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# The CAROLINIAN

Official Publication of the Students  
of the University of San Carlos  
Cebu City, Philippines

## Editorial

### ATHLETICISM IN PHILIPPINE COLLEGES

Varsity cagers on the hardcourt, sluggers on the diamond, sprinters on the track, and other men of bronze, are all spectacular college heroes. They make big names for their schools—big advertisement.

College athletics is all very well—if it is kept within sane limits. But many Philippine colleges are making professionals out of their athletes. They do not set academic standards for the continuance of their players on their terms. So long as a player is good, nothing else matters. Let him flunk in all his subjects, let him learn nothing from the classroom, let him do all this and more, so long as he plays well. The point is not the education that he gets. It is the kind of play that he gives.

The spirit of the amateur is gone. Our Philippine college teams do not now generally differ from the teams of soft drinks and steamship and wax companies.

And the spirit of athleticism, which has replaced the spirit of the amateur, becomes readily apparent when one compares the treatment of athletes to that of people with intellectual gifts. See if there is any sense of proportion in it—find out if there is any reason. Take the case of scholarships, for instance. What is the score in it? It is: In a class of 500, in most cases, only two get scholarships—and only free tuition for the first, and half free tuition for the second. Under this set-up, a stupid athlete has infinitely better chances to continue in college than has a financially handicapped genius.

We hold no brief against athletics—amateur athletics. But we do hold a brief for justice and reason and fairness, which all point against athleticism.

Schools, we are told, are supposed to encourage and turn out intellectuals—people with plenty of brains. But what are they doing towards this end? Nothing much. In extreme cases, nothing at all.

If schools believe that good athletic teams deserve support and encouragement (we do not here pass judgment upon the wisdom or unwisdom of this belief), should they not also believe that intellectual achievements merit the same—if not more—attention? Do not topnotchers and big name writers and artists mean anything to a school, a center of learning and culture? (we are told) If the answer to these questions be negative, may God save us all!

We do not pretend to be powerful. You know we are not. We cannot implement changes by our own volition. This editorial therefore is only a statement of facts. Take it or leave it.

But we do hope that someday, when Philippine colleges shall have ceased to be cheap circuses and become real colleges, academic standards will prevail, and desserts will be given where they are due. #

M. S. G.

## JULY - AUGUST, 1959

### Contents

	Pages
<b>REGULAR COLUMNS</b>	
Carollina M. S. Go . . . . .	Inside front cover
Editorial M. S. Go . . . . .	1
The Moderator Says: Rev. Baumgartner . . . . .	Inside back cover
<b>LITERARY FEATURES</b>	
Villa's Footnote to Youth D. M. Maglalang . . . . .	2
The Plays of Three Filipino Playwrights E. V. Manuel . . . . .	4
<b>IN MEMORIAM</b>	
A Portrait of Fausto Mrs. E. Velez-Manuel . . . . .	6
Never Say Goodbye L. V. Jaramilla Fulenciano A. J. Gil . . . . .	7
Once I Had a Teacher L. Varela Paulo H. Beltran C. J. Rodriguez . . . . .	9
<b>POETRY</b>	
In Memory of Cornello Fausto J. Canizares . . . . .	12
Dark A. R. M. . . . .	13
Tempus Fugit I. de los Santos A Case of Sightlessness E. Denzing, Jr. . . . .	13
Loneliness A. Amores . . . . .	13
Dream Vision I. Doronio . . . . .	13
Students R. M. Ramos . . . . .	13
The Death of the Brown Child D. M. Maglalang . . . . .	14-15
Brown Child C. Fausto . . . . .	Back cover
<b>SHORT STORIES</b>	
The Apprehension of Things J. Canizares . . . . .	16-17
The American Nun F. Robles . . . . .	18-19
Feeling Special N. McParland . . . . .	20
<b>MISCELLANEA</b>	
Faculty-Alumni Glee Club E. Yap A New Corner in USC—Linguistics Rev. E. Verstraeten, S.V.D. . . . .	22
23	
Mission Year . . . . .	24
Joey Returns F. Fernandez . . . . .	25
Slides Aside A. Amores . . . . .	25
<b>REGULAR SECTIONS</b>	
News F. Fernandez . . . . .	26-27
Sports R. Justiniani . . . . .	28-29
ROTC F. Fernandez . . . . .	30-31
<b>SCIENCE</b>	
Listen, Palawan Is Calling J. Jumalon . . . . .	32-33
The Science Library A. Rile . . . . .	35
<b>SECCION CASTELLANA</b>	
<b>WIKANG PILIPINO</b>	
<b>PICTORIALS</b> . . . . . Center spread	