Scholar Calls For 'Divine Discontent'

By ROY LOWEY-BALL

"American education is second to none to any country in the world," declared Henri M. Peyre, noted authority on European literature. Mr. Peyre, a French Legion of Honor recipient, commented on a wide range of American achievements and failures last Friday afternoon at the Physics Amphitheater.

Peyre stated that America has overcome a problem no other country in the world possessed: education of a "heterogeneous" mass of people.

THE YALE professor stressed the need for a "critical spirit" in American youth. "Let us be nothing if not critical," he said. "Perhaps our greatest failure (is that) we have not trained the critical spirit enough."

"Ever since Sputnik we have had a complex of fear and inferiority. There is an urgency here, that right now... we must act to change the future... Obviously Americans are not content," Peyre noted.

Professor Peyre, now a citizen of this country, stated that Americans must re-examine subjects and methods, strive for quality, redefine goals, and train more leaders with excellence.

HE STRESSED the fact that there is a "void" in Americans' lives: "Family ties are looser, security is very important in America. I believe there is a void created by American moves... Old-fashioned truisms are gone. Youth in college is... distinguished. It would take very little for the American youth to become radical."

"Facts have to be interpreted qualitatively, not quantitatively... the important thing is to reach conclusions and make value judgments," added Peyre.

The scholar spoke out against the "Babel of Specialization" and conformity: "We have to have rebels and divine discontent. Rebels are the inventive ones."

HENRI PEYRE

"...there is an urgency here..."