. Several scores of the members of Parliament and high placed government official attended. Speeches were made by the Minister of Education, the Vice-Chancellor of the New Zealand University and the President of the Victoria University College Student Association. During one day stay at Wellington, the LeMoyne debaters addressed five assemblies.

After a week-end spent at the great Waitaki Boys High School, the third debate was held at His Majesty Theater at Dunedin. The opposition was furnished by Otago University. Lord Mayor of Dunedin presided and close to a thousand people attended the debate. Dunedin will stay in the team's memory as the most southerly point they are likely to visit in their lives. In spite of the supposed "deep" South, the LeMoyne visitors suffered from cold, which can be understood as July is the middle of the winter in the Southern hemisphere.

For the fourth Varsity debate the team travelled back North to Christchurch where another thousand strong audience listened to the arguments of the LeMoyne team pitted against the representatives of Canterbury University College. This debate, as well as that in Auckland, was carried in its entirety by the powerful government owned radio station.

The last University debate in New Zealand with Victoria University College at Wellington was presided over by the Minister of Education, Hon. Peter Fraser, and was attended by over fifteen hundred people. In the audience were many government officials as well as most of the prominent people of New Zealand's capital. American Consul-General Pinkerton attended with his wife and the entire consular staff. A slight earthquake shook the building during Mr. Gil-

ton's speech, but according to the local geologists it could not be attributed to the weight of arguments presented.

The last day in New Zealand will be remembered because of the private interview with the Prime-Minister of the Dominion, who graciously presented the members of the team with his autographed pictures. Earlier a farewell reception was tendered by the Speaker of the Parliament and Mrs. Barnard at which several ministers of the crown were present.

The team left New Zealand on July 22, traveling to Sydney, Australia, on the fastest steamer in Pacific Ocean service, S. S. Awatea. This good ship passed under the world famous Sydney Harbor bridge early in the morning on July 25th.

As the first debate in Australia was scheduled for ten days later, the LeMoyne debaters spent their time in Sydney seeing the Metropolis of the Southern Hemisphere, being interviewed by the seemingly numberless newspapermen, posing for the photographers and finally making a debut before the camera of the Fox-Movietone News, thus becoming the first debating team in Australia, and possibly in the world, to be featured in a newsreel.

The first Australian city outside of Sydney visited by the LeMoyne debaters was Brisbane, capital of the State of Queensland, where they were given a civic reception by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Jones. The Honorable H. A. Bruce, Minister of Education and Public Works in Queensland Government, tendered a luncheon at the Parliament house to the debaters at which a welcome on behalf of the Premier, Mr. Forgan Smith, was given by the Minister. In Brisbane three debates were held, one against the debaters of the Australian Labor Party, which is in power in Queensland, and two against the representatives of the University of Queensland. All three debates were held in halls which were not able to hold all those who desired to attend, and consequently hundreds were turned away.

Return to Sydney was made by the circuitous old railway line which brought the debaters for the first time in contact with the bogy of travelers in Australia, the interstate change of railway gauge, and consequently the change of trains. In Sydney two debates were held during this visit, one against the University of Sydney, and the other between Messrs. Byas and Gilton over the National Radio Network. During this stay at Sydney, Vice-Chancellor Wallace of Sydney University honored the visitors with a formal luncheon welcoming them on behalf of the Sydney University Corporation.

Next on the schedule was a visit to the inland town of Orange, where a local debating organization supplied the opposition. From Orange the debaters returned to Sydney in order to entrain for Mel

bourne, the capital of Victoria, from which next day they boarded T. S. S. Taroon for Tasmania, an island State of the Australian Commonwealth. After being held up by fog in the mouth of Tamar River for over six hours, the LeMoyne travelers were rewarded by the most beautiful sight of their trip, when the ocean going ship on which they traveled, slowly steamed up the winding river to Launceston from which they traveled by bus to Hobart. On the night of their arrival Messrs. Byas and Gilton addressed a gathering of the University of Tasmania students after which they were entertained with supper by the executives of the Student Union. Next night a debate against the University of Tasmania was held at the Town Hall.

Return to Melbourne was made by air, when the LeMoyne debaters boarded a giant Douglas plane which whisked them over the route of over 400 miles in about three hours. During this trip more than 200 miles of open sea, known as Bass Strait, were covered in a few minutes over one hour, the plane flying better than 180 miles an hour at an altitude of 15,000 feet.

In Melbourne the most important debate of the trip was held, when at the conclusion of the Inter-University Debate tournament, the LeMoyne team was pitted against the select All-Australian team. Justice Lowe of the Supreme Court gave the verdict in favor of LeMoyne debaters. As it was against the purpose of the trip to win the debates, only six debates were decided, each time at the insistence of the local team, and in each case the LeMoyne debaters emerged victorious. Various methods of judging were used.

In Adelaide, South Australia, the LeMoyne debaters took part in two debates held in the magnificent Bonynton Hall of the University of Adelaide. During the stay in Adelaide the debaters addressed several assemblies including a gathering of the Commonwealth Club attended by more than 500 members.

From Adelaide the LeMoyne debaters returned once again to Melbourne, where during the nine days they participated in five debates, three with the University of Melbourne, one with Victoria Debating Society, and one with the members of the Debating Association at Wornambool, Victoria.

In additoin to these engagements, the debaters addressed several other meetings, while Charles W. Gilton participated in a radio debate against Councillor J. Cremean during Melbourne's most popular radio program "The Heckle Hour". The topic of the discussion, "The White Australia Policy Should Be Abandoned" proved so intriguing that the Heckle Hour program for the first time in its two years of existence was relayed to Brisbane and Sydney. In Aus-

tralia, the commercial stations are not linked into a network, the way the national stations are, so this was a distinct compliment to the participants of the debate, and particularly to Mr. Gilton, who was especially invited to take part in the program.

Next stop was at Canberra, where in spite of the very small population of the Commonwealth capital, about 7,000, almost 400 people attended the debate with Canberra University College. The audience was composed almost entirely of the Commonwealth government officials, and Sir Robert Garran, the Commonwealth Solicitor General and one of the writers of the Australian Federal Constitution, was in the chair.

After a busy and enjoyable week-end spent in that most distinctive city in the world, the team flew to Sydney for the last debates of the visit. These debates were held with the United Australia Party debaters, with the Debating Association of the New South Wales and with a team representing Sydney Y. M. C. A.

Leaving Sydney by R. M. S. Niagara on September 29th, LeMoyné debaters paid a brief return visit to Auckland, New Zealand, where a return debate was held against the representatives of Auckland University College.

During the voyage on the R. M. S. Niagara the LeMoyné debaters had an opportunity to visit the beautiful town of Suva located on the Viti Levu Island of the Fiji Group. A native village in the vicinity was also visited.

Next stop was the so-called Paradise of the Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii. During almost a month's stay there LeMoyné debaters participated in three debates with the representatives of the University of Hawaii, and addressed about thirty different organizations and schools. The final debate of the trip was held at Vancouver, B. C., against the team representing the University of British Columbia. The Canadians exhibited the same brand of unstinted hospitality shown by the inhabitants of their sister dominions in the Southern Hemisphere.

Was the trip worthwhile? The answer may be found in the letter received by Dr. Frank Sweeney, the President of LeMoyné College, from the President of the New Zealand University Students Association, Mr. A. P. Blair, who said in part, "Our New Zealand Government was not unaware of the important nature and effect of such an international tour as this, and gave their active support and interest to it. I can say emphatically that the tour did much in increasing the regard and interest that New Zealanders feel for America and its Negro citizens, and your College is to be warmly congratulated for taking the initiative in this matter."

Lenoir Rhyne College

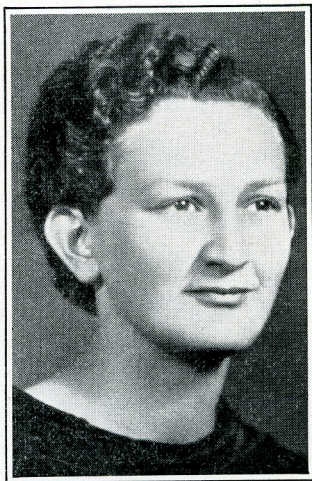
NORTH CAROLINA DELTA

Lenoir Rhyne College, which was granted a Pi Kappa Delta charter by the National Convention at Topeka last April, is located at Hickory in the Piedmont section of western North Carolina. This location, twelve hundred feet above sea level, and within thirty miles of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is a very healthful one, avoiding both extremes of heat and cold.

The chapter of nine charter members, Joe Caldwell, Albert Keiser, Annie Lytle, David Miller, John W. Moran, Inez Seagle, Peggy Setzer, Dorothy Spratt, and Dudley Stroup was installed on May 30, 1938, by Dr. Warren G. Keith of Winthrop College. This, however, was not the first introduction of Pi Kappa Delta principles, as Lenoir Rhyne speakers had become members of the General Chapter as far back as 1928, and her forensic director for even longer had held the degree of Special Distinction.

The college was founded in 1891 by four Lutheran clergymen, who accepted the gift of a fine campus from Captain Walter Lenoir with the stipulation that an initial \$10,000 for buildings and equipment be deposited with his executor. The Lutheran Church soon adopted the young and growing institution, which by 1915 had become an A grade college. In 1923 the name Rhyne was added to Lenoir in honor of Mr. Daniel E. Rhyne, a textile manufacturer, who had made very generous contributions to both buildings and equipment, and who continued his interest till his death several years ago.

At present over four hundred regular college students attend the institution, with close to a hundred additional in the School of Commerce. The college holds full and unconditional membership in



INEZ SEAGLE
North Carolina Delta

the Southern Association of Colleges and the Association of American Colleges, and is also registered by the United States Government for the reception of foreign students. Its graduates have made fine records in the leading graduate schools of the country.

The college is not a newcomer to forensic activities. For more than thirty years Lenoir Rhyne has participated in intercollegiate debating. Up to fourteen years ago the contests were conducted by the literary societies. Since then the work has been under the active supervision of the faculty with a director in charge.

Lenoir Rhyne College has sought to co-operate in the advancement of forensic activities in the state and beyond. In 1926 her forensic director, Dr. Albert Keiser, was instrumental with Dr. Elwood Perisho of Guilford College in forming the North Carolina Intercollegiate Forensic Association, of which he has served for twelve years as Executive Secretary. Since 1933, the Association under his directorship has sponsored what is now the South Atlantic Forensic Tournament, drawing students from nine southeastern states. The college has also furnished leadership in the North Carolina Association of Teachers of Speech and Intercollegiate Peace Contest. For the last dozen years her director has sponsored Pi Kappa Delta ideas and debate questions in the state and region, just as in 1924 he succeeded in bringing Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, into the national organization as the one hundredth member.

Excellent records as to participation in intercollegiate activities and a fine showing in competition has characterized the college from the first. Some of her students have made exceptional records. She believes in the development of the greatest number of speakers, with emphasis upon honest and thorough work and the highest standard of honor.

John B. Stetson University

FLORIDA BETA

By LYDIA A. THEURER, Secretary-Treasurer

On May 27, 1938, the Florida Beta Chapter of Pi Kappa Delta was installed at John B. Stetson University, DeLand, Florida, in an impressive ceremony conducted by members of the Florida Alpha Chapter at Rollins College.

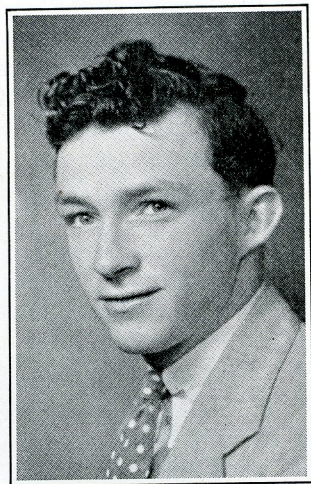
Thirteen Stetson debaters were initiated into the order after the chapter had been installed by Dr. H. R. Pierce, director of forensic work at Rollins, assisted by Margery Chindahl, president of the Rollins group; Marita Stueve, past president; Edna Harmon, debate manager; and Robert Lado.

Among the new initiates were Dr. Irving C. Stover, head of the dramatic department and advisor for forensic activities while Dean Robert C. Cotner, who has headed forensic work in the immediate past, completes work on his doctorate at Harvard this winter. Dean Cotner was already a member of Pi Kappa Delta with Special Distinction.

Dr. Stover and Harmon Harper, president of Florida Beta chapter as well as of the former Stetson Debate Club, were initiated with special distinction. Jane Taft, Richard Baldwin, Harvey Olliphant, Sarah Elizabeth Clark, and Lydia Theurer were made members with honor. Members in fraternity are Dorothea Clarson, John Cicero, Mary Elizabeth Simpson, Dorothy Schneider, and Oliver Taylor.

Officers of the new chapter, in addition to Harper, are: Richard Baldwin, vice president, and Lydia Theurer, secretary-treasurer.

Following the installation and initiation ceremonies, a banquet was given in the University Commons for the visitors, advisors, and members. Dr. Pierce and Miss Chindahl told briefly of their experiences at the Topeka Convention, and Lado gave his prize-winning oration,



HARMON HARPER
Florida Beta

"The Tragedy of Spain." Culminating the event was Dean Cotner's speech in which he intrusted his debaters to the able charge of Dr. Stover during his absence.

The installation of a chapter of Pi Kappa Delta Fraternity at Stetson fulfilled long wishes of the Stetson debaters. Inspired first by Dean Cotner's association, contact with Pi Kappa Delta debaters at various tournaments fostered the desire of this group to become affiliated with the national order.

Last spring, feeling that forensic activities at Stetson had showed sufficient progress, Dean Cotner consented to the Debate Club's request for Pi Kappa Delta membership. Meeting the fraternity's standards, the chapter was authorized at the Topeka convention, and the local group began organization work immediately.

Forensic work, which was begun at Stetson many years ago under the guidance of Dr. Stover, has enjoyed a slow, but steady, growth. During the four years when Dean Cotner served as advisor, Dr. Stover's other duties having become too demanding, debating received added impetus through university financial aid. Since that time it has been possible for Stetson teams to compete in tournaments all over the South, as well as to entertain visiting teams. The Strawberry Leaf and Grand Eastern Tournaments at Winthrop College, Rock Hill, South Carolina, and the Southern Association of Teachers of Speech Tournaments are among those in which Stetson annually participates creditably.

Debate teams which have visited Stetson within the past year include the University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth College, University of Dayton, Bard College (Columbia), University of Florida, University of Miami, and Rollins College.

The Stetson Debate Club, organized officially last fall and now superseded by Pi Kappa Delta, has also sponsored practice tournaments not only for Florida colleges and universities, but for the high schools of the state. The program for the coming year contains, in addition to these established practices, school-wide extemporaneous and oratorical contests. In all their work, the Stetson debaters are admirably aided and encouraged by the University administration.

John B. Stetson University, the home of Florida Beta, is located in DeLand, Florida, about one hundred miles south of Jacksonville, and 23 miles west of Daytona Beach. It was established first by Mr. H. A. DeLand, of Fairport, New York, as an academy in 1883. In 1885, contributions by Mr. DeLand and the Florida Baptist Convention enabled DeLand Academy to become a college as well.

The following year marked the beginning of an auspicious future,