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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON

By MARJORIE HOGAN

(Ed. Note: This article won first prize in the 1947 Scholastic Award as the best literary article of the year. **Scholastic Awards** are annual competitions for American high school students in all branches of creative art (poetry, drama, book review, humor, radio script, painting, creative music, sculpture, etc.) The competitions are conducted by **Scholastic Magazine** in conjunction with public spirited sponsors. This year more than 140,000 boys and girls from every state of the Union submitted entries. The article "The Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson" was written by a 17-year old high school girl. It is reprinted from the weekly **Senior Scholastic**, New York, May 19, 1947.)

To Emerson belonged the heritage of morality, courage, and lack of conformity of a long line of well-educated but poorly paid New England ministers. A belief in the subordination of the external to the intellectual and spiritual was native to him. Puritan background combined with the quiet and peace of the village of Concord gave to Emerson the character of the outstanding leader of culture and philosophy of the New World.

However, to fully understand the transcendental philosophy which so affected Emerson, we must become acquainted with the philosophies of the era which preceded it and caused it to come into existence. Although much of the theory of transcendentalism seems to originate from French Utopianism and German mysticism which were prevalent shortly before this time, we find that this philosophy sprang mainly out of the need of the people of the New England States. Idealism in these states had been starved by the sternness of Puritanism. Therefore, Unitarianism, the religion which the elder Emerson preached and in which young Ralph had been trained, spread widely after it recovered the original principle of Protestantism. This was the principle of an open mind, which Puritanism basically denied. However, Unitarianism was neither broad nor deep enough to hold the young, thinking clergy of that day. It was this belief in the absolute freedom of the human mind, in individual responsibility, that finally led many of the young Unitarian ministers, among them Emerson, to the transcendental philosophy.

Transcendentalism has been defined by Vernon Parrington: "Practically it was an assertion of the inalienable worth of man, theoretically it was an assertion of the immanence of divinity in instinct, the transference of supernatural attributes to the natural constitution of mankind . . . the Unitarians had pronounced human nature to be excellent; the Transcendentalists pronounce it divine. . . . Pantheism is said to sink man and nature in God; Materialism to sink God and man in Nature; and Transcendentalism to sink God and nature in man."

It was this striving to find the perfect God in His creature that led Emerson to his critical view of life. He found it difficult to be satisfied with the finite efforts of man when he believed man the possessor of the infinite qualities of God.

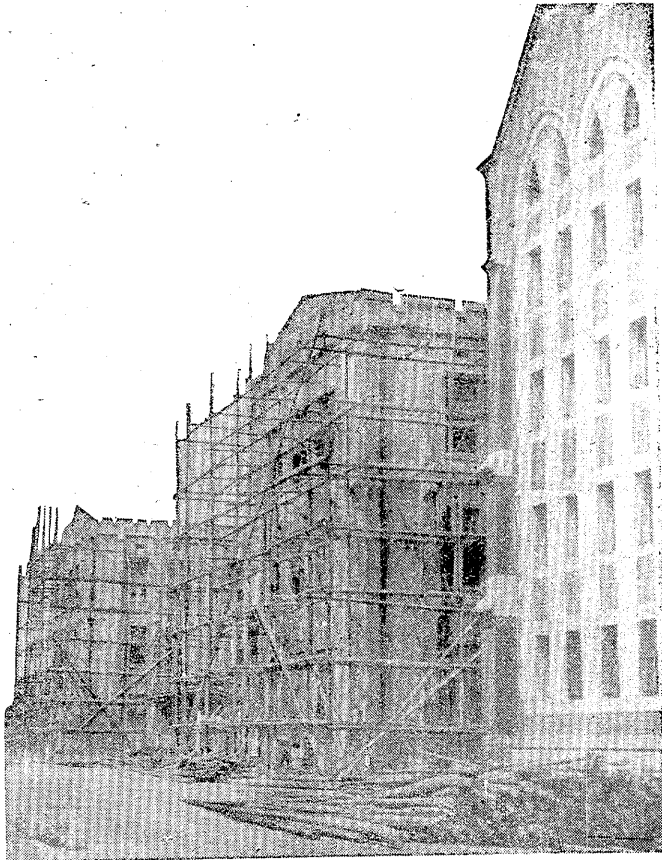
This criticism found expression in his lectures and later in his essays which were finished editions of his lectures. Although characterized by a lack of continuity and organization, the essays are remarkable for the sincerity and serenity which are notable in all the works of this author. His sincerity stemmed from his belief that he was ordained to the task of comparing and evaluating the spiritual values as opposed to the material forces of the period, while his serenity was the result of his motto, "trust thyself." However, his belief in self-reliance appears most intrinsically woven into his works and days. It is very noticeable, especially in his prose writings, that he reaches his conclusions by intuition rather than by logic. This is often referred to as Emerson's instinctive theory and from it originates the short, quotable, Emersonian sentence.

His entire philosophy was based on his belief in the divine sufficiency of the human being. Man, he believed, was king of the world and therefore it was degrading for him to accept another leader as greater than himself. Emerson also conceived each man as his own center of being, with the universe as the divine whole. From this conception springs the belief that institutions and customs are means of forcing man into acts unworthy of him. With regard to secular and political institutions he teaches that the state exists in order to produce the "wise men" and it ceases to exist with the appearance of the wise men.

Emerson's transcendental theory of politics is based solely on the principle of good-will. Constitutions, the system of checks and balances, all the institutions of government he abandons, as he places the foundation of the true republic on the basis of love. His claims for democracy and the equality of man rest on the belief that all men possess the divine Reason and are able to live according to its dictates. This is the only equality he claims for all men. It was Emerson's belief that when we dominate another being we are no longer in normal relations with him, since the bonds of good-will are strained. Therefore each person should be left as unrestricted as possible. However since the home is the fount of good-will, it is there that the state should originate. He expresses this belief in the poem which prefaces his *Essay on Politics*:

"When the state-house is the hearth,
Then the perfect State is come,
The republican at home."
In actual life, he bore with the state. However, he would not be coerced against his convictions.

It has been said of Emerson that
(Continued on Page 2)



Slow But Steady; Keio's Reconstruction Goes On

SAYING OF FUKUZAWA

Freedom Is Found Within Nonfreedom

WE REPEAT OURSELVES

By TSUYOSHI IKEGAMI
Keio University

(Note: The following is the speech made by Tsuyoshi Ikegami of Keio University, the first prize winner at the intercollegiate English language oratorical contest held on November 9 under the sponsorship of the Jiji Press.)

The third winter since the termination of war is about to come and it cannot be without joy when we look around and notice so many things happening, many things that would never have happened during the wartime—the return of foreign trade, preparations for the Students' International Conference, concentration of manufacturing power on peacetime products. Yes, things do look all right at a glance, but once we go a little further through the surface we notice that complaints have not become less. We always seem to be reaching out for more.

Just recall, for a minute, the state of Japan two and a half years ago. The air-raids night and day, labor services in factories, soy beans every three meals a day, and even dreaming about these in our sleep. These were hard times, but weren't we happy, on the other hand, when we gathered round our dinner table and talked about our brothers and friends at the front, or about the day when the war would be over? Did you

hear people grumbling about so many things in the train?

Then suddenly the war was over, and the so-called peace, for which we had so longed finally came. And what did we find in it? Satisfaction? No, although we may have to admit that the economic conditions have become pretty rough, no one, on the other hand, can deny the improvement in food and clothing situations. And still there seems to be something dark and gloomy behind everybody's mind, some uneasiness maybe a disgust for the life they live; a selfish life, a longing for something contradictory which they had found during the war.

What does this mean? It certainly cannot be that these people want to go back to war itself, which stands for enmity, struggle, separation and destruction. What we find there is the fact that material wealth does not entirely supersede over the spiritual wealth of mankind; that we, although influenced immensely by material wealth, can stand material short age to quite a great extent if we are able to adjust our spiritual conditions accordingly—the proof of relativity between material and spiritual conditions of mankind.

As to the betterment of the ma-
(Continued on Page 2)

College News; Student Activities, Sports, Society News

Open the Japanese-American Students Conference

The 8th Japanese-American Students Conference will be held on Nov. 28 (Fri.), 29 (Sat.), 30 (Sun.) at the Meiji University Hall. The Japanese Student 75 persons and the American Student about 40 persons will attend this meeting. Mr. Uyehara who is a chairman of the Economic Division of this conference is one of the representatives of Keio University. The schedule and subject of each division are as follows:

TIME TABLE

Nov. 28 (Fri.)
Welcome Meeting 7.00- 9.00 P.M.
Nov. 29 (Sat.)
Discussion Meeting 1.00- 4.00 P.M.
Nov. 30 (Sun.)
Discussion Meeting 9.00-11.00 A.M.
Discussion Meeting 1.00- 4.00 P.M.
Farewell Meeting 7.00-10.00 P.M.

The subject of Each Division

Economic Division—Students and Economic Problem.
Social Division—Family System.
Education Division—Extra Curricula Activities.
Religion Division—Religion in the life of the College Student.
Political Division—Working Democracy on the Campus.

Harvard Club Meeting

The Harvard club of Tokyo will meet on November 20th, Thursday at 7 p.m. in room 307, Marunouchi Building. Lt. Col. Donald R. Nugent, USMC, Chief of the CI&E Section, SCAP will discuss aspects of reeducation in Japan informally. All Harvard men and their guests are cordially invited.

Father Groot to Lecture

Father Gerard Groot, director of the Archaeological Institute of Ichikawa, will read his paper on "The Dawn of Japanese History" at the November 17 (Monday) meeting of the Asiatic Society of Japan at the Tokyo Correspondents Club.

Letters to the Editor:

In the Japanese Press.

(To the Mainichi)

A Request to a Certain Pickpocket

I boarded a Shosen Train at Kanda at about 5:30 p.m. on November 1. I got off the train at Shimbashi. Before I had taken a few steps I found that I had been robbed of my pocketbook and a small English Bible. They were in the pocket of my overcoat, and while I was on the train I constantly protected them with my hand so that they might not be stolen. I was off my guard for a moment, just as I got out of the train. I have a request to make of you, the individual who picked my pocket. The money you took from me may be a small sum to you, not enough to pay for your personal expenses. But it is very important to me. It happened to be my whole month's salary which I received that day you stole it. I am a girl student, attending a night course at Hosei University, while working in the day time at a certain public office. I have to live on that money for a month. I also have to pay for the cost of my education. In addition to money there were in the pocketbook, as you must have found out, a student's certificate, identification card, certificate of membership in a study group of China, certificate to be presented when purchasing a railway season ticket, and other things of importance to me. Now, you will probably say that you cannot return the money, now that you are a pick-pocket by profession. In that case I shall be resigned. But will you be so good as to consider returning the other things? I shall not regret the loss of the money if you learn through the bible you stole along with my pocketbook to open your inward eyes, fear God and obey God.

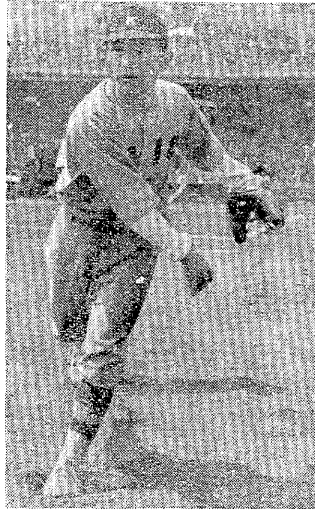
My photograph and address were on the student's certificate. I earnestly hope that you will return these things to me in any way you like.

KIN SUZULI

Minato-ku, Tokyo.

Keio Lost All-Japan Supremacy

All-Japan intercollegiate championship baseball game was held at Koshien Base-Ball Ground November 10th and 11th. The teams who had the honor of participating in this match were Keio, champion of big six univ. league, Senshu of Toto univ. league and Kansai representing Kansai league. Keio who was expected to win the supremacy lost the game with Kansai by the score of 7 to 6 at first day match. Each team had one win and one defeat by finishing three games. So the champion of All-Japan will be decided next spring.



Pitcher Iwanaka; Keio's Pride

Keio Defeats Waseda

Keio completely defeated Waseda 17-5 and 4-0 in the fall inter-versity baseball classic November 1st and 2nd. An estimated 40,000 fans saw the game. Winning these matches and at the same time with the brilliant record of 9 wins and one defeat. Keio gained championship of the big league series in this autumn. The skillful pitching of Iwanaka, who threw ten complete games, led Keio team to the victory. The Emperor's trophy was presented to catcher Kato, captain of Keio team.

Imperial Family Views Tennis

Goro Fujikura, alumnus of Keio university, flashing some of his old Davis Cup form, trimmed Fumiteru Nakano, also of Davis Cup fame, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 in the Invitational Tennis Tournament at the opening of the Palace Tennis Club which was witnessed by the Emperor, Empress and the Crown Prince.

financial statement made public.

3) Economic and Law Department is now generally opposed to it, but will make a definite answer after the publication of the school financial statement.

4) Engineering Department demands reduction of the tuition because many of the students cannot pay the tuition in full.

Student Autonomous Committee is going to investigate the opinion of the students after making detailed inquiry and making public the following points.

- Actual living condition of Keio students' life.
- Details of school finance.
- Administration policy of the school authorities.
- Donations from outside and how they are being employed.

RISING TUITION

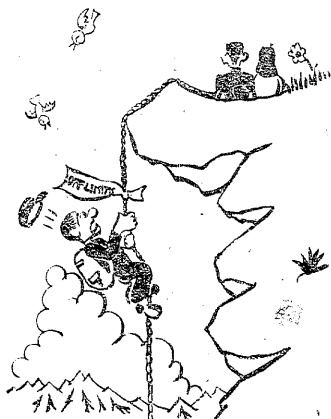
Student Autonomous Committee Wants School Authorities to Publish Financial Status

Right after the summer vacation, the increase in tuition was announced by every private school together to tide over the present financial crisis. Keio school authorities also has raised tuition.

In the science courses to 3,300 Yen and in the arts courses to 2,800 Yen (the maximum amount decided by the Private school Federation).

Student Autonomous Committee has been dissatisfied with this one-sided decision of the school authorities and is about to start a movement against it unless the school authorities make public the school financial status. Student Autonomous Committee gave the reporter the account of all that has passed as follows. Committee meeting was held in their room from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 15th.

- 1) Preparatory Course and Veterinary School deferred the decision to the next meeting because they were not informed in advance.
- 2) Medical Department complaining of its distress that 66.6 percent of the students cannot pay the new tuition, is strongly opposed to it and wishes to have the school



Off Limit Everywhere
By Sonoda

The Philosophy

(Continued from Page 1)

while he stimulates the reader he also puzzles him. He was too rooted in the Puritan morality to be other than a philosopher, even when the oncoming spirit of a new are called to him to leave behind all that was traditional. His knowledge of the world was broad, his love of beings deep. His philosophy in brief "embraced the heavens and the stock exchange," and calmly he walked where angels fear to tread.

We Repeat Ourselves

(Continued from Page 1)

terial world, many strenuous efforts are being made today, and its fruit is promised. And so, it is entirely up to us to enjoy it, by fitting in properly and making the best of it. What I mean by fitting in properly is to adjust one's desire, and making the atmosphere in which you live a cosy one.

This atmosphere is what so many people found in the past days of war and still long for. The ugly side of war, namely death, sorrow and destruction, is easier to forget, once war is over. But you do not forget the other side of it—comradeship, brotherhood, selflessness and love, and I know that we will always long for it until we get it.

Then is it impossible for us to build a world of peace under the same rule we build a world at war? As to its possibility, there must be many arguments but there is one thing that I am quite sure of, and that is, that it won't hurt a bit to try by a little more selflessness, kindness and love.

And let us remember, by the way, that as long as there is this longing for the world we have seen during the war, peace in the true sense is not yet ours. And let us also remember that nothing comes our way without our efforts to gain it. Remember! Nothing repeats itself: we repeat ourselves.

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