

Salient

An Organ of Student Opinion at Victoria College, Wellington, N.Z.

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CAPITAL'S NEW MESSIAH

Oh, Dear, What Can The Batterbee

This time last year, the country was just beginning to wake up to the fact that there would be an election in a few months. Vested interests were happy, for they believed that they had a figure-head capable of winning popular support. Indeed, the sun of capitalistic fervour shone from the rubicund countenance of Mr. Adam Hamilton, and all was going to be well for the powers that be. But then there was the election campaign, and a few doubts began to impinge themselves upon the clear horizon of Reactionary hopes, when he was compared with Mr. Savage upon the political stage. The election removed all these doubts and the press thought it expedient to soft-pedal Mr. Hamilton. The powers that be were very glum for a while, but soon a new hope was born, and Mr. Hamilton's mana was transferred to a still unknown personage who was going to come and act as "deus ex machina" for the vested interests of this land. "Wait till Sir Harry Batterbee comes," was the new cry of hope wrung from the tortured lips of harried capitalists.

Sir Harry, one gathered, was going to tell Mr. Savage precisely where he (Mr. Savage) got off. He had come, one was informed, as a representative of the English investor; he was going to keep those confounded socialists from interfering with international finances, and show them that the Bank of England could still run the Empire to its own satisfaction—in other words, to frustrate one of the most spirited and advanced democracies in the world, to revoke the mandate of the people of New Zealand given to the Labour Government last year. That was the modest programme mapped out for Sir Harry by the disgruntled opposition. Well, he will have to be a pretty powerful representative if he can carry it through.

STONEWALLING

"Salient" was cordially greeted by the High Commissioner, who made some polite conversation while offering him a cigarette and a seat. When this was over, "Salient" opened fire with a question about how the outside world regards our social experiments.

"O dear," said Sir Harry, "I'm afraid I couldn't possibly answer that; would you please read the rest of your questions?"

"Salient" reeled off a few of the less pertinent ones he had in mind but each was greeted with a shake of the head.

"No, I could not answer any question of a political nature," he said. "You see, I am a civil servant, and cannot make any public statement on any political subject."

This knocked "Salient" back a bit for all the questions he had intended to ask were of a decidedly political nature. But Sir Harry came nobly to the rescue with the following statement.

BENEFICENT INTEREST

"I am most anxious to see New Zealand and New Zealanders, and to meet all sections of the community; those in farming, commerce, the professions, public service and other walks of life, in fact, to learn for myself the interests, outlook and ideas of the people of New Zealand." Sir Harry spoke beautifully and gave one the impression that he had the words already framed in his mind with which to express his purpose. He has a very fine voice and uses it magnificently.

In answer to a question he said: "I am most struck by the resemblance between New Zealanders and those of the home-land in their ways of life and looking at things; you are a young nation and are working with the enthusiasm of a young nation."

PURPOSE IN LIFE

His present job was the subject of the next question but he had that nicely on tap.

"My job is to be an additional channel of communication to supplement the information transmitted through the ordinary channels; to explain the reasons of the United Kingdom Government in making some

communication, the object they have in view and the general purpose of their policy, to give as it were, the background and atmosphere of the official communication. In a word, it is the job of a High Commissioner to interpret the mind of one government to another. A High Commissioner has the wider duty also of trying to interpret the mind of one people to another, to do his best to get the peoples of the countries better acquainted and to strengthen the bond of sympathy and understanding which is the basis of the British Commonwealth. The British Commonwealth way of doing things is to reach agreement by negotiation and discussion; you must have a person to effect that personal contact. You will never get agreement by writing or telegraphing one another; it is only by getting around a table and understanding the other fellow's ideas and point of view that agreement can be reached. I am doing here what Mr. Jordan is doing in London."

EXERCISING PRESSURE?

Sir Harry impresses one as being a man of culture and discretion, but nervous and always on his guard. He seemed to emphasise this statement of his duties so as to deny in advance the rumours of his real significance which are everywhere. It is impossible to form any clear opinion of the truth of these rumours by contact with the man, but it seems extremely natural that the English investors should decide to exert pressure upon our democracy, and if someone has been sent, why not Sir Harry? If this is the case, Sir Harry's task will not be easy, for here is defiance of the principles of our conservative pioneer forbears, as well as of our progressive present-day Government. We do not think that citizens of this nation will tamely surrender their patrimony of freedom and self-determination, nor do we suppose that a financial detour imposed from overseas will be, or can be, disguised to such an extent as to be palatable to any Democrat, be he Arch-Tory or Communist.

We welcome Sir Harry Batterbee as a messenger of goodwill from England, and we trust that New Zealand will be left alone to work out her own destiny, untrammelled by the strangling bonds of an obsolete and unsound financial system.—D.C.

EXECUTIVE

Two deputations enlivened proceedings at Monday's Executive Meeting—the first from the Glee Club in quest of a piano, the second from T.C. in search of reduction of the Students' Assn. fee levied on Training College students. Members of the Exec. looked wise and asked questions, but neither cause was dealt with there and then. The old argument of Training College v. Varsity was broached and commented on in no uncertain terms by Ron Corkill. President Edgley had to call the meeting to order.

(Continued on column 3)

HIT. and NEV.

The Gym. on Friday night was packed by an audience obviously waiting to be exhorted, antagonised and stirred on the very topical questions of Chamberlain and world peace; but, despite the excellent audience, there was a very definite tameness in discussion during the first half of the evening.

Familiar arguments were aired on both sides, which was natural enough in a debate limited principally to Munich and its consequences. Members of the affirmative differed only in the shades of black and brown with which they painted the Premier. You could take your choice of him as a catspaw, a strategist manoeuvring the two great powers of Fascism and Socialism into a position in which they could be played off against each other; or a man who, primarily an economist, would fight mightily fast if England's oil interests were threatened.

IS THIS PEACE?

Mr. Aimers suggested supporting the League and collective security. Mr. Saker and a second and rather nervous Mr. MacDonald, were very earnestly in favour of disarmament. "To maintain peace we allow Hitler to override Europe," remarked Mr. Perry, in his sensible and well formulated speech, "but is this peace?" One by one the European victims of a policy of appeasement were enumerated and a growing urgency noted among speakers for something to be done to stop further aggression. It was interesting to note that even among a body strongly in favour of pacifism, there is a growing doubt as to its genuine efficacy. Though no one actually faced the question of whether England would fight if Herr Hitler proved adamant, all asserting that he was simply in need of a good frightening, the note of dissatisfaction with half-way measures was strongly apparent.

THE ONLY POSSIBLE?

Leading the opposition, Mr. Braybrooke's lucid argument endeavoured to show that constant retreat from aggressor nations was Britain's only possible policy, since, as a result of earlier foreign policies, she was totally unprepared for war. Chamberlain, he said, was unable to make a show of force, because he had nothing to back it with. Mr. McGavin thought that until the injustices suffered by the German people during the war have been relieved we cannot say "No" to Hitler—though one is tempted to question whether the point at which redress is complete is to be determined by the Führer himself. Mr. Murphy, an easy and promising speaker, supported the current policy of compromise, pointing out that we have nothing to lose and everything to gain by postponing a war which, if we tread delicately, may never eventuate.

However, the sympathies of the meeting were obviously with the affirmative, though the negative was treated with a most unusual courtesy, and the motion was carried. Professor Lipson, in his judging, placed first Mr. Meek, who had perpetrated a well-mannered and subtly humorous attack on Mr. Chamberlain, with an excellent climax, in which the Premier was delicately anathematised, all in the very nicest way. Second was Mr. Aimers, commended as a forcible speaker of great sincerity, and third Mr. Scotney. Also commended were Messrs. Perry, Braybrooke, Edgley and McCulloch. There were no female speakers.

—K.R.

(Continued from column 2)

Among other things we learned that—

(a) The Boxing Club were granted £3/19/6 to purchase a new dressing gown to replace one which "went missing" at Extrav. last year.

(b) Capping Ball will be held on May 7th.

(c) Misses Maysmor and Kean, together with Bob Edgley, were appointed N.Z.U.S.A. delegates to the Conference at Easter.

(d) That "Salient" is not the hot seller it was last year. Students! it's up to you to subscribe—freshers and freshettes, do your part!

REFUGEE STUDENTS DECISION REACHED

There were about a hundred in the Gym. on Thursday, a show of hands among whom showed 73 entitled to vote on the most important motion ever put to a general meeting of the Victoria University College Students' Association. But intending discussion there did not explain the obvious and unusual solidarity of the seating. It was not a difference over the third item of business that was to bring Mr. Edgley to his feet in such hot denial of his saying "the meeting is packed" merely pointing out that both sides had obviously arranged to see their interests were properly represented. The interests of "Overseas" students? Well, hardly. But there is an L.S.D. Sixty Five Pounds—as Mr. Scotney showed that proportion of our thousand a year set aside for the philanthropic purposes of bats, balls and balls.

There were six items on the night's agenda. Posted in the cubby hole it has been calculated that if read in column of fours fifty per cent. of the students could have noted them by the 31st.

Minutes and preferential voting were read before the disappointed Mr. Hein could eloquently, and Mr. Aimers, in his capacity as delegate to the N.Z.U.S.A., with that absence of heroics so characteristic of him, spoke for the only justification of the evening. Soberly said, it was soberly received.

And the substance of the circular that he read was this: That the N.Z.U.S.A. should bring five refugee students to New Zealand—one for each of the four centres, with Massey and Lincoln to be responsible for another, and that the various Students' Associations approach their College Councils to obtain a remission of fees and board at the official hostels for such students.

The motion, then, he wished to put was: "That this meeting instruct its delegate to the N.Z.U.S.A. to support the scheme outlined in the circular and to decide whether it is practical."

Open for discussion Galahad ("not for myself but someone behind me very shy") Bliss asks, and someone had to ask it, whether there are not plenty of our own students to be helped before foreigners? Undemolished by Mr. Freeman's "pretty long queue," he ventures into the type of the students, character references, the four from the innumerable.

AFTER THE WARS

The undeveloped train is caught up. Mr. Higgin asks whether "the money will be better spent in bringing out foreign students than in sending medical supplies or even food to Chinese children? The children cannot look after themselves, while the students will be living in the lap of luxury at 25 bob a week."

All of which is denied by Mr. Scotney, for the most affected by the wars are the University students—"In Austria, Spain and China the students themselves are the most crying problem in need of relief... the war is not the war but the aftermath... it is the educated youth of the country that is needed for the clearing up... an education here..."

Mr. Winchester interpolates with the only humanitarian sentiment of the evening. Arguing that the idea of placing a student at each College smells of the Zoo, he suggests they should be together, sat at Otago.

Argument *contra* Higginum is taken up by Mr. Castle. Money overseas is money down the sink in Chinese salaries, in Nazi Party funds.

Mr. Barnett finds "at primary schools and even out working," people "who have even greater intellectual capacities than we have... 25/- a week... that's just what a few of our Training Collegers here think."

Mr. Vogt suggests "a strong appeal in joint force to the Government to urge the increase in refugees admitted here from all countries." After a little complicated statistical work, a slight sniff at dollar morals, he discovers "N.Z. could take 50,000 a year."

Mr. Aimers' reply is very well done. Every point is covered and he has the best hearing we have seen a College speaker get. Pointing out that the permanent staff at Geneva of the International Student Service was flooded with appeals from Austrian and Czech students, he shows that there would be no difficulties of suitable selection. Law students would not, of course, be

wanted here, but for Dental, Medical and Agricultural Scientists there were ample avenues of employment left in New Zealand. As to the "drop in the bucket" argument, one U.S. College had taken fifty. There is no question of monies going overseas, and the 25/- per student would be the minimum for a reasonable amount of independence. Getting down to cold, hard cash, the money would not be a yearly drain on the V.U.C.S.A., but could be raised in a fortnight. "V.U.C. has a liberal tradition—a liberal outlook on world affairs—at the Easter Conference it has always been ahead of the other Colleges—and I suggest, ladies and gentlemen, that if you turn down a reasonable appeal such as this is, you turn your back on that tradition which Victoria University College has built up so laboriously in the last five years."

The eyes have it. Mr. Higgin in dissent.

SABOTAGE.

For two hours the spending of £60 odd pound had been discussed. Almost till midnight there was a struggle as to whether the Students' Association should be robbed of a like amount. That was the intention of those Training College students who turned up in such unexpected force. For two hours Mr. Vogt tried to choke our president with his own constitution. The position was that if a show of hands was taken the T.C.'s, in the belief that they were numerically stronger, hoped to alter the constitution and reduce the Students' Association fee by ten shillings for their own members. But notice of motion must be given. For one and three-quarter hours that was undecided. Mr. Edgley had arranged a postal ballot.

But was a sectional interest to dominate the College? After indecipherable exhibitions of bad taste, a motion was at last put. The financial stability of the S.A. was preserved by 13 heads. "The voting on the issue: "That a ballot be held to decide the question of a reduction in the Students' Association fee for T.C. students by 10/-" was 43 to 30, and after another motion: "That the executives of the T.C.S.A. and the V.U.C.S.A. draw up a statement of the difference between the respective bodies over the matter of fees" was carried, the exhausted combatants crept home.

Finally, the Capping Procession will not be held this year, and arrangements are being made for a night "Meetings Tonight" Notice-Board in the hall.—J.W.

GLEE CLUB

The Glee Club had arranged a bargain evening last Wednesday—a singing, supper, and hop, all for three-pence. Freshers found it difficult to master the old Extrav. tunes, and, with the exception of a benchful of executives who had all come along apparently to give out notices, there were very few of the older members who should have helped things along.

However, the said freshers seemed to enjoy their struggles. It is to be hoped that the awful example of Commencement Dance, where for the earlier part of the evening there were approximately two charming girls for every man, will not be followed with Training College-like thoroughness.

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IMMORALITY?

"The Decameron" has been banned. The smut-hounds have found another quarry. Boccaccio, the high-minded and classic Boccaccio, has after six centuries been found out by an Auckland policeman.

"The constable, who was a member of the London Book Club, selected 'The Decameron' at random from the shelves of the library in Auckland on October 14. The book was composed of 100 so-called stories, most of which were of a very filthy nature . . . we claim it could only have a very immoral and mischievous tendency on readers."

—"Evening Post," 25/2/39.

And so one more scalp is hanging on the puritans interminable belt. The grey ones, as D. H. Lawrence would call them, have gained a further victory. Now, as never before, will young New Zealand find the flowery paths of purity and virtue much easier to tread. That "The Decameron" of all books should have fallen is incredible unless it is realised just how diseased our moral sanctions are. St. Paul long ago asserted—"To the pure all things are pure." Perhaps it was true enough once—before the regime of puritanism and cant that surrounds us. As things stand today, "To the impure all things are impure," would seem to be a more just summing-up.

Whatever is contrary to established manners and customs is always said to be immoral. An immoral act is not necessarily a sinful one; on the contrary every attitude, every opinion is by definition immoral if it diverges from the customary standard. The banning of "The Decameron" is more a comment on our own furtive and sneaking outlook on sex than a judgment on the achievement of Boccaccio. For ours is an age of pulp magazines and film close-ups—everything contributing to the all-pervasive conspiracy of silence and deceit. In the words of D. H. Lawrence:

"The whole question of pornography seems to me a question of secrecy. Without secrecy there would be no pornography. But secrecy and modesty are two utterly different things. Secrecy has always had an element of fear in it, amounting very often to hate. Modesty is gentle and reserved. Today, modesty is thrown to the winds, even in the presence of the grey guardians. But secrecy is hugged, being a vice in itself and the attitude of the grey ones is: 'Dear young ladies, you may abandon all modesty, so long as you hug your dirty little secret.'"

Without ceasing, the protest is raised, "what if such books get into the hands of the young?" At all costs the taboos imposed in youth must be maintained. An intelligent sex education—which was never more necessary and which is surely every child's right—is the one thing which is assiduously avoided. The most elementary facts are universally taboo. At present intelligence and decency are overwhelmed in a welter of stupidity; stupidity concerning sex, education, marriage, morals, religion. Puritanism is begotten of stupidity; stupidity begets puritanism; the thing works in a vicious circle. The banning of a book like "The Decameron" is in these circumstances not entirely unnatural. The genuinely pornographical—the pulp magazine, the yellow-back—is never questioned; it recognises the taboo, it is never out-spoken. It is the fresh, healthy naturalness of the Italian story-teller that is attacked. Whatever happens, the truth must not be let out, the taboo must be maintained. Perhaps their next victim will be Cellini, perhaps Shakespeare, who knows?
 —J.D.F.

GOD DEFEND NEW ZEALAND

"The situation faintly resembles 'Hamlet,' with Mr. Hamilton cast as Hamlet and Mr. Savage as the Ghost."
 —"Evening Post" Editorial.

"The influence of Royalty on fashion cannot be over-stressed. It was a Queen who first inaugurated the hoop skirt hundreds of years ago, and it was our own Queen Elizabeth who recently revived the crinoline to its present increasingly popular status."
 —Women's Page, "Evening Post," 23/3/39.

"I was interested to hear that the Government court is to be 475ft. long; this means that the court will actually be about as long as Salisbury Cathedral is high!"
 —Sir Harry Batterbee.

If there is any moral responsibility of the scientist at all, it is that he should spend a part of his time, or see to it that more than sufficient scientists should spend more of their time, in studying norms and everyday behaviour problems of our own lives, as actually lived in houses and factories, pubs and chapels and shops in this sort of civilisation. Above all, it is a job of the scientist to find out, in this field, what people do want, do get, don't get, and could get to want.

CAPPING OFFICERS, 1939.

General Convenor: R. W. Edgley.
 Business Managers: J. B. Bullock,
 D. M. Hatherley.

Extrav. Organiser:
 Miss G. M. Kean.

Dances: R. J. Corkill.

Capping Ceremony: R. C. S. Agar.

Flowers: Miss M. Denton.

Undergrads' Supper:
 N. A. Morrison.

Capping Ball: Miss H. D. Maysmor,
 F. D. Christensen.

Cappicade: A. T. Fussell (Managing Editor).

"Christendom may be defined briefly as that part of the world in which, if any man stands up in public and solemnly swears that he is a Christian, all his auditors will laugh."

"At the end of one millennium and nine centuries of Christianity, it remains an unshakable assumption of the law in all Christian countries, and of the moral judgment of Christians everywhere, that if a man and a woman, entering a room together, close the door behind them, the man will come out sadder and the woman wiser."
 —From "Selected Prejudices,"
 By H. L. Mencken.

JUDGEMENT

Professor Lipson staggered what seemed to us an unusually orderly audience at the debate last Friday, with a totally unexpected eulogy on the sparkling and vivid part they played in the proceedings. In all his experience of University debates, both in Oxford and in the United States, he had never met a higher standard! In fact, he would like to give them first marks in his list of placings; if all the remarks made from the back, the middle, and the front of the hall had been pieced together, the result would have been an exceedingly witty speech.

Particularly arresting were the Judge's remarks in considering the arguments used by speakers. The fundamental point in estimating the worth of Mr. Chamberlain's policy was, he thought, *have we peace in the world today?* Have the people of Czecho-Slovakia, of Lithuania, Austria, Spain, and China, peace? (Applause.) Personally, the speaker considered Mr. Chamberlain to be sincere but misguided—a fool, but no knave—making concessions to Hitler on the premise of the latter's good faith, and believing he had certain rights denied him by the Treaty of Versailles. But continually to give in to Hitler was to encourage him. Now that we had let him go so far and given him such strength, we could only put our foot down at the cost of a ghastly war.

Professor Lipson's clearly enunciated views served as an object lesson in themselves to speakers; he has a happy knack of gaining the sympathy of his audience, and students will look forward with keen anticipation to further opportunities of seeing him at debates.—A.G.

REDUCTION IN STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION FEES FOR TRAINING COLLEGE STUDENTS.

A ballot to determine this question will be held on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 3rd, 4th and 5th April. All financial members are urged to vote.

Watch the Notice Boards for details.

EXTRAVAGANZA

Our representative has been privileged to obtain first-hand information of the shows selected for "Cappicade, 1939," and from a rapid glance at the scripts, "Salient" was convinced that this year's Extrav. will be bigger, brighter and more "peppy" than ever before.

Miss Kean, organiser of this year's "Cappicade," has arrangements well in hand for the production, which will run at the Opera House on April 22nd, 24th, 26th and 27th. She also expressed the opinion that the shows selected are excellent in every respect.

The programme will be as follows: "Comes the Dawn," described in the preamble as "A Spectral Prelude." Written by R. L. Meek, it should be a fitting opening to the programme. The gems from past Extrav. will be presented, and several well-known stars will be featured.

"Adam in Wonderland," composed and conceived by those prolific playwrights the "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this show has a background of phantasy of the Lewis Carroll type, plus a good dash of facts and near-facts.

John Carrad's Interlewd this year apparently surpasses all his previous efforts. It is entitled "The Dinkum Oil," an interlewd in the best Carrad style, with catchy song and dance numbers that will go down in history. We are reliably informed that back-chat artist "Charlie McCarthy" is featured.

The final show of the evening, written by R. L. Meek, is tentatively entitled "The Vikings." A concise, snappy show, with good topical interest it will cover a wide field in 60 minutes. Bright ballets, original songs and choruses, are a feature of this show, which will be produced by Ralph Hogg.

Miss Helen Maysmor has been appointed Wardrobe Mistress and will be grateful for offers of assistance in this important work. So, girls, practise your sewing, and do your bit towards making this year's Extrav. better than ever.—I.E.A.

I should say that there is a very wide distinction between what is read and what is seen. In a novel one may read that "Eliza stripped off her dressing gown and stepped into her bath," without any harm; but I think that if that were presented on the stage it would be shocking.—Sir William Gilbert.

Notes to Freshers and Others

A few words not only of advice, but also offered as a statement of what has been found: addressed to those who have aspirations. Advice: Forget them. Unless you are greater in your thoughts, and your will to action greater than any that has so far passed through this place, your little life is plotted with a doleful and dreadful accuracy.

Perhaps you have heard mystic and romantic tales of the activities of the so-called left group of this place. Perhaps some of you are sophisticatedly interested in those dynamic forces which are in constant motion about you. Perhaps you have heard that you may in some mysterious manner, be sucked into this whirl of modern thought. Some more original advice. Forget it.

WORTH READING

You will find out, if you have not already done so, that this College besides being able to support "Salient," also produces once a year a somewhat more ambitious and literary effort, known by an equally pointed name as "Spike." The Editorial of last year's edition would repay reading. And when you have read it, I suggest that you do something about it besides talk. We have been talking for about thirty years now about the things that are wrong and the things that we profess to believe in, which is a very fine thing. It is to be hoped that there is someone among you, who not only thinks well, but does. The rest of us who have been here even a year have fallen under the cloud of excess thought, and who, knowing little, are prepared to do less.

ACTION

We have our Debating Society. Unfortunately, it has become a respectable radical circus fit for hysterical ravings and the extremely sallies of some three hundred of our fellows. Nothing is ever decided there, nor any course of action ever formulated. "Salient" has given you a nice little list of the motions passed by this august radical group. The trend which it points to with so much pride, has been a trend for at least ten years if not more. We have been expressing our opinions about such subjects for nearly double that period and not one person has arisen from this University with a plan of action and sufficient drive to lift us above expressing our opinions. Do not mistake me if I appear to decry expression of opinion. I do not, but it is only half the story.

If any one of you believes that the University may teach a proper humility and that a real knowledge of the manner by which we may better our own lot and the lot of others, may be gained there, let him shout out his belief. If "Salient" is true to its purpose, it will listen to you, and if you have really thought, and if you are not too conscious of your overwhelming mental superiority, you will not find those who are sincere scorning you.

It is a time for a certain amount of action. It is to be hoped that you not only discuss and reason, but instead of falling into that conventional radicalism which we breed here, actually endeavour to find out what you can do. —N.R.T.

THE FUGITIVES

In "The Fugitives," a small book of verse by Helen Brookfield, recently published, we find definite evidence of a poetic sensibility and a happy gift of expression. This is not great poetry, but it is pleasant to read—and we think this latter to be, perhaps, the preferable quality. Some of it has already appeared in "Art in New Zealand," "New Zealand Best Poems," and in city newspapers.

Miss Brookfield has an observing eye and is at home with nature, resulting in a suggestion of a New Zealand atmosphere, charming because it is not dragged in by the heels for effect. She has also a strong sense of rhythm. Although very slight, one of the most pleasing poems is that beginning:—
*Time goes over
With clouds and the wild birds flying,
Wild as a swan . . .*

("The Fugitives," Helen Brookfield, 46 pages. Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd. 2/6.)

It is hardly possible that a society for the suppression of vice can ever be kept within the bounds of good sense and moderation. . . . Men, whose trade is rat-catching, love to catch rats; the bug destroyer seizes upon the bug with delight; and the suppressor is gratified by finding his vice.—Sydney Smith.

Damn all expurgated books, the dirtiest book of all is the expurgated book.—Walt Whitman.

IN REPLY

The Editor, "Salient."

Dear Sir,—I beg leave to use space in your paper to correct certain misrepresentations, made by "H.W.G." under the title "The Glory Road," of my statement of the Christian position.

(1) I did not imply that the Christian believes that God came into this world in Jesus Christ to reconcile men unto Himself, from whom they are separate, because the said Christian gets a kick, joy, strength, comfort, out of such belief. Such is not the case. A Christian believes this fundamental tenet of the Christian Faith, because he has himself experienced this reconciliation, a reconciliation with God which is a daily experience. He believes it because of the *reconciliation*, irrespective of the inevitable results.

(2) The Christian Revelation is objective from start to finish, because it rests upon a particular history—the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not the subjective thing that H.W.G. endeavours to make me make it. That particular history is given a particular interpretation by the Christian Church because of a particular experience, the experience of reconciliation with God in Christ. A Christian believes because God has gripped him in *Jesus Christ*, and for no other reason.

(3) Reason. Long may it be exercised; but to suggest that it is capable of reconciling man unto God is sheer nonsense. When that reconciliation takes place, reason comes into its own. It is accepted as a gift of God, to be used to the utmost in His service, and no more is it prostituted by being exalted to a position of the final authority in the life of man. When man begins to worship one of his capacities, the end is the disintegration and dehumanisation of man. Thanking you, I am, Yours, etc.

J. A. LINTON,
Gen. Sec., N.Z.S.C.M.

POETRY AND POLITICS

What is the duty of the poet in this age of expanding fears and savaging disasters?

Should he take sides? Or continue unconcerned? What is the function of poetry?

Here is an urgent and omnipresent problem, which deserves the active attention of everyone interested in the fate of literature.

The Phoenix Club is offering a prize of 10/- for the best statement of under 1,000 words on "The Relation Between Poetry and Politics."

Don't let the fact that you've taken English stage I deter you from entering!

"TIN HEAVENS"

Now that Britain's National Government is receiving plaudits in the press for their munificent free gifts of "tin heaven" A.R.P. shelters, it is well to reflect just what these shelters are to protect the people of Britain against. A cynical observer might well say that they are to protect Londoners from what will probably be Skoda bombs dropped quite probably from Czech planes surrendered to Germany in the fulfilment of the Munich agreement. It is indeed ironical to reflect that Britain, however much her rearmament programme may be speeded up, would take two whole years to make up what Mr. Chamberlain presented gratis to Herr Hitler at Munich. The distribution of any amount of "tin heavens" does not compensate the democracies for the loss of the following: the 80 million pound defence ring of the Czechs containing many of the secrets of the French Maginot Line; radium ores, giving Germany now a monopoly of those in Europe; lead and zinc resources increasing those of Germany by one-fourth; and forest reserves increasing those of Germany by one-fifth. Was the sacrifice of the Czechoslovak Republic worth it? When one considers that Britain is now arming as never before, in spite of the fact that the Munich agreement Mr. Chamberlain is so proud of, eschews war between Germany and Britain for our lifetimes at any rate! And who is Britain contemplating going to war against if not Germany? Veritably Mr. Chamberlain's policy is one that seems to have no streak of consistency. —P.A.M.

Censorship ends in logical completeness when nobody is allowed to read any books except the books nobody can read.—George Bernard Shaw.

FRENCH ART

The current exhibition of prints presented by the Carnegie Trust will remain on view at the National Art Gallery for about two weeks more. Italy, France, Holland, Flanders, Spain, England, Germany and America over a period of six hundred years are here represented, and so wide is the selection that a visit should afford much pleasure to all interested in art.

On the evening of March 16th, Dr. A. D. Carbery gave a commendably brief and informative address on French art to a small but appreciative audience, illustrating his remarks by references to examples in the exhibition.

Following the Flemish mediaeval art, said the lecturer, French painting may be said to begin with Poussin in the 17th century. Influenced by Raphael and the Classical tradition, Poussin spent most of his life in Italy, and his work synthesises the best features of the then dying Italian art. The 18th century, the age of reason, was a frivolous epoch in painting, typified by Watteau's romantic pastorales, figures in landscape, painstakingly drawn from life. Watteau learnt his exquisite colour from the many Rubens, done for Marie de Medici, in the Luxembourg. Chardin, a painter of genre, ran a close second, while Boucher, a favourite of La Pompadour, was a facile draughtsman. Greuze was an artist of vivacity; Fragonard, a strong and brilliant painter, is frequently represented by his silly, sentimental pictures for the fashionable world, which do him an injustice.

The 19th century opened with a return to Classicism, later evidenced in the Empire period. Corot, of course, is definitely a Romantic, though weak and at his best in the figure subjects that he did in Rome. Typical of the Barbizon School (who couldn't get their pictures into the Salon, so went into the country to be closer to nature) is Harpigny, who embodies the democratic spirit of the age, portraying the common people. And then came Realism with Courbet, a strong, almost coarse painter, whose flowers are delightful. Contemporary art was founded by Manet, the most important artist of the 19th century, in Mr. Carbery's opinion; he was strongly influenced by Japanese colour prints and by photography.

Realism became Impressionism with the advent of Monet, Pissarro, Sisley and Renoir, who had been studying optics, and who brought in light and air to Manet's style, creating an artistic scandal by their adoption of Pointillism, or Divisionalism; which was taken still further by Signac and Seurat. Thence it has been carried to some extent to all modern painting, just as it was previously evident, in a lesser degree, even in the old Italian masters, and in Vermeer and others.

In both his opening and closing comments, Mr. Carbery considered that France had always been a strong civilising force by virtue of her artistic expression. Other phases of the exhibition will be dealt with by subsequent lecturers.—a.

SPAIN

Unhappy Spain is today in everyone's mind. What made a country divide against itself? made Spaniards employ the foreigner to slaughter fellow Spaniards? Was the Government the real legal Government? What were the facts of the Asturias revolt? To answer these questions we must have a reliable knowledge of events leading up to the Civil War.

Such knowledge is to be gained from "The Spanish Tragedy," by E. Allison Peers.

For a writer to be an authority he must (1) know his subject; (2) be unbiassed.

Peers, now Professor of Spanish in the University of Liverpool, has spent a great deal of the last 20 years in Spain, living among the people, mixing with both the highbrow and the lowbrow. He should therefore have a good knowledge of Spanish life and conditions, and of recent Spanish history.

"While complete impartiality is difficult of achievement, I have tried to describe the events of those years with all possible objectivity, and party politicians will look in vain for their pet exaggerations." That Peers has achieved this is evident, since "The Spanish Tragedy" is recommended by both loyalist and rebel. "An authoritative work, says the pro-Franco man; "A book which is decidedly useful," says the Loyalist.

"Spain is not Britain, nor France, nor America, but herself—unique in many ways." The causes of the war are bound up in the nature of Spain and the Spaniards. Allison Peers is one of the few impartial men with sufficient local knowledge to attempt to explain them.—P.A.O.

"There is one thing that my enemies cannot do to me: they cannot make me hate them."—Romain Rolland.



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