

COLLEGE REPORT

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Extracurricular activities have been a part of student life since the time of Plato's Academy, but during the half century between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression they swelled into elephantine proportions on every American campus. Sports had been banned in the old time college, but the educational reformers removed the prohibitions because, among other things, they believed the athletics would reduce the number and intensity of riots and rebellions and, in addition, allure the interest and financial support of alumni and legislators. They also believed that sports would clear students' minds and thus improve their intellectual concentration.

A crew race between Harvard and Yale in 1852 initiated intercollegiate athletics, and in 1858 four New England colleges organized the first athletic conference. After the Civil War baseball captured the imagination of the country and of college students, and soon thereafter football took the center of the collegiate stage.

By the end of the 19th century intercollegiate teams in a dozen sports had been organized. Meanwhile, however, the administrators and professors who had welcomed sports perceived that they had cast out the devils of riot and rebellion only to have the new devils of commercialism and hypocrisy replace them. Undergraduate interest in intellectual activities, they also observed, had improved not a whit.

FRATERNITIES boomed along with athletics and became no less troublesome. They had begun as literary societies, and some of them possessed libraries that shamed those owned by the colleges. Long before the advent of Dale Carnegie, however, the changing pattern of American life transmogrified them into clubs chiefly in-

terested in training their members in the arts of winning friends and influencing people.

Here the educational reformers — especially those associated with state universities — also misfired. They

Idolized German universities; and since German students lived around town in rented rooms, they concluded that their American counterparts should too. American undergraduates responded, however, by inventing the fraternity house.

Fraternities had much to do with the increasing emphasis upon athletics, and they also promoted extracurricular enterprises in general — student newspapers, magazines, and yearbooks; glee clubs, mandolin clubs, and dramatics; proms, house parties, and informal dances. By the 1920s, the extracurriculum, in the liberal arts colleges at least, had decisively

triumphed over the curriculum. THAT THE college was an educational institution students agreed unreservedly but they defined education quite differently from the professors of both the old school and the new. Few students had time to read Emerson; but if they had read him, they would have agreed that "a great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think." Above all else they wanted to live strenuously. They were willing to pay the custom fees and tariffs demanded by the faculty in the form of admission credits, course examinations, grades, and graduation requirements because these

admitted them to the joys of college life; but they had little interest in what professors taught. Indeed, most of them judged faculty scholarship to be pendency and the professors themselves spiritless book-readers or mildewed laboratory grubbers who had chosen the academic life because of the fore-knowledge that they could not succeed in business or in the professions. Scorning the intellectual diet proffered them by their teachers and yet highly valuing education as they perceived it, they organized and administered their own educational program—the extracurriculum. Professors, deans, and presi-

Air Force Opens New Programs

The door opened wider this week for ex-servicemen seeking enlistment in the United States Air Force with the announcement that many former soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen with skills not presently required can now enlist for retraining at Air Force technical schools.

In making the announcement, T/Sgt. Howard Pederson, Torrance Air Force recruiter, spelled out instances where persons previously ineligible can now apply for technical training in needed skills.

In the past, if an individual's job code was not listed on the Air Force's needed skill list, it rendered him immediately ineligible for enlistment. Under the new

policy this no longer applies. Determination of schools will be based on the needs of the Air Force and on individual preference.

Former servicemen or those approaching separation who were previously determined ineligible should contact Sergeant Pederson at the Air Force Recruiting office, 1616 Cabrillo Ave., for further review of status and additional information.

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