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SEX AND RELIGION

One of the most important tasks facing the incoming Executive is to approach the Professorial Board in an endeavour to persuade them to remove the ban on the discussion of sex and religion. No doubt the Professorial Board were prompted by the highest motives when they placed this ban upon us, but we feel, not merely that we are deserving of greater confidence in our intelligence, but that it is definitely wrong to restrict our freedom of speech in this way.

Freedom is a fundamental element of truth, and there are no two aspects of contemporary life which require freedom and truth more urgently than do sex and religion. These two things, which may call forth the highest emotional qualities of which man is capable, are at the root of many of his difficulties; and this because half-a-dozen generations have entertained the notion that sex is indecent and religion embarrassingly personal. These things are personal, vitally so, but it is possible to discuss them openly without in any way infringing their personal rights. The generations that have considered and attacked them surreptitiously, in the darkness, have merely developed a scale of false values that deeply discolours their personal aspect.

Weighed in this scale of values a man, who is both high principled and intellectually great, may be branded as immoral if, in the purely personal sphere of his sexual experience, he has violated an artificial code of conventions. Had his shortcomings been avarice, cruelty, conceit and snobbishness he would probably have been a pillar of society, and a much-respected man. It is by intelligent and open discussion that this social mal-adjustment will in time be corrected.

Religion, in the same scale of false values, is now little better than a superstition. The generation that has gone before us is clinging desperately to a belief in which they have lost faith, and they are afraid that if religion is shaken out of the dust that has been obscuring it for centuries there will be nothing left for them to cling to. The idea that intelligent discussion might develop a faith that does not require, but give, support in the midst of Twentieth Century chaos, is a factor that they do not appear to have considered; and yet, without intelligent discussion, it is difficult to see how religion can hope to win the difficult battle she is fighting to-day against doubt, disillusionment and science.

The reluctance to discuss these matters must be overcome, and there is no better place to begin the campaign than in the Universities. In some parts of the world it is already begun, and in just this way. It is time that it was begun at Victoria College.

To say that we are too young to discuss these things is not a reason at all. It is the type of excuse with which parents dismiss to their children things which they do not understand themselves. In the life of the average man, religion first exerts its influence in his childhood, sex when he is a boy, and there is no time when he may discuss them with greater profit than when he is at the University. His intelligence is sufficiently developed for him to appreciate the significance of what he is talking about, and he is young enough to apply anything he may learn. People have to face problems of sex and religion before they leave secondary school, and it is difficult to see what a man in his dotage has to gain by discussing them.

Nobody at the University wishes to set himself up as an authority on these subjects, nor do we wish to discuss them so that we lay down immature canons concerning them. We wish to discuss them because we believe that so long as they are hidden away in a dark cupboard of meaningless conventions men and women will continue to blunder through life making mistakes that knowledge and understanding could rectify.

There seems to be an uneasy feeling among the powers that be that we are seeking for a public platform from which to proclaim that in chastity and atheism would be desirable hall-marks of society, an idea that is tantamount to accusing us of criminal insanity. Men and women who have lived all their lives believing that sex and religion must be discussed in reticent whispers if they are to be discussed at all, seem to find difficulty in understanding that we, who cannot accept this belief, wish not blindly to destroy it, but thinking to build something better in its place.

There are those who ask: Might not as much or more be achieved through the medium of private discussion? The answer to that is: No. We are crusading for a full recognition of these things by the conscious spirit of right. If we achieve nothing better than a half-hearted and begrudged admission of what we believe, we shall have failed. We must tear down completely the curtain that is obscuring sex and religion, for the world that we would like to live in will be built, not with slight improvements, but with radical reforms.

—K.M.J.

WHAT IS AN EXECUTIVE?

The annual election of officers for the Executive of our Association is upon us once again.

Let our first word be one of thanks to the retiring Executive for the work they have done during the past twelve months. Their period of office has fortunately been almost entirely unmarked by internal disputes, but has, on the other hand, been notable for the effectiveness with which they have tackled the questions facing the Students at V.U.C., from the provision of a Union Building to the Chinese Student Fund. Their spirit of toleration in academic affairs is worthy of commendation, and leaves for their successors an attitude worthy of emulation.

The voting at our elections has in the past not been regarded as a duty, so that returns show that, generally, less than 50% of those eligible register a vote. This is no credit to the students of V.U.C. If we display apathy in our own affairs, it says little for our qualifications to participate in civic or national elections later.

Let us hope that at least 60% of V.U.C. can be found this year to possess the time, energy, and power of selection to place a dozen or so crosses on two or three sheets of paper, and let us hope that the selection will result in the election of an Executive which has qualities not merely of industry and efficiency but of leadership in social and intellectual affairs.

—A.H.S.

NEW SPEAKERS' DEBATE FACTS.

On Thursday night thirty people heard the question of private enterprise thrashed out by thirteen speakers.

The affirmative considered mainly the waste due to competition under private enterprise. They also held such a system of greed unchristian, since national prosperity meant the prosperity of the majority of the nation's people, private enterprise, with its accompanying accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few was opposed to national prosperity.

The negative pointed out that competition is the life of trade, brought out the good in man, and was the only means of ensuring national prosperity. Both sides wrangled over such irrelevantities as socialism, state control, and even the efficiency of the civil service.

The Judge, Miss M. Shortall, advised speakers to stand up straight and avoid slang. They should be more convincing, and would not be so by being half-apologetic. If he has not a ready retort to an interjection, the speaker should ignore it. Notes should be left behind. Too many speakers had learnt their speeches off by heart. Voting on the motion was: For 17, against 10. —P.A.O.

IMPRESSIONS.

An interesting, immature, and highly entertaining conversation between four youngsters, assisted by irrelevant exclamations from a few on-lookers, constituted the New Speakers' Debate held last Thursday.

"Salient" was delighted at the ridiculous points of order, the earnestness of some of the speakers, and the benign face of the chairman. We went out singing to ourselves.

"We search for truth
With phrases true
And bad philosophy."

In a debate on the merits and demerits of private enterprise, Russia was mentioned only once. And that in an interjection.

The gulf that separated the debate from the regular Gyn. debates seemed bottomless. To think of one and then the other was like passing from Hell to Helicon.

There must be something in a University education if it can bridge that gulf. —R.L.M.

THRILLS AND CHILLS

We really were very agreeably surprised at the Dramatic Club's play-reading, "The Cat and the Canary."

Because it's perhaps the most unsuitable play for reading ever written. There are so many panels, corpses, monsters, and screams that have to be left to the imagination.

Nevertheless, it was one of the best play-readings ever presented at V.U.C., and reflected great credit on both actors and producers alike. The atmosphere in the gym was quite electric at times. And we didn't know that Hebe Maysnor had it in her.

The fact that "Salient" looked behind a few times going down Boulecott Steps is a remarkable tribute to a splendid show.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

"Salient" was asked to report the last important meeting of the present Executive, but found neither anything interesting nor a vacant chair.

The agenda was most uninspiring. Numerous reports — Publications, Common Room, Building Fund, Records, and Capping—were received, and the Secretary was instructed to write numerous letters thanking the people responsible.

The Free Discussions Club, at present obsolescent, was disaffiliated and rendered obsolete. R.I.P.

College Blues were awarded as follows:—

- Athletics.—J. P. Eastwood, C. V. Adams, D. R. Scrynggeour, E. H. Miller, E. M. Irving, H. G. Bowyer.
- Boxing.—K. Coveney, W. A. Armstrong, C. Trillo.
- Cricket.—T. A. Harpur, P. A. Ongley, J. B. Stephenson, P. D. Wilson.
- Howing.—R. P. Hansen, G. C. Broad, A. R. Burge, J. B. Bullock, N. M. Rose.
- Shooting.—D. H. K. Ross, T. R. C. Muir, H. T. G. Olive.
- Swimming.—Miss S. E. Hefford, F. D. O'Flynn, R. L. Meek.
- Tennis.—R. McL. Ferkins, N. A. Morrison, B. M. O'Connor, J. Hartley, F. H. Renouf; Misses F. E. MacLean, P. M. P. Edwards, K. Pears, L. Mete-Kingi.

"Salient" offers its congratulations to the recipients of this honour. As a matter of fact, the only enlightening item on a very dull programme was a resolution to the effect that an electric heater is to be provided for the "Salient" room.

Again, our age is highly educated; There is no lie our children cannot read.

Rugby Disappointment

On the result of Saturday's vital game with Eastbourne hung our chance of promotion to the First Division. To the disappointment of 'Varsity's many supporters, the team went down to narrow defeat, 3-5, in a game of lost opportunities.

The defeat was not due to any lapse of form, as both backs and forwards played one of their best games to date. Without being unsporting, it can be said that 'Varsity were unfortunate to lose as they spent the major part of the game on attack, doing everything but score. A reliable goal-kicker might have won the game as many penalties were awarded in easy positions but failed to bring points. It must in fairness be said, however, that the wet conditions made accurate kicking difficult.

THE FORWARDS.

The forwards went very well as a pack, playing the right game for the day, and gained much ground with sweeping, dribbling rushes. Thomas, Burke and McNeil were prominent, and Blacker played a very good game, easily his best this season. Burke out-hooked the opposition and gave the backs plenty of ball, but the rain and mud made handling difficult.

BACKS PLAY WELL.

Larkin at half and Wild at first five-eighths sharpened up the attack, getting the back line moving briskly. Larkin gave good service from the scrum and is developing into a sound half-back.

Wild played his usual fine game and scored 'Varsity's only try after one of his brilliant swerving runs. Byers also showed penetrative ability and made several bursts through the opposition.

The three-quarters were triers all day, but, in the atrocious weather conditions, did not receive many chances.

Kissel at full-back fielded the grey ball magnificently and gave a fine display.

TRAMPING Wet Sunday

Typical Wellington week-end weather probably frightened away several would-be trampers and trampettes from the Sunday trip to Belmont; however about a dozen hearty lads and lasses were present when the bus left. The "Deputy Leader" and a "Guide" (in red shorts) were collected at Lower Hut and the party began its arduous ascent of the mountain. Having struggled up a road and through a few paddocks, they at last reached the trig. A halt was called to await two stragglers who arrived almost at the summit by motor. A fine view of Wellington, Hutt Valley, etc., was obtained as per syllabus. Dark clouds in the south suggested rain, so the party moved down a spur to the Horokiwi Stream and enjoyed a well-merited meal, including tea brewed by Mr. Watson-Munro in his own imitable style. After lunch a campfire was made and although darkness was lacking, old and new extrav. songs were sung with gusto.

Thence came the trek up a steep ridge, on to the Horokiwi Road. During this part of the trip heavy rain was encountered, but with the aid of ground sheets, sleeping bags, and other odds and ends, the party remained tolerably dry. The rain cleared and great fun was had splashing along the road and admiring the splendid view. Straits of Gilbert and Sullivan were once again heard, so the party made off for Putone and caught a convenient bus home.

TABLE TENNIS PROGRESS

The Club, having just procured two new tables and new equipment, will soon be able to commence its activities in earnest. Club nights will probably be on Tuesdays and Saturdays, when balls will be provided by the Club. On all other occasions members will be expected to provide bats and balls.

Good table tennis is not possible on bad tables. If the tables are scratched and chipped, a good standard will be hard to attain. Therefore, students, treat the tables with care.

It is seldom that an All Black Rugby team contains two men who are also New Zealand representative cricketers. In W. Carson and E. Tindill the 1938 All Blacks have two very fine all-round sportsmen. Probably the finest cricketer-footballer in the British Empire to-day is the South African, H. G. Owen-Smith. A tower of strength in the South African cricket team that toured England (a century-maker in a Test), he later went to Oxford, won a boxing blue, and later captained England at Rugby. He played at full-back.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY Confidence Needed

The Victoria College women's hockey team is suffering from a grave inferiority complex, which is spoiling their play. There is no reason for them to go to Dunedin next month convinced that they will be defeated.

There are three things that some of the less experienced players could bear in mind with profit. They are:

1. Keep your position.
2. Hockey requires more concentration than a game of chess. Concentrate on the ball from the first bully to the last whistle, no matter what part of the field the play is in.
3. Never hang back. Even if there is not a chance of your getting the ball, your opponent will have something to worry about if you try to get it.

IMPROVED FORM.

The game which 'Varsity played against Ponoke on Saturday was one of their best to date. Although the score was against them, the ball was often in 'Varsity's circle. By the end of the season the forward line will probably have overcome the regrettable tendency to fumble with the ball in the circle, and the team will surprise themselves by winning a game. Helen Christie, in the goal, and Joan Bacon and Betty Rider, the full-backs, played well. They did not receive as much support as they should have done from the halves, who are not quick enough in getting back after the ball has been in their own circle. Two of Ponoke's goals were scored after the ball had been cleared from 'Varsity's circle into a long unprotected area, the three halves being still on the edge of the circle. 'Varsity's one goal was scored by Geraldine Kean, who played a good game. The forward line combined better than usual and their improved passing to the right was the reason why they got the ball down the field as often as they did.

THE TOURNAMENT TEAM.

The team going to Dunedin will consist of:

Helen Christie, goal-keeper, who has played well during the season. When she has developed her kick, which she is doing rapidly, she will be excellent.

Joan Bacon, right full-back, a New Zealand blue. Joan is one of the most reliable players in the team. She plays good hockey and has a useful hard hit.

Betty Rider, left full-back, is a keen and promising player. She should develop her stick work and hit harder.

Ruth Crombie, right half, can get the ball but should learn to pass it to the right wing. Try holding your stick a little lower down. Ruth, and keep in position.

Nancy Bayfield, centre half, a New Zealand blue. Nancy is one of the mainstays of the team and plays a good game in this difficult position.

Barbara Thompson, left half, is not playing regularly this season, but played well last year.

Florence Chivers, right wing, plays well when she gets the ball, passing to the right being one of the finer points of hockey that the forward line is still mastering. She should hit harder when she centres.

Geraldine Kean, right inner, an experienced and reliable player. If she hit harder in the circle she would score more goals.

Susie Sanders, centre forward. Another potential goal scorer, she hits hard and her stickwork is good. Pass to the right, Susie.

Betty Stubbs, left inner, plays very promising hockey for so inexperienced a player. Read some books on the subject, Betty.

Irene O'Donnell, left wing, has improved rapidly during the season. She takes the ball up well, but should centre sooner and harder.

Mary Frankish, emergency, could throw herself into the game with a little more enthusiasm. She has yet to strike her best form.

A large muster of players listened to A. P. O'Shea, Rugby Club Captain, on Wednesday night in the Gym, when he drew spirited attention to the need for improvement in club spirit in certain directions. Players who fail to notify anybody that they are unavailable were singled out for special mention. That the teams are not doing as well as they should is evident, and it behoves Club officials to take stock of the position. Frank Kilby was present by invitation and later gave the half-backs some useful advice.

Discretion is an inability to discern basic causes.

I can't imagine what the Duke of Wellington Would say about the music of Duke Ellington.

WHITHER? (Continued from page 1)

There were other speakers, notably Professor Sir Bernard Pares of London University, whose principal theme was the broadening of the syllabus. As he said, you cannot teach a language if you do not also teach its country's history; and Dr. Lincoln Ralphs, lately President of the N.U.S., and a lecturer at the University of Sheffield, who had many finely phrased things to say. He wanted a vigorous discontent for the educational system, which under modern conditions he regards as a charity suffering from all the defects of a charity. He was very concerned at suggestions which had been made that attendance at lectures should be made optional, his view being that if this were an established fact lecturers would tend to become entertainers—remembering my own University, I wondered if this were not already so!

CHARITY AT HOME!

(This article will be concluded in the next issue.)

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