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Longwood University

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL
FARMVILLE, VA.

DECEMBER, 1917

M.E. Grainger

THE FOCUS

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THE FOCUS

VOL. VII FARMVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1917 NO. 8

The Star of Bethlehem

IT looms still over the crystal world below—
The Star of ages old,
The shepherd's beacon on that holy night
When angels sang the carols,
Heralding over all the earth
God's gift to the world—
Christ-child, the King, and
Peace on earth, good
Will toward men.

—*Clara Eaton Neblett.*

Everystudent

(A Parody)

Prologue

Messenger—I pray you all give audience
And hear this matter with reverence,
In form a moral play
The summon of Everystudent called it is.
And goes to show in its own way
That in our lives at S. N. S.
We all must bow to Friend Pop-Test.
The story saith: "Damsels, in the beginning
Look well and take good heed to the daily recitation.
Be ye never so gay
Ye think Bluff in the beginning full sweet
Which in room E causeth the maid to weep."
Now take this lesson to your heart,
And from its moral ne'er depart.

(Enter Pop-Test.)

Pop-Test—Lo, yonder I see Everystudent walking. She is munching an ice cream cone. Little does she think on my coming. Her mind is on movie stars and honeymoons, but shortly will the clouds these heavenly bodies obscure. (Enter Everystudent)

Everystudent, stand still. Where art thou so gaily bound? Hast thou forgotten thy pedagogical career?

Everystudent—Why dost thou ask?

P. T.—In great haste I am sent to summon thee to room E, to give on plan paper a reckoning of the daily work.

Ev.—This blind matter troubleth my wit. Who art thou?

P. T.—I am Pop-Test.

Ev.—Full unready am I such reckoning to give. Thou comest when I have thee least in mind. Defer this matter till another day and I will cram my poor head till it throbs.

P. T.—No respite can I give thee save the vacant period before the roll is called. (Exit P. T.)

Ev.—Alas! I well may weep with sighs deep.
I have no manner of company
To help in my extremity,
And also I am unprepared
To have my scanty knowledge aired.
To whom shall I make my complaint?
I have it! To my notebook I will fly,
And with her contents stored up in my brain
I will not fear the Monday after.
To my notebook will I take my sorrow. (Enter Notebook.)
Well met, good Notebook, and good morrow.

Notebook—Everystudent, good morrow.
But why lookest thou so piteously?
If anything be wrong tell it to me,
That I may help to remedy.

Ev.—Yes, good Notebook, yes.
I am in great jeopardy.
Pop-Test, the monster, summons me
To take a quiz and get an E.

Notebook—And how can I help Everystudent?

Ev.—Give me the notes that I have jotted down in class,
Perhaps they'll aid me so that I shall pass.

N. B.—The notes? Ah yes, here's one, alas!
'Tis written to thy neighbor in the class,
And reads, "Go with me to the movies, hon,
The picture's a peach and we'll have such fun.
Wallace Reid and"—

Ev.—Ye gods! turn on.
Why, yes, there's more.

N. B. (reading)—Push, pull, push, pull, rolling, rolling on the muscle.

Ev.—Is there nothing more?

N. B.—Nothing. (Exit Notebook.)

Ev.—Well, there's my Text.
I'll go to her
And from her pages try to cram
Some valued facts for my exam. (Enter Text.)
This volume looks to me as if she's grown in size
Since last I conned my lesson from her page.
How long ago? Why it's an age.
My Textbook, truly thou hast heard my wail,
To help me now thou surely wilt not fail.

Text—I know thee not. Thy face is strange, O maid,
My intimates alone receive my aid.

Ev. Enough! I am thy owner, I demand
That thou shalt lend to me a helping hand.

Text—Thy impudence indeed I now must stop.
In fact I have a mind to call the cop. (Exit Text.)

Ev.—What shall I do? The time draweth near
While here I stand and quake with fear.
To my own mind will I go,
To my own thoughts will I appeal,
Perchance within their depths may lie
Some knowledge that will push me by.
Everystudent's Thoughts, where art thou?

Voice in the Distance—Somewhere in France.

Ev.—Alas! Where shalt I put my trust?
For find someone I surely must.
Lo, yonder cometh the well-known Grinds

With studies only on their minds. (Enter Grinds.)
With heads thrust forward in their books
And never a moment for frivolous looks,
O Grinds, behold me standing thus in fear.
Your counsel I implore in my dilemma.
Ye know full well the load I lie beneath,
But with your aid I'll pass by skin of teeth.

1st Grind—Nay, Everystudent, I say no,
Full often have I told thee so.
The time thou'st spent roaming halls, attending balls, receiving calls,
Thou shouldst have spent within the confines of thine own four walls.
Strolling streets for Sanford's sweets,
Reading Vogue and fashion sheets
Is not the way to pull a B,
But a beaten path to a miserable E.

2nd Grind—My sister Grind, thy very words I had in mind,
And to thy comment let me add:

(*To Ev.*)—At borrowing clothes thou art adept,
But let this in your mind be kept,
Thou canst not knowledge borrow so,
For those who knowledge will attain
Must strive with patience for its gain. (Exit Grinds.)

Ev.—If you will not your musty knowledge lend
There is a friend on whom I can depend,
For come what may she always will be true
And so, detested Grinds, I say, Adieu!
Oh, where art thou, my Case, (Enter Case), my crush?

Case—Who calleth me? Everystudent, why dost thou haste?

Ev.—I am summoned to room E.
Therefore I pray thee go with me.

Case—I follow no student on such voyages.
Nay, I am too brittle—I may not endure:
I will follow no student on foot to be sure.
I shall now announce thou art not in the race,
Indeed, by this evening I'll have a new case.

Ev.—O, false Case! deceiver thou art!
To coax from me my shekels and shatter my heart.

Case—Thou alone art to blame,
Whereof I am glad—
I needs must laugh.
I cannot be sad. (Exit Case.)

Ev.—That latest blow has made me ill.
A bright idea! To the infirmary I will go,
And feigning illness may escape
The dangers of this Pop-Test scrape. (Enter Nurse.)
(To Nurse.) I am not well,
Dost thou not think
I look like someone on the blink?

Nurse—Stick out thy tongue.
Thou art not ill.
All thou needest
Is this small pill. (Exit Nurse.)

Ev.—Alas, then may I wail and weep,
O Common Sense, come hither and bear me company on my journey. (Enter Common Sense.)
Surely thou wilt not fail me as have all others.

Common Sense—Full many a day my presence thou hast done without,
And now should I your comrade be,
'Twould seem quite strange and out of place,
But as a parting exhortation
I commend to you Daily Recitation. (Exit Common Sense.)

Ev.—O Daily Work! Come thou to me,
For Common Sense commendeth thee. (Enter Bluff.)

Bluff—Nay, lend not thine ear to hear such stuff,
Behold in me your old friend, Bluff,
For we two friends have dwelt together
Through rain, and shine, and windy weather.

Ev.—O Bluff! Dost understand the trial I must undergo?
I have been summoned to room E,
Where soon a pop-test I must take.
Now tell me wilt thou me forsake,
My constant one, or wilt thou go?

Bluff—Nay, Everystudent, I say no.
I have the cramp in my toe.

Ev.—Alas! thou faithless one!
I will to Daily Work appeal,
My last resort, my fate 'twill seal.
My daily work, where art thou?

D. W.—Here I lie cold on the ground,
Thy frivolities hath me so bound
That I cannot stir.

Ev.—Why, did anything on thee fall?

D. W.—Yea, Everystudent, I may thank thee for all,
For hadst thou rightly cared for me,
Thy reckoning full ready would be.
But, Everystudent, I am sorry for your fall
And fain would I help you if I were able.

Ev.—Daily Work, canst thou lean on me?
I repent me of my trifling.
I will henceforth stand by thee.

D. W.—Thankful am I that I can go,
Delivered of my weakness and my woe.
Therefore with Everystudent will I go and not spare,
Her good works will I help declare.

Ev.—I place now all my faith in thee
And nevermore will fear an E. (Exeunt.)

Epilogue

Messenger—This moral, students, may ye hold;
Ye students, weigh it, new and old.
Lean not on Bluff,
She doth but pretend;
But hard Daily Work
Your troubles will end.

—*Jessie Kellam.*
—*Helen Brent.*

A Man's Honor

TOM COLLINS had begun his college career in all earnestness, and his two and one-half years at Mercer had been very successful ones. He was a good student and a great leader. Especially was he a leader in athletics, playing on the football and on the baseball teams. His splendid work as half-back during the past football season had won for him the honor of "All-Southern."

It was the beginning of the baseball season and Tom often noticed a strange man who came out to watch the practice each afternoon. One day he met the stranger and learned that he was writing a college story. To get a real college setting and spirit, Dan Strong was boarding at Mercer a few weeks. He and Tom soon became great friends.

As some people have a habit of doing, Tom had got into the habit of making bills larger than he could pay. Always some bills were held over for the next allowance. And somehow the allowance, though reasonably large, never "went around." Tom found that he had bills that must be paid at once, else they would be turned over to the college authorities and that meant no baseball for Tom. He wouldn't write home for more than his allowance—he had gotten into the trouble and he would get out alone.

One day as Tom was trying to figure out a way of meeting some of his debts, Dan Strong came into the room. He seemed interested and for want of advice, Tom told him his troubles.

"Tom," said Dan, "there's a way around all of your troubles if you'll only do it. Are you game?"

"Game!" said Tom, "I'm game for almost anything to meet these bills."

"All right," began Dan. "First, give me your word that what I tell you will be kept secret."

This Tom did but he wondered at the great secrecy.

"I've been running a bluff about my business here," said Dan. "I'm in school at Ford College and I'm here on more important business than story writing. You know that for the past three years, you all have won the pennant from us. You have things pretty well tied up now, but if we win the game on the 22nd we'll be in the lead. I have instructions to pay any man here one hundred dollars for your signals. That amount will cover your debts and nobody will ever know of the deal. All's fair in war, you know, and it's war for that championship. Will you do it?"

Tom stood up and pointed to the door. "Dan," he said, "I'm disappointed in you as a man. Get out of here—get out of town by twelve tonight or I'll make your whole dirty business public. You have a mighty poor idea of Mercer College. Even though you and Ford College aren't, we are above dirty deals. Leave, and remember twelve o'clock."

"All right, Tom, I'll go," said Dan, "but think it over. If you decided to accept, leave a note pinned to the net on East Tennis Court tonight at eight o'clock. Come back at nine and you'll find your money—one hundred dollars."

Tom started to speak but the door slammed and he was alone. He sat down and as Dan had said, he did think. They were serious thoughts, but in the end Tom's manhood came to the front. He decided to send the following note to Dan:

"Ford College may win this game, but if she does, she'll do it by good, hard, honest work—not because a Mercer fellow wasn't a man. Mercer has one thing besides signals that Ford needs—it's Mercer's idea of honor and spirit."

He smiled as he pinned his note to the net and went back to his room—to think about the debts again.

Three days after Dan Strong's departure—for he did leave the town—Tom received a note from the uncle for whom he was named.

"My dear Tom," began the letter, "I guess you know that I am back from my trip abroad. Have been back in the States two weeks and have just found out about the "All Southern." You're fine, my boy. Because your Aunt Alice and I think that, we are sending you a small trifle. Use it as you like.

"Make all plans for the camp in July—we are expecting you.

Affectionately,
"Uncle Tom."

Tom smiled as he opened a check for one hundred dollars. He thought of the debts and wondered if his uncle could realize what his "trifle" meant.

On May the fourth, an immense crowd saw the "Orange and Black" of Mercer again win from Ford College. Tom played a wonderful game, and to him the winning of that championship meant more than it did to any other man. It meant the result of a good deed and he was proud that he had had true "Mercer Spirit."

—*Annette Alexander, '18.*

"The Uniter"

THE first thing I can remember is being taken from a big show-case in a Fifth Avenue jewelry store about two years ago and handed to an old gentleman. The clerk said, "This is a fine watch, made in Switzerland and guaranteed to keep perfect time." The old gentleman, after a thorough examination, bought me, and when I was put into a velvet box he put me into his pocket and carried me home.

There I was given as a birthday present to his pretty daughter, and attached to a delicate chain, I was hung around her neck. That night her sweetheart came to tell her good-bye, for he was going to the war next day. Their talk was a long and sad one, full of tender words and faithful promises of devotion and remembrance. "You must have something dear to me to take with you," the girl said as they finally separated, and she took me from her chain and put me in the leather bracelet on his arm, taking his watch for herself.

"Now," she said, "whenever you look at this little beauty, you can think of the giver, and know that neither time nor absence can make me forget."

So I went on her soldier's arm, back to the old country, for he was to fight for France. I would gladly forget the days of battle, screaming shells, streams of blood—horrors of war, unspeakable there, but they are deep in my heart and memory. My duty was to tell the time to a minute, and to remind the brave man, on whose arm I was, of the "girl he left behind him." I was with him in many fierce struggles when death stared us in the face. At last, one day, he was shot down just as he seized the tricolored flag falling from the hand of a wounded comrade. The shell that felled my hero tore his left arm from the socket, and sent it, all maimed and shat-

tered a hundred feet away, breaking the leather bracelet, and half burying me in the ground. Here I lay unnoticed while my soldier was carried to a nearby hospital unconscious and, as far as I knew, dead.

What fate awaited me I hardly knew, though I prayed I might excape the savage enemy and never have to look him in the face and tell the time as I had done so boldly until now. Battered, disfigured, my face bruised, my hands broken, I lay and mourned for my departed beauty and my dear mistress so far away, so bereft. Suddenly a thrill of joy shot through me as I heard a sweet voice say, "Why, look at this little gold watch almost buried here. What poor soldier could it have belonged to?" The firm, brown hand of a Red Cross nurse drew me from my grimy bed and held me to the light.

The battle was over, and the nurses had been sent from the hospital to see if any wounded had been left on the field.

"Annette Cramer," she read, opening one side of me, where the name of my mistress was engraved. "This will be a clue to the owner," she said, "and I will wear it until the man who lost it is found." I had a taste then of hospital life, the aftermath of the battle, and may I never have another!

One night as the nurse and I kept guard beside a quiet cot, I heard the word "Annette, Annette." My heart jumped and ticked ever so loud, for the voice belonged to my soldier who was close beside me. "Annette," he said, in a weak troubled voice, "I've lost the watch you gave me and that I promised always to wear." How glad I was to hear those familiar tones again, and to know my hero was alive! If only I could speak and tell him how near I was!

The nurse leaned over and listened, and as he repeated the words more slowly and sadly, she knew at once he was the soldier to whom I belonged. Slipping me from the guard on her neck, she put me in his hand, "Here is your watch. When you are stronger tell me where your Annette is, and I will

write to her," she said. With a happy sigh, my soldier turned over and fell into the deep sleep that saved his life. The days went by; letters came and went between my mistress and her sweetheart. At last he was well enough to be sent home on a long furlough, and again we crossed the dangerous water and landed safely in "little old New York." You can imagine the happy meeting of my dear mistress and her hero. I came in for a big share of affection too, for she declared I had been the one to bring him back to her.

Battered and bent from my rough treatment on the battlefield, I am something of a hero, for I have been in some of the hardest and bloodiest battles of Europe. Whether I shall go again or not I cannot tell, but my soldier and I are ready if we must go, to fight under the tri-color of France or the Stars and Stripes of U. S. A.

—*Frances C. Smith.*

Anything for Uncle Sam

"LOIS," called the girl's mother, glancing out of the sitting room window, "Mr. Merriweather's chickens are in your garden again."

"Oh, mother, what ever am I going to do. This makes the second time this morning. If this goes on I won't have a single tomato left to can."

"Yes, I know, dear, it is bad, but I don't see how you are going to help it. They say he positively refuses to see anyone. Mrs. Hudson was over yesterday, and she seems to think he has had some terrible trouble."

"Well, I can't help that," broke in Lois impatiently, "trouble or no trouble, I don't think he should let his chickens run all over the neighborhood and ruin war gardens like most of these are. I intend to find him and tell him so, too," she ended, marching indignantly out of the room.

Mrs. Ingles smiled and continued with her knitting. "She'll get hold of him," she said to herself. "When she gets that way its win or die."

Lois, in the meanwhile, was energetically driving the chickens from her garden. When she had finished her dark hair clung in damp little rings around her forehead and her cheeks were crimson.

"Horrid old man," she exclaimed leaning on the hedge that divided the two yards, "how I wish I could see him for about two minutes."

"Well, here I am," drawled a sarcastic voice, and then a thin and rather pale man about thirty years old rose from behind the hedge before Lois's astonished eyes.

Lois drew back and for one brief, solemn moment the two faced each other.

"Oh I didn't mean for you to hear me, but as long as you did, I guess it's the best possible thing that

could have happened. You see you have some dreadful chickens. They have been nibbling my tomatoes for the last week, and you know it is so important that they shouldn't be nibbled, for I want to have a real sure 'nough prize war garden."

"Oh, I see," said the man bitterly. "You are doing your bit, are you?"

"Yes," she exclaimed eagerly. "Mother and I feel like we must do a terrible lot, because we haven't any men to fight for Uncle Sam. Oh, I think it would be grand to be a man now. To have a chance to fight for such big and wonderful things as democracy and world liberty. It seems to me that we should be glad that we are living in this age, to be the ones to bring all these great things to pass. Don't you think so?"

"Well, I did one time, but now! oh! well, it can go to hang for all I care. Suppose," he said, his voice faltering a little, "suppose you wanted to fight for all this, but they wouldn't let you, what would you do?"

The girl's eyes grew troubled for she saw the traces of a great struggle in his face. She saw too the white face and the long delicate hands which showed the effects of an illness.

The tragic voice went on, "I wanted to fight, O God, how I wanted to, but they wouldn't let me. Instead they kicked me out. Now," he said bitterly, "I'll go to the dogs for all I care."

"Oh, no, no, no, not that," burst out Lois passionately. "Only cowards would do that. Why, I am almost tempted to believe you are one anyway," she said looking him clearly in the eye, "talking like that."

"A coward," he repeated after her, "a coward," and unconsciously he straightened his shoulders.

"Yes; a plain out and out coward," she calmly repeated. "You were physically disqualified I suppose."

"Yes," he muttered.

"Well, that's nothing. Why I know of lots of men who have been disqualified and they haven't such an attitude as you have. Besides, look at all the women who would love to fight, but just because they are women they aren't allowed to. Have they folded their hands and said they were going to the dogs. No, they haven't done anything of the kind. Instead they have gone to do the work that they are called on to do, to help win this war. Now," she said, "do you think you have time to go to the dogs when you are needed so?"

"Why, I don't believe I have. But gee whiz!" he said, grinning boyishly, "even if I did think so I would almost be afraid to say so before you, for fear you'd be after me with a German bomb. Where, may I ask, did you get all this patriotism?"

"Why, at college, of course. If you could hear our President talk to us, and dozens of other people, I think you'd be losing all those crazy notions of yours and get to work."

"But what can I do," burst out the man impatiently. "I am not worth two cents."

"Oh, dozens of things. There's something for every one of us to do, if we could only realize it. Now look at yourself for instance. You are half ill and yet there's a lot you can do. You could influence other men in such a way that they would want to fight. I think as a rule that its just plain ignorance on the part of men that keeps them from wanting to serve. Don't you think so?"

"Yes," he answered slowly. "I really think that is the main cause."

"Lois," called the girl's mother just then, "someone wants you at the 'phone."

"All right, I'll be there in a second," she answered; then turning to the man again, she whispered wistfully, "Please promise me that you'll do your bit, if its not anything more than keeping your chickens out of all the gardens around here, for you know they are to help win the war."

"I'll promise," he muttered.

"I knew you would," she exclaimed happily as she started towards the house.

After this Lois never had the chickens to bother her again. Mr. Merriweather faithfuly kept his word. He came over nearly every day also and helped her with her garden. Gradually too he had lost his death-like pallor and the delicate hands became brown and sinewy. Lois and this man found many interests in common, and the hot, sultry days of July and August passed swiftly by. The day she left for college he came to her with the happiest expression on his face that she had ever seen on any human being.

"By George," he exclaimed, "I bet I am the most thankful man alive today. The Doctor has just told me that I'll be as sound as any man alive in a short while."

"Oh, I am so glad."

"Well, you'd better be, for you were the one who worked the cure. You put the man back into me."

"The idea of such a thing! Of course it wasn't I. Any one who would work so for his country, when he was ill, would have come to his senses after a while."

"No. I don't believe I would have either. You see I was very bitter before you came for I felt that my country had thrown me over. You can't imagine what a terrible thing that was for a man like me to harbor in my mind. Your raking me over the coals brought me to my senses."

"I am glad then if I had a little part in taking away the bitterness," she exclaimed softly. "I am glad for you and for Uncle Sam, for he needs every faithful man he can get. I must run and dress, now, though," she said, rising, "for my train is due in an hour."

"All right, I'll see you down there. Good-bye until then."

Lois had been back at college for two months. One day while she and a half dozen other girls sat laughing and talking in her room, a maid knocked at the door and handed her a card.

"Captain M. B. Eppes," she read aloud. "Who on the shining sun, is he? Katie, are you sure it is for me."

"Yes, Miss."

"Who did you say it was, Lois?" called one of the girls.

She repeated the name.

"Why he's the very man that I have heard my brother Jack speak of so much. You ought to be tickled to death to have a date with him. Why, he is perfectly wonderful. You know he was half killed, trying to save another man down on the border. He was shot in the chest. When he was just about well he took a terrible cold and "T. B." set in. Of course he couldn't stay in the army with that so he was given an honorable discharge. Jack said he never saw anyone so cut up over anything in his life. He said he went off and hid himself and wouldn't have a thing to do with anybody. Then all of a sudden he reappeared again almost well and commenced doing war relief work. Jack said last time I was home that he thought he would get back in the army again."

"Well," said Lois, "I suppose he's all right, but I can't remember ever hearing his name before to save my life."

"Perhaps," suggested one of the other girls, "you met him at that army dance you went to in Richmond the other night."

"Oh, I bet I did; there were so many," she said, hooking the last hook on her dress hurriedly. "Well, anyway I'll soon find out." Quickly she ran out of the room, down the steps and then into the parlor. There was a man standing with his back to her, looking out of the window. It was a big, broad back and the trim army coat fitted him snugly. He turned.

"Why, Mr. Merriweather, I am so glad to see you," she managed to exclaim, in spite of her complete surprise. "Did you come with Captain Eppes? Perhaps you can tell me who he is. I can't place him to save my life."

He grinned a big, broad, wholesome grin that showed off to perfection his strong white teeth. "Why, he and I are one."

"You are Captain Eppes?" she gasped. "You are the man I called a coward? You whom every one has held up as one of our heroes! Oh! why did I ever have a tongue. To think that I who hardly know the meaning of bravery or service actually taunted you. Oh, I am so ashamed," she whispered miserably.

"Well, you needn't be, Lois. I deserved it every bit. You see I had an idea that, unless a man could get down and do the actual fighting he was no good. But you showed me how every man can fight and do his part."

"Did I really and truly do that," she asked with shining eyes.

"Yes, and so much more, that I've found out I can't be half as useful to Uncle Sam without a certain person to help me! Do you think that it is going to be hard to persuade her to think so too?" he questioned, looking down into her face with merry eyes.

"Why no," she said dimpling, "any favor that is asked for Uncle Sam, just has to be granted."

—*Mary A. Addington.*

Hello

I

WHEN you see a girl in woe
Walk right up and say, "Hello!"
Say, "Hello," and "How d'ye do?"
How's the world been treating you?"
Slap her right square on the back;
Bring your hand down with a whack;
Walk right up and don't be slow;
Smile and shake, and say "Hello!"

II

Do her clothes count much? Ah no—
Walk right up and say, "Hello?"
Clothes are but a cotton roll
Just for wrapping up a soul;
And a soul is worth a true
Hale and hearty, "How d'ye do?"
Don't wait for the crowd to go,
Walk right up and say "Hello!"

III

Say, "Hello," and "How d'ye do?"
Other folks are good as you.
When you leave your house of clay,
Wandering in the far away,
When you travel through the strange
Country at the other side the range,
Then the souls you've cheered will know
Who you are, and say, "Hello."

—*K. Painter.*

Somewhere in France

IN a spacious low-ceiled room, conspicuous both for its cleanliness and its long rows of cots, each holding a wounded man, Jack Wilson quietly lies. Dusk is gathering on a gray December evening—the day before Christmas. This is a ward of the large American base hospital where the doctors and nurses are striving heroically to render all possible service to their wounded countrymen.

Even now one of the mightiest battles of the whole war is raging along the border. Plainly can be heard the distant booming of the machine guns and the ceaseless roar of the heavy artillery, as they endeavor to battle down the entrenchments of the enemy. For two weeks the attacks have gone on continually, each attack being made with renewed vigor and unconquerable will. Jack, the hero of his company, has been wounded in an enemy trench, brought to the hospital in the beginning of the battle and for several days has hovered between life and death, but his vigorous strength is gradually bringing him near recovery.

As the day fades, dying in the west, and the stars herald the night which is the anniversary of the birth of Christ, the minds of the soldiers lying wounded "somewhere in France," drift back to their native country, to their childhood homes, and to the loved ones waiting there, for whose liberty they have offered their lives. They recall the happy Christmases at home; pangs of homesickness creep over them and they long for, yet dread, the morrow.

Jack, though resting comfortably, cannot sleep. His mind wanders back to the garden of dreams—dreams of the past years, of his little home down in a beautiful valley of old Virginia, of his mother waiting

and praying for her boy; and most prominent in his thoughts are memories of Elizabeth, the dark-eyed girl who has been his sweetheart from childhood days. Especially vivid is the picture of the rose garden where they said their last good-bye—a good-bye, not in love, but in anger—for the selfish girl was jealous that he should leave her and respond to his country's call. How her cruel words resound through his brain—"Jack, you must choose between your country and me. If you postpone our marriage and rush off to France, you may go; but never think of me again."

In vain had he tried to waken in her selfish heart a spark of patriotism, a spirit of sacrifice. In vain he endeavored to persuade her to change her hasty resolution. He had to choose between love and duty, and made his decision. "Elizabeth, you would not respect me if I did otherwise," was his last reply.

Now, as he recalls this farewell scene, his heart longs, more than ever before, for his little sweetheart, with her imperious ways and willful disposition—selfish because the world has always proven obedient to her slightest wish—Jack does not blame her, but those who are responsible for her training. At length he falls asleep and dreams he is by her side once more, in their favorite bower of the rose garden in old Virginia.

Through the sleeping ward, in the stillness of the Christmas morning, softly steals a Red Cross nurse, an assistant whose lack of experience is more than overcome by her untiring labors and tender ministrations to the suffering. She is both lovely and striking in appearance. Very few of even her most intimate friends would recognize Elizabeth in her new role. She is on duty in a neighboring ward and as she is leaving the room, Jack unconsciously murmurs, "Elizabeth." Turning, at the sound of her name, she recognizes Jack. Quickly she kneels by his bedside and breathes a prayer of forgiveness for her selfishness and her folly.

Her presence penetrates his mind as he sleeps. He slowly awakes and finds that his dreams are a reality. He sees by his side, wearing the uniform of a nurse, his beloved Elizabeth, who has always lived for self and who once placed love before duty.

One glance into each other's eyes erases all misunderstanding; and as Jack fondly clasps her in his arms both hear the angel choir singing, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

—*Celesse Prince Ross.*

The Average Girl at S. N. S.

THE servant bell rings at six o'clock,
But she's fast asleep and heeds it not.
The breakfast bell rings. Ah! she jumps up then,
And dons her middy as fast as she can.

After breakfast the average girl tidies her room
And touches the floor about once with a broom.
"Oh! There's the bell for the 8.30 class."
She runs of course, but alas! the last!

To chapel also with flying feet;
But she finds the monitor has passed her seat.
Before dinner, after dinner, the same wild rush,
"Those awful bells; will they never hush?"

When supper time comes, she says, "Oh! well,
I guess I can rest 'til the 7.30 bell."
But ere she knows it the bell has rung;
To work again, study hour's begun!

Study hour passes; then someone knocks,
"Come to my room quick, I've got a box."
But back to her room she comes at ten,
Turns off the light, jumps in bed, and then—

For the average girl the busy day ends;
She sleeps, and dreams of home and friends.
Then passes the night of longed-for rest,
And a new day begins at S. N. S.

—*Birdie Hollowell.*

THE FOCUS

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. BUGG, Notary Public.

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Editorial

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Christmas is almost here. What a thrill it brings to us—the thought of home and seeing familiar faces again! The expectations are almost as great as the realizations will be, for have we not talked of, thought of, and dreamed of Christmas since the first day of entrance last fall?

While we are having our good times let us remember a few things that will bring happiness not only to us but to others as well. What about the soldiers in camp during the holidays? This will be a new kind of Christmas for the boys—many perhaps who have never before been away from home on Christmas day. Why not try to cheer them up on that day? There are not so many things we can send, for most of the necessities in camp are furnished by the government and other sources. They will, however, enjoy attractively made scrap books, kodak pictures of home

and friends, and Christmas letters. They appreciate more the fact of being thought of than the material value of the gift. Let us mail our gifts, whatever they be, in time for them to be received on Christmas day. We can help, too, to cheer those in homes who have boys at the front.

Have you ever thought of the shop girls at Christmas? If you have been in a large department store on Christmas Eve you have been impressed with the rush and perhaps have noticed the tired and haggard faces of the shop-girls. Do you think when they wake up on Christmas morning tired and worn out from the rush of Christmas week that they are very joyous and can have the real Christmas spirit? I'm sure they can't, and we can do our small part toward making Christmas happier for them by doing our Christmas shopping early and urging our families to do it also.

Let us then remember the real Christmas spirit, make others besides ourselves happy, and have just the best Christmas ever.

—F. W.

Here and There

On November 16, 1917, the sororities gave a refined vaudeville in the auditorium for the benefit of the Student's Friendship War Fund. It reflected great honor upon Miss Munoz, who directed it. We didn't realize that such great opera singers and such clever artists were in this school. The program was as follows:

Overture
Farmville Band

Gregory, Howison and Rollins with their
Famous Hawaiian Troupe

Adele Doree
Dainty Bits of Song

Valerie Bergere
presents her
Dolls of Almost Human Intelligence

Annette Meanderer
The Accomplished Artist in Original Sketches

Daniel and Daniel
offer their beautiful playlet entitled
Grandmother's Rose Jar

Meredith, Brent and Lee
Singers
(with trimmings)

Madam Isolde Litvinne
Late of the Metropolitan Grand Opera, in a scene from
Samson and Delilah
and another from Tannhauser

America and her Allies
An Act for Everybody

The Senior statistics are as follows:

Prettiest—Josephine Daniel; Helen Harris.

Most Striking—Virginia Richardson; Inza Lea.

Airiest—Ruth Vest; Flossie Nairne.

Best Dancer—Annie Gill; Evelyn Lloyd.

Most Mischievous—Jesse Kellam; Della Wicker.

Most Athletic—Tom Gleaves; Bessie Eberwine.

Most Intellectual—Ethel Gildersleeve; Inger Scheie.

Most Dependable—Melville Fagg; Susan Ewell.

Most Talented—Ernestine McClung; Anne Gregory

Biggest Flirt—Virginia Richardson; Della Wicker.

Biggest Gigglers—Lela O'Neal; Frances Robertson.

Biggest Talkers—Annette Alexander; Mary Preston

Neatest—Josephine Carr; Katherine Ellis.

Most Dignified—Margaret Batten; Annie Lee Carter.

Most Generally Liked—Julia Stover; Tom Gleaves

Best Natured—Virginia Bain; Clara Neblett.

Sweetest—Melville Fagg; Mildred Lee.

Daintiest—"Bobby" Wainwright; Elsie Brooks.

Most Indifferent—Gladys Tuck; Inza Lea.

Best All-Round—Dr. Bryden; Julia Stover.

Most Independent—Jesse Brett; Evelyn Wood.

Biggest Loafer—Regis Cassidy; Gladys Tuck

Biggest Bluffer—Mary Addington; Katherine Field.

Wittiest—Jesse Kellam; Clara Neblett.

Cutest—Mildred Lee; Bessie Eberwine.

Most Attractive—Mary Lancaster; "Bobby" Wainwright.

Most Original—Kathleen Moorman; Annette Alexander.

Hit or Miss

Mr. Somers (speaking of towers)—What would be the psychological way of getting down:

Inattentive pupil—Off a goose's back.

DOING TWO BITS

"You seem pretty proud since you gave twenty-five cents to the Red Cross Fund."

"Yassuh," replied Mr. Erastus Pinkley. "Talk about doing yuh bit! I jes' done my two bits."

THE HIGHEST SPOT

"I am looking for an appropriate name for my new home."

"You say it is the highest spot in the neighborhood?"

"The very highest."

"Call it 'The Ace.'"

NOT A SLACKER

"I," said a man, claiming exemption in New York, "am the sole support of an aged flivver."

IT'S THE OLD TRAINING SCHOOL

A teacher received the following note from a mother:

Dear Madam: Please ixcus my Tommy today. He won't come to skule because he is acting as time-keeper for his father, and it is your fault. You gave him a ixample if a field is 6 miles around how long will it take a man walking 3 1-2 miles an hour to walk 2 1-4 times around it. Tommy ain't a man, so we had to send his father. They went early this morning and father will walk around the field and Tommy

will time him, but please don't give my boy such ixamples agin, because my husband must go to work every day to support his family.—*Ex.*

NOTHING NEW TO HIM

Said a young Tommy, just arrived in the trenches, to one who had been there since the beginning:

"This your baptism of fire?"

"Baptism, be hanged!" answered the other disgustedly. "This is my blooming golden wedding."—*Ex*

SPEAKING OF TUNES

Lucille Reed—Positively I cannot carry a tune.

Brilliantee—No wonder, they're rather heavy-looking to me.

A MISTAKE IN PREFIXES

Mr. Wade—Did you enjoy your date with Miss Ferguson?

Mr. Stokes—She's mighty good-looking but can't reverse.

WRIGHT-EARNEST TALK

Imogen—Martha, you might catch him if you go at it with an "Earnest" face.

Stover—Yes, and go at it Wright.

Charlotte Court House was called and answered and was waiting for the girl to come back.

Mrs. Harris (to two girls in the office)—Did you call Charlotte Courthouse?

One of them—Why no. (To other girl)—Does she room on our hall?

NEVER USE A PREPOSITION TO END A SENTENCE WITH

Virginia R. met a girl leaving the building without a coat on on a very cold morning.

"Where's your coat at?"

Other girl—I ain't got no kodak.

Mr. Coyner was looking for "Life."
Miss McGovern—Has anyone in here "Life?"
Kellam—I think I have a little left.

Mr. Coyner—Shall I put the grades up?
Junior—Yes, post them, there's a reason.

Would it surprise you if—
Della had a date with Don?
Miss Taliaferro whispered gently, "Get straight in line?"
Mr. Somers exclaimed, "Just again please!"
"Cutie" blushed?
Inza did not get to breakfast on time?
Mr. Lear gave a pop-test?

EXTRACTS FROM THE FOOLISH DICTIONARY

Athlete—A dignified bunch of muscles, unable to split wood or sift ashes.

We wonder why "Tom" got the vote for being the most athletic.

Board—An implement for administering corporal punishment, used by mothers and landladies. "The Festive Board" may be a shingle, a hair brush, a fish-hash breakfast or a stewed prune supper.

That isn't what we get when the Board comes.

Bone—One dollar—the original price of a wife, Note, Adam, who had to give up one bone before he got Eve.

Brain—The top-floor apartment in the Human Block, known as the Cranium, and kept by the Sarah Sisters—Sarah Brum and Sarah Belum—assisted by Medulla Oblongata. All three are nervous, but always confined to their cells. The Brain is done in gray and white, and furnished with light and heat, hot or cold water (if desired), with regular connections to the outside world by way of the Spinal Circuit,

usually occupied by the Intellect Bros.—Thoughts and Ideas—as an Intelligence Office, but sometimes sub-let to Jag, Hang-Over & Co.

Cot—A snooze for one.

Cotillion—A dance for eight.

Crow—A bird that never complains without caws.

Dance—A brisk, physical exercise, invented by St. Vitus.

Debt—A big word beginning with Owe, which grows bigger the more it is contracted.

Den—A cavity.

Dent—To punch.

Dentist—One who punches the face and fills cavities.

Owen—The only sport who enjoys an equally hot time with or without the dough.

Exchanges

It's a mighty fine thing to feel good, especially when there's a reason for feeling good—and there's mighty fine reason this month for good feelings, because almost everything is good. I have been enjoying good reading, and what can be better or more conducive to good feelings than just that?

There is good reading in *The Tattler*—interesting, instructive reading; and, judging from the November issue, one has to say that *The Tattler* is altogether a good magazine.

The Hollins Magazine is keeping up its reputation of being "a splendid magazine," and we enjoy reading it.

The State Normal Magazine is splendid, also. It contains not only good material, but a variety of material as well.

In the all-story number of *The College Message*, we like especially the story entitled, "The Klan Makes a Radical Departure." It shows a fine spirit, and is well written, as are the other articles in the magazine.

But just here, after all the good things, I fear I shall have to sound a note of discord. *The Bayonet* is disappointing. It is a very slim volume, and falls flat, somehow. The poems are not good, and the main story, "The Scorpion Feather," has a "slap-dash, on-the-surface, get-it-through" effect, which is not at all satisfactory. However, we await the second installment before passing too hard a judgment. The magazine's redeeming features are the editorials and "Advice for Every American Soldier."

We are glad to welcome the *Sage* in our Exchange. It is an attractive magazine, well got up, and very promising.

All exchanges are gladly welcomed not only by *The Focus* staff, but by the student body in general, which body proceeds to devour them as soon as they reach the Reading Room. We acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of *The Critograph*, *The Yellow Jacket*, *Record*, *The Skull and Bones*, *The Stampede*, *The Taj*, *The Castle News*, *The Southwest Standard*, and *The Bessie Tift Journal*.