"ALL THE RUNNING WE CAN DO!"—CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR ALUMNI*

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"The man who stands still today is actually slipping backward" chides the abstract covered booklet offered to more than ten thousand University of Wisconsin alumni in the Milwaukee area. "Learning for Living" is the theme of the continuing education program provided late afternoons and evenings for adults. More than one hundred courses each semester are listed to entice the adult to continue to use his brain power.

Most alumni recognize the validity of the admonition of the Dean of Extension at the University of California, Dr. Paul Sheats, who warns, "Learn or Perish" (Time, February 2, 1962). The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee and the Extension Division remind the adult, "Every day brings new advances in scientific and social theories, and each of us to keep pace must do quite a bit of educational running." One of our major objectives in the adult program is to help alumni learn of the new developments in their respective fields. Slowly there is the recognition of the essentiality for educating adults to insure the security, productivity, and adaptability of the individual to a society continually changing. For example, a recent class entitled, "The Utilization of Radio Isotopes in Medical Radiology," was taught by a group of distinguished scientists; and it drew physicians, radiologists, and medical technicians, all trying to keep up with advances in the field. Professor Richard John, Coordinator of Commerce Extension programs, developed a course, "Accounting for Managers"; of the 21 enrolled, 20 were college graduates, but 17 had never before attended an evening adult class.

Wisconsinites are fortunate for the vision of President Charles R. Van Hise, Louis E. Reber, William H. Lighty, and Frederick Jackson Turner, all of whom had a realization that adult education is an imperative for modern man. As early as 1904 Van Hise proclaimed, "I shall not rest content until the beneficent influences of the great University of Wisconsin are made available to the people of the state." The University Extension Division was the outgrowth of his organizational genius, which resulted from the prodding of

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Dr. Charles McCarthy, that great friend of libraries and adult education. The once “Cow College,” as recently described so picturesquely by President Elvehjem has become one of the world leaders in continuing education. The University can be justly proud of the search, and public service—the diffusion of knowledge to the people third leg of the milking stool of higher education—teaching, re-
of the state.

STUDY OF ALUMNI EDUCATION

There has been far too little study of alumni education. In a small volume “New Directions for Alumni: Continuing Education for the College Graduate” Ernest E. McMahon, Dean of University College of Rutgers describes the history of alumni education and many of the programs now being carried on by institutions of higher learning. His concern is with the extent to which American colleges and universities provide educational resources to aid the alumnus to continue his personal, political, philosophical, and social growth.1

As early as 1917 President Alexander Meiklejohn of Amherst College made a plea for a closer relationship between the college and its graduates. Meiklejohn stated that the real test of a graduate’s loyalty is that of membership in a college community. “If the college has given itself up to the pursuit of knowledge and appreciation, philosophic, literary, scientific, humanistic, no man who has ceased from that pursuit is in any genuine sense a member of the college community. I sometimes think that the only real test of our teaching is that of the extent to which pupils continue to study our subjects after they leave us ... I am dreaming of the college community as a body of thousands of men—teachers, graduates, undergraduates—all of whom are engaged in the same intellectual operation, in the same great enterprise of the mind.”2

In 1956 a survey was made among seven hundred members of the American Alumni Council by Robert J. Ahrens. Only 267 institutions replied. Seventy-two institutions reported current or past programs of continuing education among alumni, and 195 replied that they did not have nor had they ever had such a program. Sixteen reported the programs as unsuccessful, while forty-four rated their efforts as successful. Ahrens found that the highest percentage of continuing education programs was carried on by private women’s colleges.3

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1 Ernest E. McMahon, New Directions for Alumni, Published by the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1969, 52 pp.
Alumni education is not new to the University of Wisconsin. Although President Ernest Martin Hopkins of Dartmouth is generally credited with the first call for alumni education in 1916, the records of the Wisconsin Alumnus show that William H. Lighty, organizer of the Correspondence Study Department of the University of Wisconsin Extension Division, was urging alumni to continue their education as far back as December, 1907. Lighty wrote enthusiastically of the “NEW UNIVERSITY EXTENSION” which he had helped organize with the help of Frank A. Hutchins and Dr. Charles McCarthy. Lighty reminded alumni that at that time there had been organized one hundred and seventy-five courses offered by correspondence instruction, taught by fifty-eight professors of the University representing twenty-five departments. As early as 1907 non-degree programs were offered alumni. Lighty wrote: “Some special post-graduate work is also offered not for university credit purposes, but as a practical means of keeping abreast of the times in a most effective way through contact with the scholar and specialist.” A special course was then being organized for physicians on “Immunity and Infection”. “Thus,” he says, “the practitioner may be effectively in touch with the newer and established results of research that apply to medical practice.”

So far as I can find, Lighty was the first in the United States to promote alumni education, and his urging of continuing education was perpetual; his motto until his dying day at 93 was, “Keep abreast of the times.”

Today, however, at the University of Wisconsin new programs are being developed especially for alumni. A program organized recently is the Summer Alumni Seminar now to be offered both on the Madison and Milwaukee campuses. Under the able leadership of Dr. Robert Schacht, a specialist on residential adult education, a program of liberal adult education has gained national recognition for the University of Wisconsin. This summer the themes for the six one-week seminars in Madison are “Scientists at Work at Wisconsin,” “The Future of Cities and Metropolitan Areas,” “The Nature of Marxism,” “The Exploration of the Universe,” “Africa: A Continent in Transition” and “Political Power in America”.

In Milwaukee, a new residential seminar will be held at spacious Marietta House on the Kenwood Campus near Lake Michigan. Leading scholars will discuss their concern over the immersion of the individual in a stream of conformity under the title, “The Role of the Individual in Today’s Mass Society.” A week will be spent in the residential seminar, not too different from the format of the Danish Folk School, where persons gather for consideration of problems.

confronting their contemporary society. Living in, there will be lectures and discussion in history, economics, and sociology, dealing with the conditions which produced the kind of society with which alumni come face to face today. Through selected readings and group participation, alumni will examine certain basic concepts of individualism, such as self-reliance and self-assertion, and try to determine whether the loss of these values is an inevitable consequence of our societal and economic systems. Guest lecturers include Dr. Earl S. Johnson, Visiting Professor of Secondary Education, The University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; Dr. Warren L. Susman, Assistant Professor of History, Rutgers University and Dr. Herbert F. Klingman, Director of the Division of Commerce and Professor of Commerce UW–M. Visitations will be made to interesting places in Milwaukee during the evening hours.

**OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Unlike yesteryears, alumni today have numerous rich programs from which to choose. Study-travel, institutes, conferences, evening classes and correspondence study, all are available through Extension Centers and a statewide service of University Extension. Radio and television add numerous opportunities for continuous learning. The Milwaukee program, like the other adult programs throughout the state, is designed to aid citizens in their pursuit of intellectual interests and in the acquiring of skills necessary for personal achievement and progress. Through the “Learning for Living” program, new theories in the physical sciences, new methods in the arts, and new thought in the social sciences are brought to the greater Metropolitan Milwaukee community. Through University Extension the total resources of the University are made available to the citizens of the state.

It is never too late to learn! Longfellow reminds us:

>`Ah! Nothing is too late
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate,
Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles
Wrote his grand Oedipus, and Simonides
Bore off the prize of verse from his comperees,
When each had numbered more than fourscore years.”`

And today, fellow holders of sheepskins, we must admit, it takes all the running we can do to stay in the same place!