

Pratt's letter about Order Form lecture.

Letter from Pratt.  
regarding the  
"Philosophy of Order Form"<sup>s</sup>

Tapedo Florida, Atlantic Fleet,  
N.S. Dixie

Thursday Aug 14<sup>th</sup>.

(1913)

Dear Captain Little,

It is a bit difficult at first to make a correct estimate of a lecture like yours.

But I have been thinking over the character and condition of the times and the men to whom it was addressed. The more I think of it, the more fully am I impressed with the lesson it conveys.

The War College and its followers are at the turn of the roads, before us somewhere lies the correct way, but that way is not too clear to all, neither is it entirely free from dangers. It is well that one the best fitted of all the lovers of the College and what it stands for - "Truth" - should speak to the younger generation coming on.

There is no one man at the College, nor has there been one, whose life is so intimately wrapped up in its work.

For years you have culled the truths here and there, gleaning them in a life time of experiences. Yesterday you gave us the benefit of that experience boiled down in a few simple natural truths.

Had any one else attempted to deliver that same lecture I would have detected the false note in it, and it would not have reached the mark as yours did. No one there could give it the breadth of your view point. To me it was the lesson of the past, to guide us in the future. Not only did it point, but it bid us beware of false Gods.

The time was ripe for it, and the place fitting. Had it been delivered

a year or two earlier, it would not have come home with the telling force it did,

I feel that very few of those present are as yet thoroughly in touch with the underlying motif of your lecture, but they will absorb it. Your lecture is doctrine and, simple as it appears, I place it as the best I have heard.

It will live when time and conditions have buried in forgetfulness other more locally intense lectures. That is the beauty of it, the simple truthful atmosphere and natural lesson it conveys.

I have often said that all I learned of tactics I learned from you, that is Greek to the average man, for he immediately seeks for some one point upon which to focus the attention. Not so, He could never understand what I mean.

The "parts" I am somewhat familiar with and, thanks to study & the desire to continue the good work, I hope to be able to know more and more of their various functions. But the relation of the "part" to the "whole", and the broad view point I learned from you,

In every shade of tactics, I learned, rather am only beginning, to follow the thread of thought from its local birth place, through to the end, where it forms a "part" of the "whole".

And so I call your lecture doctrine a leaf out of the book of life, freely given to be absorbed into the lives of others..

And if you will I shall be glad if you personally send me a copy of your lecture, It is refreshing sometimes to turn to the simple definitions when you wish to

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straighten out the tangles and snarls  
that man forces his life into,

Most sincerely yours

189 W.V. Pratt.