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# Salient

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

Vol. 17, No. 3

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By Subscription.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thursday, March 26

7.30 p.m.—A.S.M.

8.0 p.m.—

DR. W. B. SUTCH

"Political and Economic  
Problems in Africa"  
IN ROOM B.2.)

# STOP PRESS

AT an Executive meeting on Monday night the President announced that Extrav could no longer be held in the second week of the May holidays. The manager of the Opera House, Mr. Stringer, had notified the Executive that the pencilled-in dates were no longer available; the only alternative dates were from June 1 to June 11.

Informed students will realise what this implies. The available period is the second week of the second term—right in the thick of terms examinations. The traditional association of Extrav with the Capping festivities will be gone. But as Mr. W. Sheat so correctly stated, if there is not an Extrav this year there will never be one. Already the old hands who have had the experience at running Extravs are drifting away from the College. The Executive has found it difficult to find suitable persons to fill such posts as wardrobe mistress; even the post of producer was hard to fill. In 1951 there were over four scripts; this year there are two. We are lucky: Otago University has asked for our last year's script to produce as it has none at all.

The position brightens when we consider that this period falls during Coronation week with the possibility of larger crowds. Mr. Bollinger informs us that the script submitted by himself and others is, in his opinion, much better than the accepted 1951 script in which he collaborated. Mr. Curtin, one of the co-authors of the other script, informs us that his script is of a high calibre, one act in particular being very good. This script is at present being read by the selection committee.

Although the Executive has again booked the Opera House (from Monday, June 1, to Saturday, June 6) the possibility that this booking be cancelled also cannot be overlooked. We are subject to the often-changing decisions of the Opera House management on this matter. There is no other theatre suitable for the Extrav type of show other than the St. James. Negotiations are proceeding with a view to the tentative booking of this theatre but, if anything, the Opera House is considered to be best for our purposes. It is in the lap of the gods now.

## REPORT ON GOODWILL TRIP PRESIDENT WRITES ON AUSTRALIA

I WAS somewhat doubtful of the wisdom of accepting the Editor's invitation to give some impressions of my recent visit to Australia lest anything I said be taken by my readers as gospel on any aspect of Australian student life. My main impression on returning to New Zealand was that one cannot gain a true impression of a city the size of Sydney let alone a country the size of Australia after a fortnight's stay. So what I have to say would perhaps be taken with so many grains of sodium chloride.

The main object of my trip was to represent the New Zealand University Students' Association at the Annual Conference of the National Union of Australian University Students. In fact, I had the honour to represent the members of this Association and of all the Students' Associations in New Zealand at a Conference where the representatives of all the Australian Universities were present. This was by no means a novel step in N.Z.U.S.A. policy as delegates have been sent from this country in nearly every year since the war and we have entertained Australian student leaders here in some of those years. The idea is that the two national student bodies can work closer together and get a better idea of each other's problems. Much practical good has come of these meetings in past years when such schemes as travel and exchange were hammered out. At the present, such trips are more in the nature of goodwill ventures but there is reason to believe there is room for the development of a common policy in a number of matters affecting the student bodies of both countries.

Readers will probably not be very interested in the procedure of the N.U.A.U.S. Council and the ways in which it differs from our own. Perhaps all I need say is that the Australian meeting lasted for 6 days. (It was scheduled to last for 8 days.) Our council meetings of course never last more than 4 days at the outside but it is to be remembered that the Australians have only one meeting a year to our two and they travel vast distances to get there.

### LITTLE SPORTS TALKS

The most striking impression of the Council itself was the similarities between New Zealand and Australian students. It was an interesting exercise during a not very interesting debate to look round the table and imagine that you were at a meeting in New Zealand, because you could see different people adopting the same approaches and having the same characteristics as their opposite numbers in New Zealand. This fact was also noticeable outside the Council table where one found it very easy to become friendly with the Australian students and to associate with them in the same way (and in the same places!) as one would in New Zealand.

Another feature of the actual meeting was the absence of any discussion on sporting problems. Sport was mentioned only incidentally when reference was made to the merit or otherwise of Sports Unions in particular universities. The sporting administration in Australia is completely different from that in New Zealand but, to my mind, it does not provide a pattern which we in New Zealand should readily follow. It would take a whole article to expand that statement but as it is not of general interest, I will leave the expansion to my official report.

By this time, you are probably wondering what was discussed at this particular Conference and whether or not you, as members of the New Zealand University Students' Association received value for the money that was spent in sending me to Australia. I will answer the first question as best I can and leave you to draw your own conclusions as to the answer that should be given to the second question. From the point of view of New Zealand interest the most important matter discussed, apart from travel and exchange, was the International Students' situation. This discussion paid little attention to I.U.S. and organisations of a similar suspect nature because it was felt, and I think rightly so, that the Australians have sincerely wasted enough time and money on I.U.S. for no return other than the abuse that they, in common with the other "Western Unions" have had to suffer in recent years. The Australians eventually decided that they would not send anyone to any I.U.S. Conference in the future unless that Conference was held in England. The idea of this motion was that a Conference held in England would not cost anyone anything. The holding of a Conference in England is so unlikely that the effect of this unanimous decision of the Council is that Australia has completed the break with I.U.S.

### ASIA INFORMATION SERVICE

The Australians last year joined the International Co-ordinating Secretariat with headquarters at Leiden in Holland. This Secretariat has affiliated to it many of the Unions that have either left or been driven out of the I.U.S. over recent years. It is not a hide-bound organisation such as the I.U.S. but represents

rather a coming together of as many nations as possible for the purpose of practical co-operation in the international field. The main activity of I.C.S. is to hold Annual Conferences at which various programmes are decided on and then assigned to individual national unions to put into effect. In the last couple of years, much good work has been done through this type of scheme, particularly in the field of student health. New Zealand has not yet joined the I.C.S. mainly because we have feared that it might become just another organisation that would be used as a sounding board for various political views. I think that such a fear has been proved to be false and that the time has come when we should join I.C.S. and participate in its activities. I say this for two reasons. Firstly, because it is an organisation which is doing something that is of benefit to the student world and it is doing this without going through the profitless

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## "YOU WERE TAKEN FOR THE RIDE, MR. EDITOR" President's Letter

DEAR SIR.—The keynote of your last editorial on the subject of appointments to NZUSA was in the word "abuse" in the first sentence, for such was your criticism of Mr. McCaw and Miss Hoskins. I have no intention of comparing them with other Exec members—I only wish to defend those whom the Executive chose and whom you attacked. On what grounds did you assert that Mr. McCaw would be playing cricket and not attending meetings? I am quite sure that Mr. McCaw did not tell you this. Even if he was to be playing cricket (and you have no grounds for believing that he will be) he would miss less than a quarter of the meetings.

In addition, you seem to overlook the fact that Mr. McCaw has been to N.Z.U.S.A. before and is highly regarded there. You also forget that he took on the thankless task of Congress Business Manager, that he served and worked hard on the Student Employment Committee, that he ran the stationery scheme so well that over £500 worth of stationery was sold in a week; you forget that he is generally regarded as one of the most efficient members of the Executive.

As for Miss Hoskins, you forget that she is a highly capable and experienced speaker and advocate, that she was at the first Congress and on the Committee of the last one, that she was a member of the Stationery Committee and helped to initiate the Student Employment Service, that she is the organiser of the International Students' evening (in all of which projects other colleges are interested), and that she has the widest experience of overseas universities. Above all, Mr. Editor, you forget that the Executive chose these people, the Executive which should know their capabilities best. Maybe your candidates would be good delegates but there is no ground for asserting that those selected are not.

Your reference to "nepotism and chicanery" infer that the Executive was party to such things. If you are going to make charges as serious as that, it would be a good idea if you justified them instead of libelling this and past Executives. I am

more than a little interested in this as I have been a member of the last six delegations and a party to the selection of them all. In addition, the Council, in August, 1951, had sufficient confidence in me to elect me as their chairman in the absence of the then President. Who was a party to what and when, Mr. Editor? I suggest you justify these charges or withdraw them.

I think I have shown that there is some ground for asserting that the other two candidates have shown considerable interest in matters bearing directly and indirectly on N.Z.U.S.A. and that they are capable of representing this college as it deserves to be represented. I have challenged you to justify your allegations. The only person who was possibly taken along for the ride was you, Mr. Editor. Remember that a kind Executive agreed to pay you the Tournament subsidy to go to Christchurch last August in order to let you report N.Z.U.S.A.? Remember also that you deserved this consideration so much because, after all, you, as editor of the host college newspaper the preceding Easter took so great an interest in the affairs of N.Z.U.S.A. that you did not bother to attend a single session of a meeting that lasted from Good Friday morning to Easter Monday afternoon? Who's calling who what?

M. J. O'BRIEN,

President,

V.U.C.S.A.

# Salient

## THE END OF FINALS

In the last issue we tried to give in the Editorial something for the Association to think about; here we present a scheme for not only the consideration of the students but also the consideration of the staff and possibly, the University of New Zealand.

At the end of each university year the student is inflicted with a number of three-hour examinations. This is called "finals"; the preparation for these examinations is called "swot." It is well known that swot imposes upon the student a physical and mental strain that amounts in many cases to near collapse, and often a disinclination towards future study. This reaction is unsound and entirely unnecessary. The institution of "finals" is in itself educationally unsound, and for these reasons:

1. It imposes such a strain upon students. Education should not be complicated with physiological stresses unless totally unavoidable;
2. "Finals" are not an indication of a student's ability throughout the year, but merely of his "swotting ability;"
3. Retention from such intensively studied superficial matter is practically nil—this is educationally unsound;
4. A student can pass a unit by neglecting one section of his work and hope that his other papers will pull him through;
5. Part-timers, through their inability to obtain long periods from work in which to swot, are at a disadvantage;
6. The disposition of the time-table brings mechanical factors in what should be a purely educational matter;
7. Factors for which a student cannot claim an aegrotal often enter into his chance of passing. One set of examinations is the final judge of his academic ability when often finals merely record that a student has a bad migraine. To remedy this state of affairs we advocate a simple change in the examination system: eliminate "finals."

That's all very well, you say, but what will we put in their place. The answer is—we won't eliminate examinations, but simply "finals." In other words, we wish to spread what were "finals" over the whole year. This would mean that each student would sit a three-hourly examination set and marked by each department at the end of each term. The advantages are obvious. No student would be able to let his work lapse; the part-timer would be able to cope with his work better with sectionalised examinations; no student would be able to neglect any part of his work in favour of any other part; the end of year strain would disappear; both staff and student would be able to measure progress much easier, etc. And, for terms (if you need terms—in most departments they are a farce) what better than the lecturers' judgments based on class exercises, practicals, essays, and assignments.

Obviously no-one would consider abandoning examinations altogether—pity! So we offer this modification for the staffs consideration. Later on we hope to print their reactions to the scheme. We are tired of seeing students who have worked conscientiously to gain reasonable terms flop miserably in finals for some of the petty reasons we have mentioned. Finals as part of the education system are old-fashioned, so let's get rid of them.

—T.H.H.



**JIM BUICK** and Alan Durward have both been granted commissions in the Royal Air Force. They will be at Wigram until they leave for England at the beginning of next year.

More Extrav. appointments have made—these can be seen in the Exec. minutes. The most important appointment was that of John Wright as stage-manager. This is John's seventh year at Vic, during which time he has been the Drama Club's stage-manager, and has represented Vic. at indoor basketball. He takes over the stage-managership from Huddy Williamson who has done it for the last few extravas.

One of the most interesting pieces of minor news is the recent co-option of Miss Diana Lescher to the Executive to replace Miss Dibble. Miss Lescher has been prominent in the Catholic Student Guild's activities, athletics, tennis, drama, hockey, and has a Congress "pink" in archery.

We note with pleasure Miss Anne Flannery's award of a Government Drama Bursary, to study dramatics in England.

Both the Fresher's Welcome and the Fresher's Ball were unqualified successes. The social committee would be wise to strike while the iron is hot and do their best to liven up the college social life with more such successful nights.

We wish to make an adjustment to a statement previously made in this column. We credited John Doran with a share in the flat of John Treadwell et al. We now have to advise that although Mr. Doran's association with these parties is close, he is at present still looking for board.

### REPORT ON GOODWILL TRIP

(Continued from Page 1)

hysteria and propaganda that was associated with I.U.S. Secondly, the I.C.S. has assigned to Australia the task of forming a South-East Asia Information Centre. This is the kind of task which New Zealand would be allocated and, if we joined, there would be a ready-made project in which we, with our Australian friends, could interest ourselves.

This brings me to the next point—the South-East Asia section of the debate on international affairs. This was regarded as such an important debate that a commentator from the A.E.C. was present specially to listen to it. The debate took almost a whole afternoon. Before saying much about this aspect of international student relations, let me give readers some idea of the background to the interest of Australian students in South-East Asia. In the first place, there is a growing awareness among the Australian people, or so we are told, of what is vaguely described as the "problem" of South-East Asia and Australia's near north. What

## WRITE FOR CAPPICADE

**CONTRIBUTORS** are urgently wanted for Cappicade Fiftythree to be published as usual this Capping day, May 8.

This year there is no particular theme for capping mag. The editors thought it would be much better if everyone was allowed to be just their plain, witty, funny, satiric selves.

Anybody who can write—or can't for that matter—should immediately face up to a typewriter (preferably, a good old pen will do) and bash out something simply hilarious.

If you don't want to, or can't, write you may have seen some ambiguous news headline, sentence, paragraph. Clip or copy it out, and add a corny comment or two.

But most of all we want the Big Stories—and quick, too. Anything is good enough for Cappicade (just you look back and see). Anything we get will more than likely be published (unless it's perhaps twice as low as usual).

Your efforts should be written on one side of the paper only, with plenty of space between lines (double space if typewriting).

Parcel up the opi magna and dispatch it with the utmost promptitude to the commonroom letter-rack (male or female, strike out that which does not always apply) or to the Exec. room addressed to the editors, Cappicade.

this problem really is varies from the approach you take to it, so far as I can see. Anyway, Australians generally are worried, whether it be from the point of view of national defence, or from the unselfish attitude that one should help one's neighbour who is in a poorer situation. This was borne out by the variety of questions that were asked on this general subject during the afternoon when I was in the Federal House of Representatives at Canberra.

Secondly, there is a very large number of students from South-East Asia at Australian Universities. Many of these are in Australia under the Colombo Plan but these students by no means form a majority. Australia is also host to many students who have come under the technical assistance programme, while others have been sent by their own governmental and educational authorities. I was told by an Asian student that there are over 2000 students from the South-East Asian area in Australia at present. This represents something a little under 10 per cent. of the total University student population of Australia. You cannot help noticing these people around the University and you consequently cannot help feeling that something should be done by the individual to see that their lot is a happy one and that they will return home with a high opinion of Australia.

Thirdly, a number of the student leaders in Australia have an intimate knowledge of conditions in those countries and of the people who come from them. Retiring President Greg Bartels of Sydney could not attend much of the Council meeting because he is now employed by the technical assistance programme to meet people coming from other countries to study in Australia, and he is introducing Asians to Australia by the hundreds. Retiring Vice-President Bob Hawke, West Australian Rhodes Scholar, was in India last year as an Australian representative at a conference of Christian youth. Melbourne S.R.C. representative Jim Webb was not at the Council meeting because he was busily engaged at a meeting of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East which was taking place contem-

poraneously in Manila. I think. He had a brief to visit about 20 universities in the South-East Asian area to make contacts for the future.

### AUSTRALIA-OVERSEAS CLUBS

From what I have written of the background, you can see that the interest of Australian students in this area is easily aroused. This interest is cultivated even more by the high quality of the students who are going to study in Australia. This is, of course, is equally true of the many fine Asian and Pacific students in this country. At the Council, one of the people present in the capacity of an observer from the Adelaide University was Malayan economics student Chek Juan Choo. This in itself was evidence of the part that these students are playing in Australian student life and is also evidence of the way that they and Australian students generally are mixing together.

This mixing together is encouraged in some of the Australian universities through the formation of what are known as Australia-Overseas Clubs. The purpose of these clubs is to bring overseas and Australian students together not only socially, but also for the purpose of hearing lectures, visiting factories and institutions and so on. In West Australia, the Club flourishes on the basis that there must be not more than 50 per cent. Australian or 50 per cent. Asian membership. A similar club, although not with this provision, also exists in Melbourne where an International House Appeal is at present being carried on. It was momentarily surprising to walk along Swanston Street in Melbourne and see a poster on the Town Hall advertising the fact that an overseas artist was

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## MEN'S COMMON-ROOM

**SIR**—The men's commonroom has just undergone renovation and refitting. It seems, therefore, the most opportune moment to make a suggestion which I have had in mind for a long time. It concerns the decoration of the walls of the commonroom, which, it must be agreed, do need brightening up in some way or other.

I suggest pictures, not paintings or murals (as has been considered) but just plain photos. These photos should be of teams prominent in local or inter-varsity sport or competition, including debating and other activities, not necessarily physical.

The Executive, within its own power and discretion, could say when a club was to have its team photo taken. The photo would need to be taken in a recognised studio so as to be worthy of its place on the wall and so as to achieve a certain amount of uniformity. The cost of the studio portrait would be paid by the club concerned, while the expense of framing and mounting could be met by the Executive.

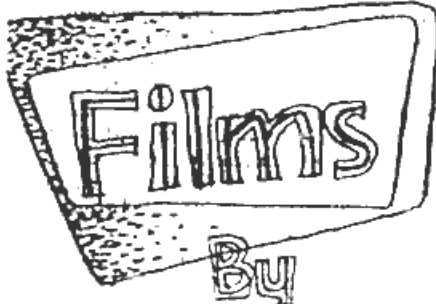
I consider that a wall decorated in that way would always hold interest as new photos and personalities were added, and also it would preserve a record of the many students who otherwise pass through this college without lasting notice.

—J. McL.



The epitome of philosophical grace and loftiness of spirit on the right is Mr. Patrick Hutchings. His companion in the arms of Morpheus is Miss Josie Harding. The occasion is a launch trip to early Mass, last Congress. In this way all Catholics take their religion, oblivious to worldly things!





By  
Ian Rich

# EXIT CHARLIE, ENTER CHAPLIN

## A CLOWN TURNS PHILOSOPHER

A TRUE artist cannot escape the circumstances of his private life, a sensitive artist often allows the people and events around him to influence his work. Scholars have linked the different moods and shades of Shakespeare's plays with corresponding periods of the dramatist's life. So it is with Dickens, Beethoven, Dostoevsky. And Charles Spenser Chaplin.

I would be amazed to hear of someone who knew nothing of Charles Chaplin's private life. He has been a figure of such controversy, that weekly magazines have found it profitable to spend pages telling us all about him. We now know about his unhappy childhood among the squalor and poverty of a London slum, his various marriages and love affairs, his "political activities," his self-imposed isolation; but for the expression of the inner man of Chaplin, the champion of the underdog, the lover of freedom, we can turn to his films. Charlie the Tramp, the little fellow, with his small black moustache, skimpy coat, baggy trousers, bowler hat and walking stick.

"Charlie is the unique expression of the poetic and the philosophic art of Chaplin, the focal point of so many planes of experience, thought and emotion, at once personal to Chaplin and common to humanity." Charlie, the dancer who, when he dances, is liberated from all corporeal burdens. Charlie the dreamer, who when he enters a fantastic world remote from the sorrows of mankind, the bounds of a cruel human society, the burden of his own solitude. Charlie the clown, the pursuer after the unattainable, the blunderer. The little fellow who showed himself increasingly to contain within him the loneliness and fear, the desire to evade responsibility, the hopes and pathos of the universal soul. Charlie the underdog, the silent sufferer of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

### "THE GOLD RUSH"

My meetings with Charlie have been all too rare. "The Gold Rush" was the first film I saw, but unfortunately at a time when I was too young to even know the meanings of such words as "significance," "philosophy," "direction," "pathos," "humanity." But I remember I laughed, as Charlie intended me to, when Charlie ate the stewed boots, when the avalanche pushed his log-cabin to the edge of a precipice and leaves it rocking in space. I remember Charlie's party to which none came, the feeling of pity I had for the good little man, surrounded by so many nasty bad men looking greedily for gold. I wasn't old enough to realise the significance of Charlie's black silhouette against the immense white snow. Charlie not only fighting against society, but nature as well.

### "CITY LIGHTS"

"The Circus" was Chaplin's next film, but I have not seen it so I must pass on to "City Lights" which was released in New Zealand a few years ago. This film is probably Chaplin's most famous, not only because of its artistic appeal, but also because it was produced after the introduction of sound to motion pictures. Chaplin had been opposed to the idea of sound: "I don't find the voice necessary, it spoils the art as much as painting statuary. I would as soon rouge marble cheeks. Pictures are pantomimic art. Talkies annihilate the great beauty of silence." But I believe, with Richard Griffith, that Chaplin, in producing "City Lights" was not merely challenging the aesthetic and commercial feasibility of the talkies. He was trying to preserve the silence of Charlie. "Charlie the central figure in the pantheon of modern mythology would cease to be universal once he spoke in any particular language or gave himself a local habitation or a name."

So "City Lights" once again presents us with the personality of Charlie, and what has clearly become the reiterated and significant sym-

bol of Chaplin's work—the idealist tramp with his unquenchable love, compassion, chivalry and goodness; the girl, in this case blind, who is complementary to him, in need of his devotion and herself submissive, feminine and unattainable. The eccentric millionaire upon which their fate depends, is the new form of the "deus ex machina," changing the social forces that overwhelm them according to his incalculable whim. I noticed an increased sadness from the Charlie of "The Gold Rush." There is a lassitude, an acceptance of unhappiness. It is as though Chaplin were expressing through Charlie the impact of the deeply-felt effects in his own life and in the world of film—his unsavoury divorce and the coming of talkies.

### "THE GREAT DICTATOR"

"Modern Times" was Chaplin's next film but the distributors decided it was not worthwhile re-releasing it. Therefore, "The Great Dictator" is the next on the list. When Chaplin opens his mouth. The artist "who brought the form of the motion picture to its purest realisation" now attacks the medium of sound.

The plot and theme of "The Great Dictator" are too well known to warrant repetition here. I shall restrict myself to a few remarks, mainly to point the development of Chaplin as an artist and thinker. It is this film that we begin to say goodbye to Charlie the little tramp. He is still with us in the form of the Jewish barber who is the complete opposite of the dictator, Hynkel. But we find that with speech Charlie is only a shadow of his former self. In appearing as the barber, the anti-thesis of Hynkel, a member of a persecuted family, Charlie has lost some of his transcendental quality, his universality. Charlie had expressed the whole of himself and of mankind in mime. Words impede and embarrass him; and we feel, with painful nostalgia, that the Charlie we knew has gone from us.

But with Charlie out of the way, Chaplin had a chance to develop to a fuller maturity as an artist and a thinker. Having dealt with poverty and loneliness of his universal clown, Chaplin takes over and turns his attention to what he conceives to be one of the greatest evils of our time—Fascism. Chaplin the crusader speaks to mankind with burning sincerity. What he says is intensely personal to him.

### "MONSIEUR VERDOUX"

"Monsieur Verdoux" a second and maturer summing-up. Chaplin brings to a head his attack on society, begun in his early films, gaining in anger and ardour through the years, and increased by his own persecution until, in "Monsieur Verdoux" he gives tongue to his hatred. Once again I have no space for a plot summary, and once again I am forced to limit myself to a few remarks.

Verdoux's murders are a symbol of Chaplin's desire to exterminate the parasites, who, by their very existence, force wide open the gap between wealth and poverty, take away Verdoux's cherished home and reduce thousands like him to penury. Having set the social scene—the preponderance of wealthy widows who maintain their wealth at all costs while contributing nothing to the organism supporting them, Chaplin drives home his condemnation of its folly and evil by taking its guiding principles to their logical limit. That indifference to individual liberty, callousness towards human suffering, carelessness towards life itself. Forced into an impasse of social chaos, he applies the principle underlying that chaos to secure for him-

self and family an adequate livelihood. So that finally society, in condemning him, condemns himself.

The last section of the film brings out most clearly Chaplin's philosophy. Here are two quotations, uttered by the condemned Verdoux. They need no comment. "Crime does not pay in a small way" and "One murder makes a villain; millions a hero. Numbers sanctify, that is the trouble." Not very original, but so intensely felt.

[Bibliography: "The Little Fellow," by Peter Coates and Thelma Niklaus.]

### "LIMELIGHT"

I have traced Chaplin's history as a screen artist, dealing with the films I have seen. I saw the Charlie of "The Gold Rush" and "City Lights" in the full bloom of his creation, then I saw Chaplin gradually overcoming Charlie until in "Monsieur Verdoux" he had almost disappeared. I watched Chaplin's development as a humanist, and I realised that his coming maturity demanded a voice. I have not dealt with technical considerations because of lack of space and a purposeful intent to wait until I came to "Limelight," Chaplin's latest creation. For in "Limelight" his technical brilliance is best demonstrated. In fact, this film is the fine, full-flowering of Chaplin, not only as a technician, but also as an artist.

I wouldn't be surprised if "Limelight" doesn't go down in history as the most misunderstood and underrated film of the century. I have yet to see a Press criticism that does not condemn it as being either dull, self-conscious, unfunny or technically imperfect. (I admit my reading has been narrow.) Many of Chaplin's admirers have been disappointed, others bewildered. This, I think, is largely due to a failure to understand that "Limelight" is not an isolated work, with Chaplin playing a somewhat serious part in a somewhat serious film. It is easier to understand "Limelight" and to begin to see its countless and often unexplainable beauties and subtleties, and the artistry of its presentation, when it is analysed in its relation to Chaplin's

total work, which is itself the exact expression of his own reaction to the experiences and feelings of his own life. And of course, critics must forget the traditional belief that Chaplin is always funny. Failure in this may cause the essential philosophy of this film to be overlooked or avoided.

The broad theme of "Limelight" is that of an ageing music hall comedian who wants to make a comeback, but has lost his confidence and is haunted by the fear that he can no longer get the laughs. It is during this "melancholy twilight" of his career that he rescues a youthful dancer from suicide, gives her a new vitality and a will that takes her to the top of the ladder of success. Success, the vitality of youth and failure, weariness and loneliness of age—that is the antithesis of "Limelight." Calvero, the fading comedian, plunging himself further into despair, as he sees the full flower of the young dancer that he rescued, come to life.

There is supreme pathos in "Limelight." The drink-soaked comic; the years of failure have turned him into a philosopher. He strengthens the girl with his talk of life and desire ("Desire is the theme of all life") but we all know that at the bottom of his heart, Calvero finds it a struggle to believe what he is saying. Terry, the dancer, wins through with Calvero's help of laughter and philosophy ("To hear you talk no one would think you were a comedian.") but only to find she must give emotional support to Calvero. For him, at that stage of the game "life begins to be something of a habit." "The trouble with the world," he says, "is that we all despise ourselves." "Life isn't a gag anymore. I can't see a joke." Calvero is weary, frightened of failure.

And Chaplin himself has been haunted by failure. We have learnt a lot from Samuel Goldwyn, the Hollywood friend of Chaplin. He always received Chaplin's confessions of dread. "You know, Sam, if 'City Lights' is a failure, I believe it will strike a deeper blow than anything

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## Evil Good Fun "The White Devil"

WITH the team-spirit and vigour that are characteristic of their productions, Unity Theatre have tackled the problem of reviving an Elizabethan revenge tragedy, Webster's "The White Devil." To attempt this was, in itself, worthwhile and meritorious, and that it was not a complete success is possibly due more to the play and its conditions than to faults of representation. To write or act a "blood and thunder" tragedy in Elizabethan times was to work within an accepted scheme, accepted because the audience, through an immediacy which the theatre now lacks, could easily become caught up in that scheme of things. What is left for the audience of such a play now?

There is the dramatic and human impact, which in "The White Devil" is not often felt apart from the trial scene (whereas in "The Duchess of Malfi" the downfall and death of the heroine can carry the audience along); then, there are some extraordinary poetic lines, which in this play give a swift movement to the first act, but which, in their dramatic context, must now seem almost accidental. Finally, the more literary critics have seen in the play a searching treatment of the workings of evil. This, however, I fail to see; for Webster, evil was primarily very good fun. It has elements of that "terribly serious farce," as Eliot calls Marlowe's "Jew of Malta," which has since been destroyed by those who sentimentalise or simplify or explain away, and which can hardly be recaptured now, or communicated in its complexity.

It was inevitable, therefore, that the first half of the play, the inter-

play of intrigues, should come off better than the ragged fourth act or the orgies of the final one. Michael Cotterill gave a fine performance as the Duke of Brachiano, Bruce Mason as his pandar Flamino, and June Struthers as Vittoria, played smoothly and competently, but they were never so intensely in character. Vittoria lacked the passion and force which should have dominated the play and made a climax of her speech at the trial. She is the only one for whom a rounded character is, as it were, ready-made in the play—she is not painted black or white, we are left not knowing whether to admire or condemn her. The characters of Brachiano and Flamino make greater demands on the actor; they have to be filled in and give dramatic and poetic validity despite the dead wood in their lines and their situations. For Webster does not make adequate use either of a dramatic build-up or of poetry to sustain his play, and in these respects he seems to me inferior to his contemporaries—Middleton and Tourneur.

The production was effective in setting and grouping. The in-set was used to its best effect in Brachiano's death-scene, which was the only convincing one of the eight deaths in the play. Another high point of the play, Cornelia's famous dirge, could have been made more of. I am not sure, however, that much could have been done to prevent the massacre at the end from being ludicrous. The deaths at the end of "Hamlet" may still be acceptable on the stage, but "Hamlet" transcends the convention of the revenge tragedy, and its greatness is partly due to that. "The White Devil" belongs too much to a convention, one which is no longer vital or even existent for us, and though we may still look on at times fascinated, we cannot, as in great tragedy or poetic drama, feel involved.

P. DRONKE.

# Sports News

By B.V. Galvin

## TEST CRICKET Personalities and Performances

**T**HE touring South African XI have soundly defeated New Zealand in the First Test and at the time of writing appear to be in a strong position in the Second Test. The Basin Reserve, a ground on which most post-war touring XI's have amply justified their reputations did nothing to spoil its record.

The toss may have gone South African's way and given them an undeniable advantage. But even if the coin had fallen the reverse way up I don't think there would have been any difference in the result. New Zealand are undergoing that embarrassing and often painful process of developing a new Test XI. Consequently the South African XI with the praises of the cricket world still ringing in their ears were too stiff a hurdle for the founding New Zealand XI.

But one Test has made a difference. Seasoned Test players such as Reid, Sutcliffe and Wallace have had an opportunity to re-tune themselves to the atmosphere of Test cricket. New players blooded at Christchurch now fully appreciated the significance of this adjustment. The players brought in for the Second Test have caught this new manner or feeling this from their team mates. The effect was noticeable on the first day at Auckland. Fielding errors were almost entirely eradicated and the bowling remained hostile at all times. Whatever the result of the second Test New Zealand will have regained some face in the sphere of international cricket on their first day's performance alone.

**R.** A VANCE filled yet another role on Saturday when due to the absence of Reid and Larkin he filled the unaccustomed position of slow bowler. Previous to last Saturday he had to fill the post of wicket-keeper.

Tich Boyer the third of the promising ex-Rongotai trio has his baptism in senior cricket on Saturday. He is one of the few regular keepers in the Varsity club and should make the most of his opportunity.

C.M.T. is still depriving Victoria of several good cricketers J. Thompson, R. Brini, J. Eadows and R. Harrison. We hope all will be available for Tournament.

Tony Clarke (Bill's younger brother) had a successful day with the ball on Saturday. He captured several Midland's second grade XI wickets with his medium paced outswingers. Poor fielding let the second grade side down on Saturday and has given them a fairly large total to chase.

### Write for Cappicade

Pour out your wit and satire for Cappicade this year. We are crying out for contributors (can't you hear us?). We want it quick. So write out that story, limerick, etc., and put it in the commonroom letter-rack or Exec. room addressed, "The Editors, Cappicade."

### REPORT ON GOODWILL TRIP

(Continued from Page 3)

to give a recital shortly in aid of the Melbourne University International House Appeal.

### DELEGATE TO HAWAII

So you can see that Asia loomed large in the minds of Council members even before the debate started. The main issues that were discussed were the ways in which the students of these countries could best be contacted so that we in Australia and New Zealand could help them and they could help us. This is not as easy as it sounds because in many of the countries of this area only patchy national student unions exist and, in some cases, they are not nationally representative at all. However, it was felt that when Webb returned some more useful information would come to hand. It was also suggested that steps should be taken through the Australian Overseas Clubs to contact individual Asian students and to have them as messengers of goodwill and advocates of closer co-operation when they returned to their homelands. This, I think, is a very sound scheme. In addition, the Council decided to send someone to the Pacific Conference being organised by the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii this Easter. The man selected, pending the completion of satisfactory arrangements for the use of cheap military transport, was International Affairs Officer Allan Barblett, a West Australian lawyer. If Barblett goes to Hawaii, he may possibly return through New Zealand, especially if we give him some assistance towards his journey. Unfortunately, N.Z.U.S.A. has not the wherewithal to send a representative to Hawaii. We will, however, be making some written contribution to the discussions that go on there.

It is this section of the international field that I think we can learn most from the Australians. We must remember that this area is just as important to us as it is to Australians. It provides us with some activity near at hand in which we can show our willingness to co-operate in practical activities in the international field. If, out of all this discussion, New Zealand and Australians are able to help the students in the South-East Asian area then I feel that my trip to Australia and any future trips by other observers will have been worth while.

In this article, I have concentrated very much on the one issue. When I started to write the article, I thought that I would probably be discussing a number of matters. However, I felt that it would be better to give a comprehensive coverage of one aspect of the Conference rather than to give a little about too much. When the time comes for the report to be presented to N.Z.U.S.A., the Editor will then be able to select other items that he may find interesting and, if he sees fit, publish them.

My own feelings are that it is too soon to tell whether the trip was worthwhile from the point of view of the advantages that will accrue to N.Z.U.S.A. There is no doubt that it was a worthwhile experience for me but this is never sufficient to justify the expenditure of student funds. I think that it would be profitable for as many students as possible to travel to Australia, or further for that matter. In the case of Australia, there is the unique opportunity that exists under the travel and exchange scheme. This is one way of working your passage through Australia and being in close contact with students all the time. If the employment position improves this year, and there are signs that it will, I would advise all students who have been thinking about participating in the scheme, to do something about it. They will find that they will meet a most hospitable group of students, that they will see institutions that are Universities in every sense of the word, and that they will return to New Zealand the better for their having travelled.

M. J. O'BRIEN.

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### EXIT CHARLIE, ENTER CHAPLIN

(Continued from Page 3)

else that has happened to me in this life." "His reaction to life you see," says Goldwyn, "is intensely personal, intensely emotional." And I say that intensity is reflected in this film.

There is also, of course, the failures of his private life. His unhappy marriages, the insults flung at him by those around him. "Chaplin today is trapped in paradox. He enjoys unparalleled fame and popularity, while at the same time he is loaded with infamy and unlimited hostility. The same man much loved and much hated, is a public idol and a public affront." He goes on his way in spite of all, but I feel sure that deep down there is a yearning for a happy and successful public life. We are made to feel that the real hero of "Limelight" is not Calvero, but Calvero-Chaplin. Several events of Chaplin's life are reflected in the dialogue; we are reminded of his love for human beings in spite of their fickleness, the crowd "which can be prodded in any direction." At other times we remember Chaplin's love life, but he assures us that he has reached "the age where a platonic friendship can be sustained on the highest moral plane." And, of course there is the reference to his five wives.

We now only have the bitterness of failure. Chaplin is no longer fighting society as he did in his earlier films. He has now reached the "melancholy twilight" of his life.

The presentation of "Limelight" is magnificent. "Simplicity is no simple thing," says Chaplin, and he should know because he has practised the art of non-stuffy, ostentatious camera work, to Chaplin, the signet of film art is not fancy camera toying, and how well he justifies his conviction. In "Limelight" we bear witness to a sense of rhythmic flow, of time (except when there have been obvious cuts) that is a common feature of a Chaplin film. The dialogue of the first half of the film is allowed to take its own course, with the camera moving only to point a line here, or to observe a reaction there. The camera tracks or moves only on rare occasions and then with great

effect. At the beginning of the film for example, when we move down a passage to a room and plunge straight into the drama. Or during the dance—like movement of the stage crew changing the set between the scenes of the ballet. The camera moves us to high altitudes amongst the files.

The acting is just as admirable. "Limelight" is the impressed work of the greatest artist of them all and he brings to the screen one of the most exact and perfect individual performances I have seen. I remember especially two revealing close-ups. The first after his courageously unfunny rendering of "The Flea Training" act. Calvero hears applause, but as he stares out at the auditorium he suddenly realises that there is no audience present. The camera moves forward to catch the full poignancy of that realisation. The second, Calvero's prolonged stare into a mirror that reveals that once the make-up is removed, there is no comedy left in that ageing and withering face. I remember Calvero's various attitudes towards Terry, the drunken scenes, the interview with his agent, the admirable audition scene, the "wooing" of the rent-starved landlady, the Spring Song

stage turn, and the unforgettable final half hour of comedy and pathos. Chaplin the clown reveals himself to be a great dramatic actor.

And yet another Chaplin achievement. His sound track. A miracle of simplicity, the most moving I have heard. It moved me both to tears and to laughter. To tears (forgive my frankness) when Terry first discovers that she can walk again. As she shouts "Look Calvero, I'm walking, I'm walking?" her voice is drowned by the film's theme tune (it is sentimental and emotional, quite simple). A moving effect obtained by elementary means; no fancy tricks. To laughter, in the last comic act, with Calvero on the violin and Buster Keaton at the piano. The aural gags double the side-splitting effects of the visual. Chaplin the perfecter of the silent screen now conquers the sound track. (If I had space I would have mentioned further subtleties. The conversation behind a closed door, for example.)

For me, this criticism is largely a problem of selection. Which of "Limelight's" store of beauties and subtleties shall I chose for mention? This one perhaps. Calvero gives Terry a lecture on consciousness, on the fact that we are thinking beings, on

the miracle of existence. "What do the stars do? Nothing, except sit on their axis. Can stars think? Are they conscious? No, but you are." And he goes away to his couch, only to become a prey to this consciousness. All the nostalgia, all the dread of failure returns, as he remembers and thinks about the successes of his younger days.

Or this one: the final scene of the film. The dead body of Calvero lies on a couch in the wings, and the camera draws away. Terry, unconscious of the comedian's death is still dancing. She pivots in front of the camera, in the foreground, hiding Calvero from view. And she is in dazzling white against a background of gloom. What a miracle of suggestion! What a magnificent farewell shot for "Limelight."

From "The Gold Rush" to "Limelight." What now? Calvero says: "I must go on. That's progress." Can we expect the same of Chaplin? I hope so, because I want to see some more of this man.

"Limelight's" grading \*\*\*\*\*

Last week's solution: The advertised film was "Knockout."

Two more themes common in most pictures (according to Roger Mancev)—

- (1). A sock in the jaw is an honest man's answer.
- (2). Women can be come-hither till you don't know where.

### Catholic Student Guild A.C.M.

The following were the officers elected at the A.G.M. on Sunday night.

President, Mr. S. Johnson; vice-president, Mr. B. Galvin; treasurer, Mr. P. Goodson, committee, Misses G. Lescher, C. Dath, N. O'Shea, Messrs. D. Donovan, R. Edwards, G. Proctor.

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