

# The Feminist VIEWPOINT

## *This Time It Is Wadleigh*

**H**ARLEM is not vastly different from any other residential community in Greater New York. It is pregnant with good and bad, either and both depending upon who views them and how interested the viewer is in minority racial groups. Other sections of the city, too, are similarly constituted. Like us, they have their rich middle class and poor; well and sick; energetic and lazy; law-abiding and law-breaking; clean and filthy; stum areas and overcrowded living quarters.

Yet, for some inexplicable reason the trend is to pass over or comment on lightly about other sections of the city, but always play up sky-high everything unfavorable about Harlem, its residents and their habits.

IT IS the speech made by Dr. John L. Tildsley, retired associate superintendent of schools, at a luncheon in Hotel Astor last Saturday that makes many Harlemites resentful. The learned man was one of the principal speakers at the closing of a week's celebration of Wadleigh High School's fortieth anniversary.

The learned man had this to say, in part: "The students have to pass through a neighborhood where gentlewomen do not like to pass."

Although Dr. Tildsley made an earnest plea for a new site for the school, at the same time he went out of his way to give Harlem a black eye. There are undesirable conditions near any and every school in this city. Wadleigh is no exception, nor is it any more affected by these conditions than is any other school. Young girls with proper home and school training are not easily swayed by conditions that obtain in a given community. There's a little bit of bad and daring in everybody, even gentlewomen, and it is possible to survive the rugged tests.

A NEW Wadleigh building is needed. As to the site for this building, we must consider many other things. If putting the building on the present site means definitely redistricting Harlem so that all or mostly Negro girls will go there, then no new building should be constructed there with that purpose in mind.

One likes to be permitted to go to a school that offers the course that best seems to suit one's personal purpose and fitness. So far, Wadleigh has held to the cultural or general course and it has turned out some mighty fine young women. If ever the trend at Wadleigh is to be steered into industrial lines, just because Negroes populate the territory in which the school happens to be located, then we, the residents, should start protesting now. In fact we should have started long ago to curb some of the industrial trends in the local junior high schools.

DR. TILDSLEY and some of the other influential educators and business men of this great city ought to feel about this education situation the same way that Miss Lucille Spence, one of the Wadleigh teachers, expresses herself: "If the races are to live together after maturity, they should, as children go to school together."

The City of New York needs more and better high schools, but it does not need segregated institutions. Let us have a new Wadleigh here or any place else in the city that may be better suited for the building, but let us not be restricted to going there.—T. E. B.