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SPIKE

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SPIKE

THE yearly reduction in the size of SPIKE has halted with the 1943 issue; this magazine is the same length as in 1942. We are not grateful. Had there been a very few more pages we should have been forced to that ancient and patriotic stratagem of printing assertively, " GOD SAVE THE KING," on each of them. It is therefore with profound feeling that we thank those who did write, and those who helped to produce their writings.

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Permit No. 717

CONTENTS

FRANCE

Fascist heels ring in the hollow streets;
Threats whisper in the gusty shadows;
Faded moon-glare enamels the restless buildings;
Silence passes through the hollow streets.
Long ago, in day's sunshine,
Joan came riding from Orleans,
Over the grass unweighted by buildings;
Sun in her armour shines.
Voices filling a cloudless sky,
The hedge grown wild with roses,
The stilled trees relaxed with warmth,
The sweaty smell of the horses.
An icy breath echoes in the hollow streets;
Memory of day is distant and frozen.
Long ago men made these buildings;
The life that was France coursed through the street,
When Voltaire, Diderot, laughed at the priests,
And stood boldly into the light.
When the people of France outgrowing their bonds,
Struck the oppressor, with sobbing hate;
When the sturdy young Communards snatched at the future;
When France was great.
The fascist heels pause in the hollow streets;
The hanging shadows are bulky and dark.
France in nineteen seventeen,
Close brown fog round a smoke-grimed train:
Khakhi men engrossed with the moment,
Troops moving up to the Line;
A heavy moment dropped from halted time.
France drifting to the expected war;
Truculent fascists take stand all round;
Then like an alarm-clock in the grey morning,
Fascist tank-tracks grind.
People banded, grimly waiting;
Officers with contemptuous smile
Let the bonds grow limp, and welcome
The fascist to the people's soil.
The fascist heels tread with leaping fear;
The shadows grow, and meet;
The whispers will become a routing din,
The streets will pulse with life again,
There will be blood with the dawn
And there will be flowers with the morning.

QUENTIN BARR

EDITORIAL

OUR FIFTH YEAR of war begins. It is time we looked about us. What part has Victoria College played in the community and in that struggle, the results of which most intimately concern us? And what result has this part had in the pages of SPIKE?

Our cover design is not misleading: we have served well. In the vanguard went those who fought; behind them stand those who study in order that they too may fight, not in the sands of Egypt nor the streets of Naples, but in the laboratories, the factories, the offices. With them go those whose duty it is to maintain this University intact, to carry on the fight for student unity, and to keep our institutions flourishing so that we may say to those returning, "We have served doubly, both in the civilian line and on the hill."

1943 has been satisfactory in both these respects. The majority of students are part-timers, many of them in essential industries. Nevertheless student activities have been virile, study has been vigorous, and examinations have been passed. But in studying SPIKE does the reader get any inkling of this? The articles are certainly more concrete than usual; they are criticisms or discussions on trends of writing or film making induced directly by the war. But where are the short stories? Why has not a part of the experience and anguish of individuals snatched into this war machine been caught up and crystallised before us? We have had short story writers, where are they now when material for their pen is so abundant?

The writings and strivings of overseas students have become so vigorous that perhaps we go too far in applying their standards to New Zealand. Perhaps the two tendencies, to do more, and to write more, are in opposition. Let us hope that the answer lies in that; surely the upsurge of progressive student writing the world over can not have passed New Zealand by. To judge by ROSTRUM it has, in SPIKE we are not sure.

"DISTANT POINT" AND THE SOVIET THEATRE

"I remember him as a young man interested in the widest aspects of art and literature, and I remember him most of all as the author of one flawless play that moved me, with my fifteen years' experience as a dramatic critic, rather more than any play has ever moved me on any European stage. It was the voice of the future speaking, with the trained and cultured accent of the past."
(Hubert Griffith, in a memoir of Alexei Afinogenev.)

THE CRITICS who have railed at the conscious didacticism of the Soviet theatre, who have so hideously misconstrued the "Art is a weapon" formula, will be confounded by Afinogenev's "Distant Point." They will have nothing left to do but to sneer, and even that will be very difficult. For it is not a new theory only which pervades the play, but a new life.

Alexei Afinogenev played his part in shaping this new life. He was only thirteen when the Revolution came, but in 1920, he tells us, he held sixteen different jobs simultaneously. In altering nature, we alter ourselves; and between Afinogenev's first play, "Robert Tim," and his last, "Distant Point," there lies a period when the author and the society he depicted were alike transformed. In his play "Fear," Afinogenev shows the new life being built up in one country; by the time "Distant Point" is staged the new life is an actuality, and the scene of the play is the whole world. "We all have only one Distant Point," writes Matvel in the book he presents to Glasha, "a world

in which all men shall live their lives in freedom and happiness . . . . " We all think of that, live for that . . . . to the very last second of our last hour. And when death comes—why, we'll die alive!

The adolescence of Soviet drama was a stormy period. Western intellectuals were alarmed at the excessive use of dominating slogans; they deprecated the interference of the State in the artistic field; learned enemies of the Soviet continent rejoiced at each successive crisis and denunciation. They forgot that a new art, like a new society, does not grow up overnight like a mushroom. They forgot —or perhaps they did not want to remember—that the growth of a new art involves experiments and excesses. " Distant Point " at one blow makes their condemnations absurd, and their lugubrious sympathies merely pathetic.

Is it too much to claim all this for one play? No, if it is considered as a symbol of the present stage of development of Soviet art. Speaking generally, to appreciate Soviet drama up until a few years ago, one had to be a Communist, or at least know a little about the history of the new regime. There was a tendency to dump the reader down in the middle of the Five Year Plan, or some such specialised period, and leave him rather bewildered over the whole business. To understand " inga " or " Tempo," one had to realise that " Trotskyite " and " Deviationist " were not just words to frighten the children with, and this feat of mental legerdemain was impossible to most Western critics. The Soviet people, who were fulfilling the Five Year Plan, and who in the normal course of the day's activities had to fight against Trotskyites and deviationists, applauded the new drama that was written for them, but the Western intellectual, peering from his ultra-democratic ivory tower, could discern nothing on the Soviet horizon but bogey-men and inordinate praises of Stalin.

The abandonment of the Meierhold Theatre project was an objective symbolising the end of experimentation for its own sake. The cultured traditions of the Moscow Art Theatre and Stanislavsky, with just a touch of Meierhold here and there, form the basis of the most modern work. It has now become trite to say that " Distant Point " owes much to Chekov; it is also the fruit of those years of experiment which led to the present synthesis.

The setting of " Distant Point " is significant. The time is the present—not the days of the Civil War as in " Days of the Turbins " and many other plays. The scene is not a factory, or a collective farm—indeed it is almost as far away from any manifestation of construction work as it could possibly be. The action takes place on a tiny wayside railway station of the Trans-Siberian Railway, called " Distant Point," and in the woods around it. We are introduced to the very ordinary station staff—Koriushko, the station master, and his family; Vlas, a former priest; Lavrenti, a linesman, and his wife Glasha; and other characters, each with a distinct and most minutely portrayed personality. Zheniz, the station master's daughter, is an irrepressible youngster, a member of the Young Communist League (" The number of my party ticket is nought-nought-fifteen-twenty-three "—that is Zheniz). Lavrenti hates the isolated life; he wants to go to Moscow and be written up in the papers as a Hero of Labour. He says:

> " One can't live and die away in the wilderness . . . like an unknown pine tree . . . when around you there's constant great deeds and heroism . . . The Cheliuskin North-Pole people were saved . . . . people fly into the stratosphere . . . all sorts of records are being beaten all the time. They build canals, they build Dnieprostroy, towns in the Urals . . . . Everyone wants to be a hero, and I have to eat my heart out here . . . . There's no one even to write about us . . . . nobody to notice us . . . . That's how it is."

To this little station comes excitement and glamour, in the shape of a real live Red Army general, Matvei, whose coach has to come off at Distant Point for repairs. The way in which life at Distant Point is changed by his coming is the theme of the play. Let this not be misunderstood—there are no miraculous conversions, unless Lavrenti's final decision to stay at Distant Point can be classed as a conversion, and there are no long speeches praising the Soviet regime. And yet when the coach finally leaves, the inhabitant know *practically* the fact which they realised only in part before Matvei's arrival—the fact expressed in the following dialogue between the old pointsman Makarov and the disillusioned Vlas:

Makarov: In the old days . . . mmmm, in the old days . . . I was a pointsman and signalman on a railway . . . .

Vlas: And now?

Makarov (slowly): Now I'm a pointsman and signalman on the same railway . . . but the signals and the railways and everything in the whole country now belongs to me. That's the difference.

Possibly the most interesting part of the work—one of the underlying themes, in fact—is its presentation of the Bolshivik attitude toward death. Matvei, it is disclosed, has an incurable disease, which will cause his death within three months. Vlas, with faith neither in the God he has rejected nor in the new regime he despises, is haunted by the fear of death, although he would be the last to admit it. In one of the finest passages of the play the two confront one another:

Vlas: You'll have to die anyway . . . Wherever there's war, there's death.

Matvei: Even, if necessary, we'll have to pass through earth.

Vlas: And why should it be necessary?

Matvei: Why?—because we're building our happiness here on earth, and while we're building it we've got to defend our earth and our happiness.

Vlas: And if you're killed in the process?

Matvei: Then there'll be Lavrenti here still—and Glasha—and Petka . . . .

Vlas: But what does that mean to you? You'll not be here to see it.

Matvei: What if I'm not? I won't be here to-morrow at the station! But the farm for breeding sables will be here! And Glasha will be starting her search for gold . . . . And the more I can bring off and accomplish in life for the happiness of those close to me, the longer I shall live after death.

Vlas: And you've got lots of people close to you?

Matvei (with the ring of a trumpet in his voice): Enough! More than plenty! The workers of the entire world . . . . !

It is, as Matvei says, a long way from his God to that of Vlas. Matvei does not seek immortality, but is glad that he will live " in the minds and memories of living people, in what I've done here on earth."

The liberalism of the play will astonish those pedants who have not read " Squaring the Circle." Says Lavrenti: " To compare people like Morae with Budyonny!—the Party people, except Matvei, are equally immature, although there is a certain charm in their immaturity. Vlas makes certain subversive remarks concerning the method of dealing with class enemies through the muzzle of a gun, and Matvei does not endeavour to explain things to him. All through there are magnificent opportunities for potent preaching which the author carefully passes by. He is concerned with the New Man, and such preaching as there is, is merely a commonplace statement of actuality, and not the conscious propagation of ideas.

You get to like these people. Gennadi and his guitar and his simple little songs grows upon you, even if the guitar is, according to Lavrenti, a petit-bourgeois instrument. Glasha, with her Yakut eyes which can read secrets in the broken twig on the pathway, with her serene mysticism and the poetry of her people, is a fine creation. Even for Vlas we feel a bit sorry. They're a mixed lot at Distant Point, but finally we agree with Koriushko, who says, as he is saying goodbye to Matvei:

" And if you don't forget all about it, tell them in Moscow, Matvei Ilych . . . that you passed the station ' Distant Point '—and that things were all right there . . . . as they should be with Soviet railwaymen. You don't have to rememember our names . . . they don't matter . . . but simply tell them that the station ' Distant Point ' is linked with the whole country . . . "

" Be content in that station of life." Does the play say no more than this? Lavrenti decides not to seek honour and glory in Moscow; he gives up the idea of becoming a Hero of Labour or of flying to the North Pole. He stays at " Distant Point " railway station, 6,782 kilometres from Moscow and 2,250 kilometres from Vladivostock, with his wife and child. In a capitalist country, such a

" moral " in a drama would be reactionary. But in the Soviet Union, it is progressive, and if you can't understand why, you'd better read this play and find out.

Alexei Afinogenev was killed by a Nazi bomb which fell on Moscow early in November 1914. He was 41 years of age. His death is not the least of those crimes against humanity for which the Fascists will finally have to account.

R. L. MEEK.

PREFACE TO BATTLE

Now in the stolid hours before you join
The furtive jungle life in dealing death,
Now is the time to summarise—equate
What is at stake and the meaning of your breath.

You have found time to sing your urgent loves,
And reminisce in sorrow of your home,
To chant your battle preludes and anoint
Your weapons in a foreign ocean's foam.

The yellow butterfly, blown like a blossom of broom
By vagrant breezes, no doubt lightly skims
The stricken fields of Java, and the Yangtse
Rolls its turgid way while chaos rims
The dull horizon with a pall of death:
Over Europe Moon poised numb and still,
red-veined
With running fire, has still her pristine sheen.
All these, O Singer, have their glory stained,
And all the pleasures once you sang are dulled.
Would you prefer to ponder and relate
Your lingering memories when these stand
annulled,
And not assert your voice in urging Fate?

Now in the stolid hours before you join
The furtive jungle life in dealing death,
Now is the time to summarise—equate
What is at stake and the meaning of your breath.

WANDERING SCHOLARS

By Erik Schwimmer, *Correspondent of the Netherlands Indies Government Information Service.*

STUDENTS HAVE at present lost their fame of adventurers with which they added brightness to the middle ages and incited the hatred of the renaissance. In fact they have for ages been hated by nobody, considered simply polite young men who go into professions, whose main function during their apprentice period is preparing set books and examinations and engaging in the follies of youth.

Their degeneration into politeness, however, was only proceeding because it was polite to be reasonable; and after the relative victory of reason some hundred years ago it was the complete acceptance of scientific truth as the only truth that bred complacency among the learned. They began to consider their scientific bias as a policeman considers his uniform; as an excuse for ignorance on all other fields.

Science began to be associated with paleness and picture theatres began to delight in showing the superiority of glamour girls over awkward university professors who did not know how to face the facts of life.

The student is, however, not necessarily the dispassionate and eclectic albatross whose giant wings prevent him from marching. In ages past when he was hampered in the pursuit of truth he was a strong and determined adversary. In the present time, when fascism wishes to replace a large part of reason by imagination, by the rationally inassessible, he is again most intimately concerned and defends the very reason of his existence.

In Holland the demonstrations started very soon after the committees for Germanic culture introduced their various doctrines on history, ethics and ethnology. The professors gave subversive addresses, the students showed a determined anti-nazi attitude, printed bitter in memoriams of executed colleagues in their periodicals, and, also doubtless formed part of saboteur organisations.

The whole aspect of the colleges had changed. The free forum attitude upon which university life in the Netherlands had always been based gave way to a definite tendentiousness; such fascist students as there were (less than one per cent.) were entirely boycotted: with those whose creed was the insignificance of reason, whose practice was the distortion of truth, there could be no compromise.

The Germans dismissed Jewish professors: there were general student strikes, protest meetings, etc.; the Universities were temporarily closed. When they opened again new chairs of astonishing descriptions had been instituted, in branches of knowledge specially and exclusively designed for the Germanic world. These positions were not offered to such worthy men as that German professor who committed suicide when ordered to give a course on the Aryan descent of the Japanese. The chairholders are unqualified men who think it quite good business, tell their simple tales and are fortunate that their subjects have been made compulsory. Sometimes the students had occasion for a little revenge such as when a lecturer said he did not wish to go into the position of peace and economic judges and somebody of the audience inquired whether the reason of this was that he considered these offices very ephemeral.

In the first two years of occupation the German routine of imprisoning professors, shooting students, appointing fascist lecturers, went on in Holland as in all other countries under Nazi rule. The most drastic instance was the appointment of one soapbox agitator from the Dutch fascist party, an amazingly unqualified barbarian, to professor of philosophy at the University of Utrecht.

It was only recently that the menace to students became more direct and that as a result of steady persecution the majority of students in Holland are now refugees roaming the countryside, hiding underground from the Secret Police, and that students have become to the Germans a special class of professional instigators and saboteurs.

During last December the Netherlands were charged by a wave of roundups due to clamours from Berlin for 45,000 workers to be delivered before the end of the year. The German authorities found

themselves unable of collecting the victims at such short notice and determined to empty the universities for the occasion, which would not strengthen their Kultur propaganda but rid them of a very troublesome part of the population. The principals of Dutch Universities were told in a secret meeting that they had to provide 8,000 students from all but the science and medicine faculties, which the principals flatly refused to do.

Fearing forceful intervention from the Gestapo the college boards immediately took action. The University of Amsterdam published a notice that lectures had to be discontinued owing to acute shortage of coal. The University of Delft organised a mass exodus the morning after the meeting. In Utrecht a fire broke out in the record room of which the student registers became the well selected victims and for fear of seizures university life throughout the country came to a standstill.

When they found their immediate plans impracticable the Germans had recourse to an ancient ruse and cancelled the measure. Never again would they set their hearts upon the sanctuaries of learning: the fosterers of the sciences would henceforth be safe as in Abraham's bosom; that they should return and resume their studies. The Dutch were doubtful, wavered, waited a little.

The authorities persisted in their courteous attitude. And slowly, all too unsuspectingly, the students trickled in. By the beginning of February college life had almost come back to normal; few stayed away; most students with true Dutch heedlessness of dangers, had quietly returned and were telling their friends that they thought that storm had blown over. They wished to continue their studies.

This was a tragical error. Suddenly the Germans started to empty the colleges in all University towns and drag the students out of their homes. A Dutch underground paper bitterly comments: "The unfortunates have been warned hundreds of times. In order to avoid lagging behind in studies the foolish students continued to troop to college. Now they will lose a year or will never return."*

Razzias raged everywhere: from streets, cafes, picture theatres, students were picked up and rushed to concentration camps. There would be small intervals of peace to make things settle down somewhat and more savage roundups would follow. Finally it became the custom for students, when new roundups were whispered of, to take a holiday at an unusual address, to seek work in agriculture or in dairy farms. Frequently the ground grows too hot and they have to go underground. None of their relatives knows of their whereabouts. The Gestapo surrounds them everywhere, in the disguise of helpful patriots, trying to trap them with alluring proposals to help them to Switzerland or to Britain.

It was not very long before University life was once again at a complete standstill. Thousands had been arrested; thousands succeeded in hiding from the authorities; nobody had the carelessness to attend lectures. Students wrote pamphlets, planned armed resistance, and recent messages from Stockholm tell us of students shot together with the printers who multiplied their writings. The principals of the Universities issued a warning that higher education would be suspended until all imprisoned students were released.

These warnings have had no results. The Germans since granted study permits to all those who were willing to sign a declaration of allegiance to Nazi Germany, and reopened one or two of the colleges. They forbid all Dutchmen to employ the fugitives who had not signed, withheld their ration cards.

Almost no students have returned however; they keep to their fox holes from which they will issue only to pursue a free science and to fight the invader.

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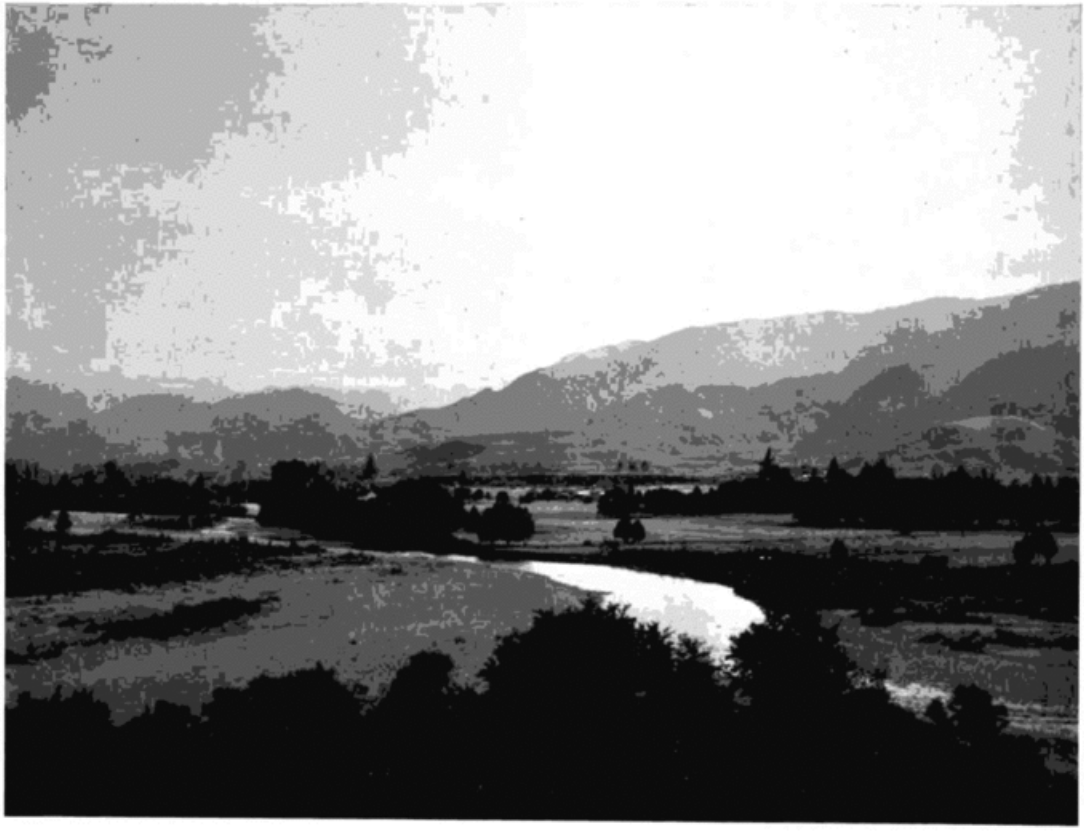
* The Germans had promised labour service for students would only last one year.



TAKAKA VALLEY

J. W. Brodie

SIKH

A. R. Anderson

HOLLYWOOD AND PARNASSUS

THERE HAS BEEN a silent revolution in Hollywood since the war. Bad films are becoming the exception. America, finding herself in a just fight and reflecting the aspirations of this fight has produced films which have the mark of healthy art—which have features and tendencies once seldom found except in the socialist cinema of the U.S.S.R. This has gone on without conscious application of new ideals—rather in spite of the old ideals. It is a striking proof of the influence of the social environment on art.

This is a people's war. In America, especially, increasing stress is laid on industry and industrial workers. A film such as *Joe Smith American,* the story of a factory worker, is directly inspired by the war, yet it is a sympathetic portrayal of a working man. *Priorities on Parade* was a Hollywood musical revue. It was advertised as nothing more. Yet it was a whole epoch ahead of the revues of a year or two ago. The motive was no longer the unhealthy dope—the sexy escape of pre-war swing films—but necessary relaxation for aircraft factory workers. The glamour girl was a welder, the singing hero worked in an aircraft factory and was even human enough to find the wages an added attraction to the job. And the very jivin' manifested a complete change of content within the old form—in place of the negro porters of contorted expression we had a machine dance strikingly reminiscent of the dances of Soviet China.

Wake Island was a heroic film. It set out to prove that the American Marine is a great guy—no new motive. But a new kind of Marine for Hollywood. This bunch of Americans on the lonely bomb-pounded island was made up of real live Marines and the heroism of their struggle—a convincing reconstruction of actual events—made the dare-all glamour boys of the old type film a very pale memory. And the civilian engineers—ordinary navvies, and heroes when necessary, were further indications of the change in art that has come with the war.

The Burma Road is obviously an attractive subject for adventure films. *A Yank on the Burma Road* and *Bombs over Burma* both depicted American truck drivers in Burma. Both were carried away with their subject—could not tell of China without being deeply impressed by the people's struggle for life and freedom. Both thus gained a deeper seriousness which lifted them from the level of mere entertainment.

Entertainment has always been the prime motive of American films. They have been produced for no other motive than profit, and people pay more for amusement than enlightenment. The war has changed this too. Propaganda—the encouragement of the war effort—becomes the major consideration. This may have far reaching effects on the cinema if its influence is continued. Except in the U.S.S.R. the cinema has not been considered as more than entertainment; it is subject to amusement tax and is considered an unworthy alternative to good books. Perhaps the same was thought of drama in the age of Elizabeth—or of Aeschylus. In the scattered cities of the modern world there is very little opportunity for the average person to come into contact with good drama. The cinema could be in part a substitute—not for the development of local dramatic talent in towns and villages but for a national drama which has never flourished since the disappearance of the city states of Greece. It could become not entertainment only but a cultural asset. Our schools in their endeavour to give a background to modern literature lay great emphasis on the literature of the past. But they neglect to relate this to modern literature, just as Latin grammar seldom culminates in an appreciation of the Latin poets. The means becomes the end. Consequently modern art seems in some danger of neglect. The cinema is not a substitute for all other art forms but it should be a supplement. It should be recognised as part of the stream of literature—a new offshoot much as the novel was in Fielding's day.

Sometimes we read ecstatic descriptions of the power of classics over readers. We read these classics and are not more than a little interested. The fault is not with us. These are the works which engrossed past ages and are now of immense value to the student of literature, but no longer hold

their original fascination. A good film can grip the attention in this way—it is modern art and suited to modern needs and requires no effort of historical knowledge in its appreciation. People finding this fascination in the cinema and not in works commonly termed "good literature" tend to become altogether antagonistic to literature.

Of course certain books are popularised by the films, by being dramatised. It is another progressive feature of war films that this tendency is declining. Films are constructed with a view not to fidelity to a book but to dramatic propriety in the film. It is beginning to be realised that the film has its own rules and proprieties.

The period of poorly conceived films has not been entirely in vain—it has been accompanied by a development of technical skill, of sound, of technicolor, so that the pioneer work is accomplished and the possibility of a new art form is with us. It has been argued that this perfection is in reality a defect and that the audience is not encouraged to use its imagination at all—that a return to the Shakespearean stage with its scanty scenery would be healthy. This is similar to the theory that the machine age is retrogressive because it encourages laziness. Just as the relegation of heavy physical labour to the machine frees mankind for intellectual and administrative work, so the improved technique of the cinema removes distractions from the higher functions of the imagination.

In New Zealand film-making is a very young industry. But New Zealand Film Units offer plenty of hope for the future. They have not the luxurious effects of American films but they are sound and close to life—they have the freshness of England's early poetry. Developed along these lines they should achieve much.

G. W. TURNER

HOME GUARD

Even here where the lovely Alps
rise arrogant above our northern pride
we labour six days and on the seventh
play war on the green hill-side.

Now we have learnt to keep in step
and wear khaki without selfconsciousness
we are only a short step from Libya or Japan;
but in the meantime we are concerned with the procedure
of falling in and falling out again,
and a technique of war whose parts (like amateur actors)
we know, awkwardly, forgetting the lines . . . .

And always the question, what's the use?

For here where the broom is the target
and only the gorse and the blackberry resist
it is hard to remember brothers and friends dead
to whom this was play once and now is real,
more real than leaves and the dead stumps
of fingers that no longer feel.

The sun rising goes down over Europe leaving a darkness
that Dante in his dreams never envisaged;
and even when we go home at night it doesn't stop.

—ANTON VOGT.
(1/5/43)

MAYAKOVSKY

MAYAKOVSKY—The poet who hated " poetic diction "; who wrote for the needs of the moment, and whose work will endure for all time; the man who brought the most vital poetry of his age to the mass of his people and who has been referred to as " lacking in art."

Towering above other poets of his time, Mayakovsky dominates in his greatness revolutionary soviet poetry. Yet he did not consider himself a born poet. Primarily a revolutionary he considered how best he could serve the cause of the advancement of mankind. Born at the end of the last century, in 1893 in a remote Georgian village, Vladimir Mayakovsky knew life under the Russian Czar. By the time he had reached his teens he had not only met the grind of poverty but also as a student worked in the revolutionary movement of the workers which had affected the Universities. Eleven months in a Tsarist prison gave him time for thought and study and on emerging he wanted to create a new socialist art, and, with work, discussion, and encouragement the ground-plans were laid for Russian futurism.

Again and again he was baulked by his inability to satisfy his high standards in both thought and language. There was his early personal magnificence in " A Cloud in Trousers " (1913).

" I shake the world with the might of my voice
And stalk—handsome
twenty-two years old."

But this in itself was not enough and his development over the next few years was as startling as it was brilliant. He had early forsaken the strict metres of the old order, rather he aimed at something more living, vital, something nearer to the spoken language, and where the versemakers plodded through jerking iambics and footweary anapaests, Mayakovsky learnt to write poetry in the language of his people, in speech rhythms often nearing rhetoric. (1)

With the coming of the Revolution of 1917 he saw active political service. The Red Fleet in the Baltic asked him to read some poetry to them, feeling his work unworthy of their proud greatness he wrote " Left March " for them.

In the years that followed the revolution Mayakovsky lived an incredibly active life, he wrote three film scripts and acted in the leading roles, made about a thousand posters and wrote thousands more captions. Then the wiseacres remarked to one another, these wise literary yes-men of reaction, " He is prostituting his art! He has written verses on hygiene, for war relief and for Red Army volunteers! This man will stoop to anything! He is no poet." Theirs was wishful thinking. While Mayakovsky was turning out epigrammatic instructions " not to drink unboiled water " in verse for the uneducated, he was at the same time building up his greatest achievements.

He saw poetry in the things in the world which he considered great. One poem " Paris " subtitled " A chat with the Eiffel tower " is where he entreats it to come to Moscow

" There—
You're more needed.
Steel-shining
Smoke-piercing
We'll meet you
Moscow
is spacious
Everyone
will have you in their street!"

Yet he comes from the whimsical treatment of his theme to the folly of

" Paris of dandies and dudes
Paris of yap yawning bouldevards."

At this time too he wrote a poem " My Soviet Passport " which is a chuckle against the French gendarmerie who examining it

" Take it—
like a bomb
take—like a hedgehog."

Lenin himself at some conference referred to Mayakovsky's satire on the intolerable number of conferences held where after searching for someone who is always in conference

" Into that conference
I burst like lava . . . . .
And see:
people sitting there in halves . . . . .
Then I hear the calmest of the clerks point out
They're at two conferences at the same time."

On those early days boiled water meant people's lives and in the development of administration and institutions criticism was necessary, and in this Mayakovsky played his part.

" I don't want to be
a wayside flower
Plucked after work*
in an idle hour
I want Gosplan (2)
to sweat in debate
Assigning my output
as part of the State
I want the pen
to equal the gun
to be listed with iron
in industry
And the Polit Bureau (3) agenda:
Item I
To be Stalin's report on
' THE OUTPUT OF POETRY.' "

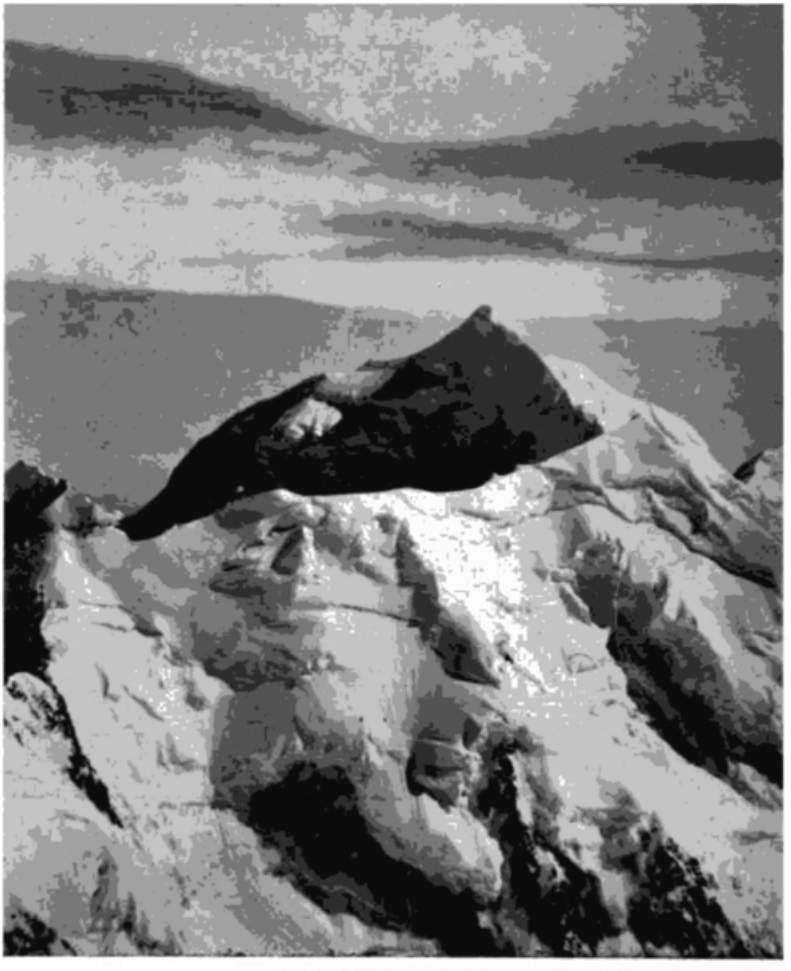
Mayakovsky's greatest work, at any rate of that available to English readers in his epic poem " Lenin " part of which has been translated into our language by Herbert Marshall and dedicated to the newly bereaved Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It is not merely the personal story of a great man, in the grief of the Soviet peoples in mourning, Lenin's gift to mankind can be recognised. He is dead but

" Lenin
is now
the most live of all living
Our weapon
our knowledge
our power."

Guiding genius of Russia's peoples through reaction to revolution, Lenin left a poetry of knowledge, a grieving people and work well done

" Today
brings a genuine anguish
hearts break frozen
We
bury
now
the most earthly
of all
Who have lived
on this earth of men.

TASMAN VALLEY *R. S. Unwin*



MT TASMAN *R. S. Unwin*

SPIKE

In this epic Mayakovsky writes the story of the ages of man's exploitation of man, from the cry of the early slaves to the years in the memory of when the communards of Paris died for liberty, up to the present day

Hear the thunderous rumble
of the oncoming years
the accumulating anger
of human evolution
a storm of rebellion
whose lightning sears
and flames of revolt
flare to red revolution."

Moving in its simplicity, stark in its feeling, even in translation it cannot fail to open new fields and indeed a new conception of literature to English readers.

He wrote for his audience—a people working and consciously striving up the road of mankind's advancement. His was the radiant energy of an inspired genius, throwing aside conventional expressions and sweeping all before him with his vitality. Twenty-four when the October Revolution came, thirty-seven when he died, yet Mayakovsky made a contribution to human progress to be measured not merely in words and books. His work can be seen not only in the poetry but in the spirit of the Soviet Union to-day.

Once at the reading of his work he had said

" With Lenin in our heads
And a gun in our hands . . . "

but a Red Armyman finished it for him

" And your poetry in our hearts, Comrade Mayakovsky."

—M.C.C.

FOOTNOTES—

(1) The parallel best-known in English literature is where Coleridge in Christabel breaks away from the conventional regularity of the unaccented syllables although he preserves the accents.
(2) State planning commission of the U.S.S.R.
(3) Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik).

SOME THOUGHTS

ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

"To spend too much time in studies is sloth: to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment only by their rules, is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience." (Lord Bacon—Essays Civil and Moral)

HERE WE FIND the beginning of the scientific spirit; the germination of a seed that was to become the first real tree of knowledge, with its roots deep in the world of human experience. For the essence of the outlook of the scientific man is to combine the study of textbooks with the handling of test tubes. Theory for the scientist must be " bounded in by experience." There can be no knowledge which does not fall within the realm of experiment: metaphysical speculation despite its high-sounding jargon has no place in the scientific attitude. Theory and practice are two aspects of man's activities in changing the world in which he lives. When the alchemists gave up their search for things created by speculation and began the task of discovering laws which enabled them to turn nature to their service chemistry was born. The science of chemistry arose when men wanted to know how to make sulphuric acid and other things for which the industrial changes of the times created demands. These demands could not be met by word-spinning. Science knows only one way in the search for truth, the careful observation of experiments and the generalising of the results of many observations in the form of laws which can guide the actions of other men. Until men had learned to base their theories on practice we could say with the Honourable Robert Boyle (the Skeptical Chymist).

> " Methinks the chymists, in their searches after truth, are not unlike the Navigators of Solomen's Tarshish Fleet, who brought home from their long and tedious voyages, not only Gold and Silver and Ivory, but Apes and Peacocks too; for the writings of several (for I say not all) of your Hermetick Philosophers present us, together with divers substantial and noble experiments, Theories, which either like Peacock's feathers make a great show, but are neither solid nor useful; or else like Apes, if they have some appearance of being rational, are blemished with some absurdity or other, that when they are attentatively considered make them appear Ridiculous."

To-day in the capitalist countries, and particularly in the fascist countries, there is a reversion to fantastic word-spinning, to the production of theories based on vain imaginings. We find highly placed men of science becoming High Priests of the cult of Mathematical Deity; there are snobbish sniffings on the part of highly specialised theoreticians when applied science is discussed. Theory and practice are losing contact. The dissertations of the High Priests of the New Mysticism " if they have the appearance of being rational are blemished with some absurdity or other that when they are attentatively considered make them appear ridiculous." Those who are tempted to believe in the Great Ones who live in the splendid isolation of the Court of Higher Mathematics or the maze of the new quantum physics may well be reminded that the object of the founders of that austere body, the Royal Society, was the study of " natural philosophy and husbandry according to the principles of our new philosophical college that values no knowledge but as it hath a tendency to use."

It is not accidental that Boyle, living during the period of development of the new capitalist world should have had this virile outlook, nor are the metaphysical meanderings of our modern mathematicians dissociated from the general break-up of our capitalist society in which the weevil and the drought help in keeping production down and prices up while the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before becomes an embarrassment.

The wheel of history has, however, just completed a revolution and we now see the beginning of

a new virile society in which there is once more a keen pursuit after " knowledge that hath a tendency to use." In the Soviet Union the scientist has become part of a great team united in the tremendous task of building a new form of human society. And in this task of changing the world science has been rewarded by the discovery of important new laws; despite the awful warnings of the pundits of our declining democracies theory has made great strides, and in the abstract fields of higher mathematics and wave mechanics important advances are being made.

Perhaps the greatest feature of Soviet science is the fact that the scientific worker sees his discoveries applied with enthusiasm to the task of helping his fellows. Whereas in our world a novel discovery may become the property of a large monopoly, its sole value being to increase the wealth and power of a few people, in Soviet Russia a new invention becomes immediately the property of the people to be applied in building the new world. But lucky is he who has his ideas exploited by a capitalist monopoly for it is even more likely that they will be " pidgeon-holed," never to see the light of day. A new invention which causes the obsolescence of valuable private property is frequently a serious embarrassment.

Ours is a dead world which only progresses during periods of destruction; a world for which war is the only solution for its difficulties. Science at present is going ahead because it has become necessary to devise ways and means of killing men, women, and children more quickly than the enemy can. British estimates for rearmament expenditure for 1937-41 were £1,500,000,000, while the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research investigating food, clothing, housing, etc. spent £600,000 in 1936-37.

" This is the dead land,
This is the cactus land,
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star."

Fascism has come to prop up our decaying civilisation, and with the spread of its evil influence the stars of learning are one by one eclipsed. Man's spirit is stupefied by propaganda and lies, the people of the reactionary countries will be remembered—

" if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men."

But we are not without hope, for at this very moment the Red Army men are throwing the Nazi war machine back across the Ukraine, the entire Russian people has risen to throw out the invader—to destroy the hordes of Hitler-created puppets. The Russian people have for a time thrown their energies into destroying an evil world rather than building a good one. They recognise in Nazism not only a military enemy, but an enemy of the spirit, an enemy that would attack everything for which the Soviet Union stands.

" Modern Russians have qualities which bourgeois governments lack: warm faith in principles without which any society is doomed to destruction. The Russians believe that society exists for the purpose of assuring a free life of the body and spirit to all workers. The Russians believe that men exist on earth for the purpose of creating a happier life for other people and their dependents." (Paul Gsell.)

It is the unity which such a creed inspires which will destroy the slaves of reaction. The war on the Eastern front is a war between the very spirits of the combatants. It is a struggle between the past and the future. And the future must win: a new world is being created in which men's ideals and their deeds are one. Men in this Soviet world are no longer content to preach one day of the week and live basely during the rest. A socialist cannot have an ideal which is not at once a deed; he cannot have theories which are not actions. The ideals of Liberty, Equality and International Fraternity are for the modern Soviet citizen " bounded in by experience." HERMES.

ALLIANCE

(*For an American friend, 12/8/1943*)

Not by statesmen signing treaties,
pen in hand and doubt at heart—
diplomatic undertow,
power politics, self interest, greed . . . .

But an alliance is made in the minds of the people, read
in the pulse of the mob,
formed in the barber shops over the ice-cream soda, in bars
and commonrooms
of colleges, and shadowed in the Gall-up poll. It is written
in the will of the people,
signed in a thousand separate friendships and sealed with
mutual trust.

It is the children of stranger nations meeting: the untaught
friendliness
of frank goodwill: the alien names—Hiram, Virgil, Elmer,
Cary—
accepted at New Zealand hearths. Names learned and loved.

And it is deeper than that, deeper than comparing of speech
and customs and superficial things.
When your men have loved our women and been loved in
return,
When you have climbed our hills and sweated, and we in
turn
have pondered over atlases and found strange-sounding
names—
Sleepy eye and Baton Rouge, Indianhead and Albany,
Shiloh and St. James—
then there is forged alliance that is stronger than treaty and
pen,
an alliance that is graven deeply in the hearts of women
and men.

You were your country's envoys here: and now that your
task is done
we charge you with a mission: be our ambassadors at home.
Tell the people of America we live for the same ambitions
as they
fight for the same ideals, illusions and hopes. Offer our
friendship
to them.
Two years in Greece and Crete and Libya our
soldiers fought

SPIKE

and kept the war from you. And now we mourn with our
own dead those of yours
who dying stood between us and invasion by the common
foe—
men of Indianhead and Sleepy Eye, Albany and Baton
Rouge.

Go from here, proud that you have served your country well
first on the field of honour and then as interpreters here.
For your sake
We hold to this alliance. Do you the same.

Then a peace may be established when all the killing is done
that will outlast our generations, and save our grand-sons'
sons
from growing up predestined fodder for newer, bigger,
better guns;
and over the islands of the south security be set, and our two
nations share
the burdens of progress and defence of the backward peoples
there;
and over the freed and grateful populations, two wartorn
flags displayed
witness continuance of an alliance that you, and I, and
others made.

RAMAS.

SYMPATHY

What can the fireside know
Of the dugout's weather-grey sacking?
How can the sweetheart feel
The gunned nerves breaking?

Distant on wide, real, rock
A steel thrust and I bleed.
How much will the city miss
The unnoticed dead?

QUENTIN BARR

CONFESSIONS OF A DEMONSTRATOR

AT THE beginning of the year, the Stage One Science Demonstrator sees his students fresh, keen and eager to learn. At the end, the academically-finished product. Does he feel pleased with what he sees? Can he look on the multitude and say—a good step forward in their education? By their year's work they have been better fitted to occupy a responsible place in society. Can he think that the viewpoints they have obtained will help them throughout life?

Like Hell he can!

If he is a conscientious Demonstrator and believes that attitudes as well as examination answers are important, he will feel very disappointed with his year's toil. Still a Demonstrator is only a Demonstrator for a year. For most, one year is sufficient. The causes, ideas, attitudes with which he hoped to impregnate impressionable youth have been abandoned or subdued. The whole system, he generalizes, is at fault. No one particular individual is responsible. All, by their inertia and passive acceptance of the prevailing mode contribute. Yes, even the student, who assists that process making for larger classes and impersonal lectures, by taking an interest in his subject only as a corner of a degree, or by accepting and recording uncritically every word and thought uttered by the infallible lecturer.

So does the Demonstrator reason and leave. Occasionally he takes the occupation seriously and makes the sad mistake of staying two or three years, hoping and waiting. When he then departs, he feels the years are wasted and goes back to the farm, disillusioned.

Of course one year of demonstrating is a valuable and eye-opening experience for any young upstart. To have his idealism and belief that the people on top act according to rational and not purely emotional considerations shattered is a good levelling process. He sees once more his close relationship with common dust.

The general process goes in stages, something like this. Before his first practical class he thinks, " Well, what *do* I know? Do I know more than they do! What sort of questions will I be asked? " and in a shiver of nervous apprehension runs over the section of theory covered by the trac. in one of the largest reference books he can find, carefully memorizing all those tricky little ideas he thinks may crop up. He enters the first Prac. As likely as not the first thought is, " A dumber-looking lot I've never seen." He's right, but he doesn't really know it. Ah no, not yet. Not till next week does he realise how bad they really are. But I anticipate the story. What really greets him is a crowd of people suddenly thrown into a laboratory, and having found their places, standing by them in remuninative perplexity. Sooner or later one or two get the idea and start in to toil. Others see them and their social instincts being strong (in actual fact probably only about average but artificially inflated by wartime enthusings) feel the urge to do the same thing. So they read the first paragraph on the sheet before them which says—do this, this and this—and they do it. Not content with performing each operation once, they try them all several times until they have so mastered the technique as to have spent ninety minutes and fathomed the first two lines. Then the questions begin. Strange questions. Not at all academic. Things like " Can I smoke?" and from the very bright and bold, " What's that thing over there in the corner?" All questions are followed by a servile " Sir " and the Demonstrator begins to feel his importance. At last he's found a niche in life. He's big.

So much for the first Prac. and the first week. By the second some realise that here is a new phenomenon they've come across—they don't quite understand what they are, or are supposed to be doing, so they refer to the textbooks and ask questions. Others, secure in the knowledge and truth revealed by their school exercise books feel that all is chaff. By the fourth week the multitude are

roughly sifted into three classes, the bright, the plodders, and the dummies. The bright have ceased to call the Demonstrator Sir, and ask him fearless questions. The plodders call the Demonstrator Sir, and put down what happens in the text books. The dummies also call the Demonstrator Sir but furtively direct their questions to the nearest neighbour.

The weeks pass by and the Demonstrator no longer worries whether he knows enough or not, and the students on their part begin to chat. The atmosphere becomes more friendly. Those who can do intelligent prac. work are easily picked out from those who cannot. The first examination paper serves as a testing ground for their theoretical knowledge and the Demonstrator has the trials of the people who think

(a) he sets the paper
and (b) he knows the questions, and/or
(c) he marks it.

When the marks are released he sees the effect of " swot " or otherwise. The results are surprising. Good students down low, poor ones up high.

It is shortly after this, in the second term, that he begins to criticise his department and University bitterly. All its faults become manifest to him. He sees the inadequacy of the staff to cope with the large numbers of students and he sees the inadequacy of the building, the equipment, and the facilities. These things worry him and maybe he inquires further and finds the basic cause to be lack of University finance. This, he sees as an urgent problem, and wonders what can be done, and why hasn't it been done. He will also probably realise that the classes as constituted at present carry much dead weight. Lazy or unintelligent students who keep back those more able to benefit by teaching, abound. Then the examination system—God of the University—comes in for criticism.

Soon he finds that there is little he can do about these things, but as problems they remain very much alive in his mind. The things that could have been done and have not, then become apparent. How University teachers have tolerated such large heterogeneous classes he cannot understand. He may even become militant about these things and seek to improve his own or his department's position. It is then that he really meets inertia and conscious misunderstanding.

At this stage his best plan would be to go away and quietly read J. C. Beaglehole's "History of the University of New Zealand " and get his problems in better perspective. He would see then that his is not the only mind concerned with such questions. He would see then that his pet piece of canker is only one small part of a peculiarly haphazard growth, which has not only dead, dying and diseased branches but also bears some fresh young and luscious shoots. Of course he does not do this. He either weathers the weight of his progressive ideas and settles down to a servile non-critical existence or retains his militancy and leaves.

A personal note. As one who has done neither of these exclusive alternatives I feel myself called upon to explain this anomaly marring an otherwise perfectly good argument. The reason is clear. At an early and immature age I read J. C. Beaglehole. Quite what he meant I don't rightly know. Still it must have affected me somehow. One day, perhaps, when exams are over, I must re-read that book.

HOLLYWOOD ABOVE ALL

" Nobody writes a true love poem . . . . The poets tried to tell one eternal truth and got lost in their medium . . . . . Of all things on earth, God has made no more noble, nor beautiful, nor poetic, nor exultant thing than a man and woman who truly love each other in bed together.

THAT MOUTHFUL is one of the obiter dicta of Clive Hanley (alias Briggs) in Eric Knight's novel " This Above All." Clive is, of course, an utter prig, and by the time you've got to page 130, on which the above-quoted passage appears, you are so painfully aware of his priggishness that you tend to skip anything he says which takes up more than three lines. And it would be a pity if you skipped that passage, because it contains a near-truth which is seldom enunciated outside the C. of E. marriage service.

I say a near-truth because the passage is quite obviously a masterpiece of over-statement. And Clive really shouldn't condemn poets as a class for dishonest concealment of the Facts of Life until he has read Donne, or even that anonymous quatrain in the Grand Manner:

" Oh Western wind, when wilt thou blow
That the small rain down can rain?
Christ, that my love were in my arms,
And I in my bed again."

Nevertheless, it's a valuable statement. And what gets my goat is that in the film version of " This Above All " *they cut out the last three words.*

I thought I'd long outgrown the intellectual-adolescent stage of enlightened and passionate protest against sexual obscurantism. " I do believe in being frank about these things, don't you, darling?") But after seeing the film I felt once again that old super-righteous crusading zeal. I wanted to dash out and convert the heathen, armed with Stopes on Contraception and irrefutable statistics on illegitimacy and the incidence of venereal disease. This militant mood quietly passed away,—but I'm going on the bash on the day when Hollywood first acknowledges to its public that there might perhaps be something in what Clive says.

Now when a soldier on leave asks a Waaf to go away for a holiday with him, and she consents, it's pretty plain that the intentions of both are strictly dishonourable. In the novel, the holiday takes its anticipated course, quite naturally and without the slightest suggestion of smut, and the most effective and moving passages of the whole work are those in which the attraction between Clive and Prudence develops and matures. In the film, however, Clive and Prudence occupy separate bedrooms in both their pubs, and there appears to be only one nocturnal meeting when Prudence beautifully and adequately gowned, goes into Clive's room to find out what he's talking about in his sleep. And just in case any film-goer with a pure mind reads between the reels what isn't there, Prudence announces to her father with emphatic and virtuous pride that although she's been on a holiday with a soldier " they did nothing of which they were ashamed."

The result is that a fine love story becomes insipid and ordinary. Prudence doesn't conceive, and a hospital marriage gives the final touch of respectability. All traces of sex are triumphantly exorcised.

Now it wouldn't be worth making a fuss about all this if it weren't so typical of the manner in which Hollywood has treated the rest of the novel—and, indeed, most of the significant novels which it has put on to celluloid. After all, mankind gets the films it deserves, as well as the Governments, and if we possess an unhealthy sexual ethic, we can't expect to see films where people get into bed together for any other purpose than to make theaudience laugh like hell.

In the novel " This Above All," Clive is a typical muddled pseudo-intellectual who deserts after Dunkirk because he can't find any logical justification for supporting the war. (But, of course—"God knows I'm not a Communist, or a fawner on Russia "). His conflict is resolved by a relapse to faith, in-

spired partly by a curious clergyman called Polkinghorne, who says, inter alia, " Communism, Fascism, these are mere intellectual conclusions. But conclusions of faith will solve what these cannot." This set-up, as will be readily understood, isn't particularly promising, involving as it does a confession of the author's inability to find an intellectual justification for supporting the war. It is indeed surprising that the conception of two wars—that of the democracies against fascism, and the subsequent fight of the people against capitalism—should so clearly emerge from Clive's pulpit oratory. But it is *not* surprising that the film version effectively clouds the issue.

It does this in a remarkably subtle manner. In the novel, Prudence delivers an affecting speech about England, Shakespeare, Cockneys and the thump of cricket bats, pitiful in its superficiality. That's what England means to Prudence. And Clive then tells her at length what England means to him—slums, the stigma of bastardy, poverty and struggle. By the time he's finished, there isn't much left of the cricket bats, and we can at least understand why Clive needs an overdose of faith to convert him.

In the film, Prudence's speech is presented with awful solemnity as the highlight of the piece, and Clive is visibly shaken. Every word of it is obviously meant to be taken as gospel. And its full horror is accentuated by the manner of delivery—a high-pitched strained half-whisper, rising in a crescendo of sobs, with a taut uplifted female neck taking up half the screen. Perhaps it's a bit unfair to blame the actress for this shocking exhibition—it must have been difficult to do anything with that passage except the obvious thing.

And what about Clive's slums? Oh yes, they were mentioned. A potted summary of Clive's criticisms of the British ruling class and their system *was* delivered by Tyrone Power. But the trouble was that while Clive developed his brief thesis, Prudence was undressing behind a screen displaying pleasing silhouettes of portions of her very beautiful anatomy and honest to God I can hardly remember a thing he said. This barefaced attempt to put people off the scent succeeded admirably. Mr. Power's faintly subversive words were completely lost by an audience interested very naturally in Miss Fontaine's body.

There was a bit of mud-slinging at the British " aristocracy " here and there, but nobody, least of all the aristocracy, objects to this harmless pastime. Titled lords and ladies are legitimate game for the most conservative script-writer. Hollywood duchesses usually turn out in the end to have hearts of gold, and the only reason why they didn't in this picture seems to be that there wasn't time.

Having been spectacularly converted by the Reverend Polkinghorne after approximately six minutes' conversation, Clive gets injured in an air raid and is taken to hosiptal. There were one or two pleasing moments when it looked as if he *might* die. but All Ended Happily. Suddenly, in the last few feet, the producer remembered that he hadn't explained to the audience where the title of the picture came from. So Clive was duly presented with a volume of Shakespeare, and at the meet and right place recited the relevant passage from " Hamlet." This was curiously followed by an exhortation to win the war, which sounded quaint coming from a recumbent figure with its head wrapped up in bandages, and which was apparently linked in some esoteric and quite incomprehensible manner with the Shakespeare.

I understand that Eric Knight was killed in a plane crash before he saw the film version of his novel. God works in a mysterious way.

RONALD L. MEEK.

STILL LIFE *J. W. Brodie*

Sig Gruber

PROSE JUDGMENTS

PERHAPS MY judgment has been warped by the peculiarities of the typewriter which produced the versions of the manuscripts I have been reading, and yet typewriters are usually concerned with the conventional letter and not the conventional phrase. Nevertheless I could not help reflecting that most people seem to dislike writing. Either they have something to say (a distinct improvement upon last year's entries) and are impatient to say it, or else they know that something could be said, but are unable to discover what it is, and anyway derive little enjoyment from trying to say it.

I don't think anyone who submitted a manuscript showed any sign of having struggled to conquer the medium of words. No one gave any indication that the art of communication is an art which can be mastered only with infinite pains. But why, you may ask, should anyone concern himself with such a barren subject? And the answer is that we live in an age of propaganda and standardised speech, that we need writers capable of thinking things out, capable of precise and sensitive expression and aware of their responsibilities as writers.

Last year I think I observed that few of the contributors were prepared to notice what was taking place in their own backyards. Apart from a reference to New Zealand produced films and the Confessions of a Demonstrator, the contributors this year might have come from Moscow. I don't think I shall be accused of an anti-Soviet bias if I suggest that this is not a healthy sign. Of course it is excellent that people should be interested in Russia, and perhaps I am behaving like the lecturer who attacks his audience of five because of the ninety-five who are absent, but it is not a healthy sign that of the six manuscripts submitted two should be criticisms of Soviet literature, one a tribute to the development of Soviet science, one an account of the activities of Dutch students, one a slight commentary on the American film with passing reference to Russia and New Zealand, and only one upon something in the backyard, namely a scientific laboratory.

There were no short stories or sketches submitted, but difficult as it may be to reach a high standard in work of this sort, it is difficult also to reach a high standard in critical writing. If there was a little attempt to struggle with the word or the development of theme, there was scarcely any attempt to consider the nature of criticism, or to determine standards of judgment. " Distant Point " and the Soviet Theatre was the most successful and interesting of the articles and therefore receives the highest award. Wandering Scholars gave an honest account of the activities of Dutch students, and, in spite of some unhappy expressions, deserves second place. The description of Mayakovsky was not as good as it might have been because of the failure to think in terms of the English readers of a remarkable Soviet poet. In Theory and Practice the typewriter was overworked on its phrase-keys, and the possibilities of Hollywood and Parnassus were not developed. Finally Confessions of a Demonstrator succeeded in stating what was already known without excitement and with little freshness.

H. WINSTON RHODES.

VERSE JUDGMENTS

IN 1937 when I first judged this competition there were numerous entrants and still more entries. I notice that I commented on no fewer than fifteen poems, and I remember that one competitor alone entered as many as twenty and another nine or ten. This year seven poems have been submitted by, I think, six authors. The war is the main reason for the decline, but not, I should say, the only one. Following the ferment of the 'Thirties, when a large number of young poets were politically conscious, taking sides actively, and preaching, interpreting and posturing in faulty new verse with the assistance of Frued and surrealism, the war that was expected came, but not quite as

it was expected. This has had an all-over effect to which the poets have had to struggle to adjust themselves. Now that politics has become a subject too uncertain and ambiguous for direct treatment, and its terms and those of popular psychology have got tarnished by familiarity, they have been compelled almost to begin again. For the moment, after making allowance for the physical difficulties of the war, there are probably fewer people writing poetry than usual, and fewer readers also, because they like the poets have had adjustments to make. It is good to find "*Spike*" still able to have its annual competition and ready to offer its readers the fruits of it, even though these are small.

The best poem in my judgment is "Home Guard."

Acting on the instructions of the Editor, I offer the following criticism on the separate poems:—

"ALLIANCE."

It is hard to write a good admonitory poem; the words available are too general and abstract, too worn and impersonal for distinctiveness of expression. "Alliance" is an illustration. A plea for a continuing association between Americans and New Zealanders after the war, it is vigorously declamatory in a pale Whitmannish way, but expresses easy obvious ideas in the dull, familiar English of the politician.

"FRANCE."

This poem has more to it. It is technically well put together and the movement of feeling and idea is managed with some success. I like particularly "Fascist tank-tracks grind" and "the whispers will become a routing din." Still the poem is only moderately successful. For one thing the language is too directly descriptive to evoke the complex responses needed for the theme; for another the piece is studded with lifeless stock terms: Fascists are "turbulent," the betraying officers "smile contemptuously," the people wail "grimly," "there will be flowers with the morning," and so on.

"SYMPATHY."

It is a pity that the second stanza is not nearly so good as the first. I cant see that "real" in the first line of this stanza, has much point, and "unnoticed," coming after "Miss," is weak. But the first stanza seems to me good; its rhythm is firm, and the use of the "dying Free" of the feminine consonantal thyme—"sacking—breaking" is very effective.

"PREFACE TO BATTLE."

The writer of this poem shows a good deal of linguistic resource and has achieved some memorable lines. The opening stanza, repeated to end the poem, is well done (except for "stolid," which doesn't seem right to me). So are some of the lines in the middle section. But the second stanza is a failure, very conventional in idea and expression, and ending with a pointless line. The poem as a whole may be criticised not only for its conventional nature but also for its cloudiness of meaning. In spite of the evidence it gives of the poet's skill in managing language, image and rhythm, it reads —to me anyway—rather like an academic exercise, removed from close emotional contact with the soldier.

"HOME GUARD."

The deliberate flatness of statement here, I think, more effectively evokes the desired mood than the clamant tones of some of the other poems. I hear echoes of Eliot in the sombre tone and relatively complex rhythms. (if "we toil for six days and on the seventh we must motor to Hind head or Maidenhead" ("The Rock") with the third and fourth lines, and "We know awkwardly, forgetting the lines" with Eliot's similar rhythmic devices), but do not think it is a second-hand poem. Even if Eliot is the spiritual and technical tutor, the pupil has successfully absorbed what he has learnt into his whole experience, and speaks with a voice that is authentically his own. Incidentally this is the only one of the seven poems giving any indication that its author is a New Zealander.

I wonder how many people will read the poems in "*Spike*" this year and feel that it is of some cultural importance that this journal, like a few others, still thinks it worth while to publish poetry. Poets need audiences; they need critics and opposition but what they are for the most part getting is indifference. We could do with a Society for the Prevention of Poetry, which might easily be an offshoot of the Swing Society.

W. J. SCOTT.

PHOTOGRAPHIC JUGDMENTS

THE PHOTOGRAPHS submitted this year were twelve. Of these, Mr Perry, our Judge, has chosen six for placing and comment. The last of these, "Jerusalem University: Stage of the Open Air Theatre," a picture of more than usual student interest, is unfortunately very difficult to reproduce. In its place we print a sunset by the same photographer.

Mr Perry was favourably impressed by a greatly improved standard this year. We had feared that a Society for the Prevention of Photographers might also be required; our fears are laid at rest.

Here are the Judge's comments:—

1st. TAKAKA VALLEY. By J. W. Brodie.

Beautiful aerial perspective, tone values very good. It is unfortunate that the hilltops and the river form an arrowhead pointing and taking the eye out of the picture to the left. If the river had turned back to the right in the middle distance or a sufficiently strong barrier in the form of a dark mass at right angles to the point of the arrow had been placed at the left one feels that the picture would have been greatly improved. In spite of this it is a very fine piece of work of a quality not often seen.

2nd. SIKH. By A. R. Anderson.

Pleasing L-shaped composition of a very interesting subject. Background, although modulated, slightly monotonous. One regrets that the rein should disappear out of the picture right at the very corner; because of this fact and the strong contrast it makes with the sky it draws far too much attention to its unimportant self. Picturesqueness and concentration of figure are very good.

3rd. TASMAN VALLEY. By R. S. Unwin.

A picture of pleasing tones and full of interest.

4th. MOUNT TASMAN. By R. S. Unwin.

Good quality print, full of detail but rather of the Government Tourist variety.

5th. STILL LIFE. By J. W. Brodie.

There is too much contrast between the birds and their surroundings. The placing of the birds would be improved with about an inch and a-half trimmed off the right-hand side and about an inch off the top.

6th. JERUSALEM UNIVERSITY; STAGE OF THE OPEN AIR THEATRE. By Sig. Gruber.

One is intrigued by the contrasts of interest in this picture. It is a pity a foreground was not a little stronger; as it is, the heavy sky at the top rather overbalances the composition. It is doubtful if this picture will reproduce well.

SALIENT ON PARADE

THE OLD controversy as to whether the V.U.C. student newspaper should confine itself to local student gossip or embrace the affairs of a wider world has long since been decided in favour of the latter. Avowing pride in the anti-fascist history of "*Salient*," the first editorial of 1943 proclaims that "This war is to our mind the most important news and most important issue." So it is that the War, and, especially, the impact of the War upon student affairs dominate each issue of "*Salient*."

Before going further, let me express the opinion that the 1943 "*Salient*" is a very creditable production. In no previous year can I recall such a consistently good presentation of student opinions and discussion of international affairs together with adequate criticism and reporting of College activities. Perhaps in some ways the task is easier to-day. The vital issues are more clear cut than they were a few years ago when College anti-fascism was not always in favour with authority. The immediate common aim of winning this war impresses a certain unanimity on students as on other

GRADUATES, 1943

THE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE, 1943

Back Row: A. Eichelbaum, R. Oliver, G. Edgar (Asst. Treas.), J. Barr (Treas.), M. B. Boyd (Secretary).

Front Row: P. Wilton, J. W. Winchester (Asst. Sec.), L. J. R. Starke (Vice-Pres.), O. J. Creed (President), D. Filmer (Women's Vice-Pres.), J. M. Grant.

THE LATE MR W. BROOK

elements of the community. Certainly, reading "*Salient*" in bulk leaves an impression that the student generally enters more seriously into the pursuit of learning and is more concerned with his place as a citizen than his pre-war predecessors were. Yet presuming that the enlightened attitude towards domestic and political matters which "*Salient*" has always encouraged does go down better with 1943 students, the editorial people still merit praise for the lead they have given and for the manner in which they have presented their material.

So much for the general impression made by "*Salient*" 1943. Turning to particular items, I think the correspondence section interested me as much as any other, not only because it suggested some of the tendencies referred to in the previous paragraph, but also because it seems that "*Salient*" is doing its job well by starting discussion on questions which otherwise would never have received the consideration that the act of writing requires. Especially, the provocatively woolly article by "Gabriel" on Vansittartistry in the first issue drew forth two replies with good arguments on this subject which I have seen nowhere else. The critics of "*Salient*" who made sorties into "No-man's Land" puzzle me, for I can find very little to support their claims that the early issues were dominated by "crudely presented overseas propaganda," and I do not think "*Salient*" publishes nearly as much "humorous and idiotic drivelling" as we find in the newspapers which "Big" no doubt reads daily. However, perhaps the complaints of Messrs Hayman and Witheford did stop the editorial committee from thinking that Russia is all the world; certainly, judging from the first instalment of the feature "Salient Advises," the generous withdrawal of the rest of their manuscript by H. and W. raised the standard of "*Salient*" several points.

Editorials were patchy this year. The first promised well, then for the second was substituted material which was good copy but which did NOT take the place of an editorial. Why not an editorial on rehabilitation of learning in Europe, to set the correspondence columns going again? Particularly impressive was the high earnestness of most of the editorials. Indeed I would be inclined to suspect that it was mostly seriousness in words were it not for the record of Victoria's part in the Liberty Loan, in the N.Z.U.S.A. conference, and in other evidence of real activity which the paper presents elsewhere.

The "Message to Students" from the Students' Association President in No. 1, the very full report of the N.Z.U.S.A. meeting, and the accounts of Executive meetings indicate that "*Salient*" is keeping the students in touch with their governing body; while an editorial levelled against the Executive seems to have made that body hasten to catch up with the student demands! But why no review of the field for the Student Association Stakes? Properly handled, an interview of candidates does help the voting student—candidates so often give themselves away.

Judged as a whole—and that is all that time and space allows—the film and book reviews were well, and sometimes brightly written, and mostly have the commendable virtue, often missing in "advanced" reviews, of saying something about their subject. To one who knew V.U.C. before the days of a music room the amount of discussion of music in "*Salient*" is as surprising as the existence of four musically-minded clubs in the College, and, despite a slight tendency to jargon and preciousity common in musical circles, reviews of the activities of these clubs make one keen to join in; which presumably is what a good review should do.

By the way, has "*Salient*" given up trying to find someone who can write verse, if not poetry? After pages of prose a reviewer longs for somebody who can mix a touch of humour with all this eager earnestness and give us some pithy satire or an honest parody. In the absence of indigenous graphic talent an occasional borrowed cartoon or illustration adds a little interest, but the large block under "This England" was not justified.

It is a pleasure to read a University periodical with so few misprints, and except for some bad touches of dodging from the foot of a column to the previous one or over a page, the magazine is well set out. Brighter headlines were a noticeable feature. However, I did draw blank looks when I tried out "Executive to Wrestle Board Worry" on a few people. The general standard of writing, too, is better, with fewer of those emotionally-charged catch words which dulled the edge of much previous writing in "*Spike*" and "*Salient*," but "Reds" and "reactionary bourgeous finance

SPIKE

capital " can't be kept down. Here's a new one—" interdisciplinary co-operation." Some-one on the Editorial staff should check a habit of running ideas together without the conventional (and very convenient) question marks, full stops, or connectives to aid the reader.

But before I descend to mere pin-pricking I can not do better than endorse the spontaneous tribute from J. V. Ilott in No. 9. Yes, " *SALIENT* " 1943 is quite a good performance.

And now for a final suggestion; when will the worm turn, and " *SALIENT* " review " *SPIKE* "?

N. T. CLARE.

MR W. S. BROOK

AN APPRECIATION

VISITING the College recently, a feeling of something absent came over me. I realised before long what has caused that feeling—"Brookie" was no longer in his accustomed place in the Hall. It was then I learned for the first time that the College had lost one of its most faithful friends, and one who will be greatly missed by students past and present.

Since 1906 the College had been served by a "Brook." It was in that year that Mr J. S. Brook was appointed caretaker and he and his wife became a tradition about the College. His successor was his son, Mr W. S. Brook, and he became equally a tradition and was equally loved by the students.

His duties far exceeded his title. He was the general traffic officer of the College and it was he who broke up the incipient romances which were blocking the traffic in the main hall. He was the telephone operator of the College, and Mr Brook it was who put a stop to "two-up" games, smoking and other misdemeanours which infringed the College regulations. His task required great tact and patience and so well did he succeed that he became one of the best loved identities of the College.

When the Library was enlarged following the Carnegie grant, Mr Brook did most of the carpentering work which was required, and this work was done splendidly.

No student activity passed unnoticed and he was a staunch supporter of all College Clubs. The football club was always one of Mr Brook's pets and he always bemoaned the fact that the great days of 1928 and 1929 did not come again. He annually kicked off in the Ruru Shield match and I think that this was his favourite football game of the season.

It is not often that the College is lucky enough to be served by one with so wholehearted an interest in it, and it is true to say that "Brookie" will be greatly missed. To all the generations of old students who after they had left College occasionally paid a passing visit to the College to renew acquaintance with the place, Mr Brook was the one person they always looked for to discuss past days and draw invidious comparisons with the present. In him they found a ready ally, and once again were able to recapture something of their student past. For Mr Brook had an encyclopedic knowledge of University affairs, incidents and history, and he was never tired of recounting the 'Varsity exploits of Victorians who have now made their mark in the wider world outside.

To his wife and family the College's sympathy is extended.

JOHN CARRAD.

GRADUATES, 1943

MASTERS OF ARTS WITH HONOURS.—Carter, Alan Herbert, *First Class in Mathematics;* Harrison, Helen Mary, *Third Class in Mathematics;* Robinson, Florence Marie Winifred Lynette, *First Class in Latin and French.*

in absentia.—Cave, Catherine Alice, *Second Class in English;* English, Winifred Irene, *Second-Class in Latin and Greek.*

MASTERS OF ARTS.—Macaskill, Patrick, *in French;* Riddell, Gretta Gordon Clark, *in Economics.*

BACHELORS OF ARTS.—Boyd, Mary Beatrice; Caird, Darcy Patrick; Cox, Carlien Estelle; Cramb, Sarah Twycross; Eichelbaum, Ann; Evison, Frank Foster; Ferguson, Janet Fergus; Fleming, Marie Louise; Grant, Janet Mary; Grice, Margaret Leone; Hill, Helen Clara; Hogg, Marion; Hussey, Nada Elizabeth; Jermyn, Janet Margaret; Jolly, Gwynneth Campbell; Langford, Isabel; Langford, Nancy; Lissienko, Inna; Markham, Valda; Money, John William; McMaster, Nita Marie; Neligan, Ruth Diana; Newell, William Hare; Ramsden, Ian Walter; Russell, George Harrison; Thornton, Norma Myrtle; Towgood, Winifred Nina; Turner, Rae.

in absentia.—Durward, Marjorie Beryl Scott; Ince, Millicent Ann; Robb, James Harding.

MASTERS OF SCIENCE WITH HONOURS.—Henderson, Cedric Lynn, *Third Class in Mathematics;* Marwick, George, *Second Class in Zoology;* Morton, Ian Douglas, *First Class in Chemistry;* O'Donnell, Barrie George Michael, *First Class in Physics;* Ralph, Patricia Marjorie, *Second Class in Zoology;* Seelye, Ralph Nicholson, *First Class in Chemistry.*

MASTERS OF SCIENCE.—Swinney, Elsie Maud, *in Mathematics.*

in absentia.—Lees, Alexander Clark, *in Chemistry.*

BACHELORS OF SCIENCE.—Brodie, James William; Jonathan, Shirley Rose; Marwick, Hugh; McDowall, Ian Campbell; O'Donnell, John Brian; Russell, Robert Angus Hamilton; Scott, Raymond Annesley; Simpson, Jack William Newby.

BACHELOR OF LAW.—Gibson, Keith Gordon.

MASTER OF COMMERCE WITH HONOURS.—Rosenberg, Wolfgang, *First Class in Economics and Economic History.*

MASTER OF COMMERCE.—Gibson, Allan Reginald; Reilly, John Falconer (1941 Examination); Simpson, Doris Leslie; Starke, Laurence James Ravenscroft.

in absentia.—Clocomb, Stanley.

DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION.—Armstrong, Ernest Alexander.

DIPLOMA IN BANKING.—Wilson, Kenneth Joseph.

DEGREES BEING CONFERRED AT OTHER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CEREMONIES.

BACHELOR OF ARTS.—Koplowitz-Kent, Heinz Siegfried (at University of Otago); Scoones, Stewart Thomas Henry (at Auckland University College).

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE. — Leathwick, Ralph Joseph (at Canterbury University College).

DEGREES ALREADY CONFERRED.

MASTER OF COMMERCE.—Lau, Gert August, *in Economics and Company Law.*

BACHELORS OF ARTS.—Allison, William Norman Andrew; Cooper, Alan William; Denniston, Ralph Hugh Francis; Hely, Arnold Stanley McMath; McFarlane, John Douglas; Quinn, Kenneth Fleming.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE.—Power, Jack Milgrew.

BACHELORS OF COMMERCE. — Bedbrook, John Kenneth; Martin, Donald Lewis Maunsell; Thompson, Donald John Alfred.

DIPLOMAS ISSUED SINCE GRADUATION CEREMONY, 1942.

DIPLOMA OF HONOURS.—Bray, Douglas Harrison, *Second Class in Education.*

DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION.—Alexander, Robert Ritchie; Banks, Norman Lindsay; Coad, Margaret Isidore; Mills, Edward William.

DEGREES CONFERRED BY EXECUTIVE MEETING OF SENATE SINCE 1943 GRADUATION CEREMONY.

Watson, Murray Bowler, *B.A.;* Lewin, John Philip *B.A.;* Bear, Winton Graham, *B.Com.;* Dale, Thomas Wilson, *LL.B.*

SCHOLARSHIPS.

The following awards were made:—

SIR GEORGE GREY SCHOLARSHIP.—
H. Marwick (declined)
I. C. McDowall.

SENIOR UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS.—
G. H. Russell (*English*); K. F. Quinn (*Greek*); Janet F. Ferguson (*French*); Mary B. Mackersey (*History*) (equal); Gwynneth C. Jolly (*Philosophy*) (equal); J. W. Money (*Education;* R. H. F. Denniston (*Applied Mathematics*); R. A. Scott (*Physics*); H. Marwick (*Zoology*); M. E. Casey (*Contract and Property*).

POST GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN SCIENCE.
I. D. Morton, *M.Sc.*

THE SHIRTCLIFFE SCHOLARSHIP.—
W. H. I. Dawbin, *M.Sc.*

SIR ROBERT STOUT SCHOLARSHIP.—
R. H. F. Denniston, *B.A.*

LADY STOUT BURSARY.—
Mary B. Mackersey.

ALEXANDER CRAWFORD SCHOLARSHIP.—
Mira S. Parsons (*Arts*).
J. C. P. Williams (*Science*).

EMILY LILIAS JOHNSTON SCHOLARSHIPS.—
F. M. Todd, Marion Marwick.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LIZZIE RATHBONE SCHOLARSHIP.—
Barbara J. Patrick.

JACOB JOSEPH SCHOLARSHIPS.—
W. H. I. Dawbin, *M.Sc.*; I. D. Morton, *M.Sc.*

PRIZES.
Prizes were awarded as follows:—

COOK MEMORIAL PRIZE.—
A. H. Carter.

BRUCE DALL PRIZE.—
G. S. Bogle.

JOHN P. GOOD PRIZE.—
G. H. F. McKenzie.

MACMORRAN PRIZE.—
Mira S. Parsons.

N.Z. INSTITUTE OF CHEMISTRY PRIZE.—
L. J. Lambourne.

DR. W. E. COLLINS CLASS PRIZES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.—
G. H. Russell, Joan E. Taylor, F. M. Todd.

CLUB OFFICERS

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CLUB: *President*, N. Swinburn (Cpt.); *Secretary*, J. Williams.
ATHLETIC CLUB: *Secretary*, R. Daniell.
BASKETBALL CLUB: *President*, Miss M. Wicks; *Secretary*, Miss M. Parsons.
BIOLOGICAL CLUB: *President*, M. Laird; *Secretary*, Miss A. MacMorran.
BOXING CLUB: *Secretary*, A. Young.
CATHOLIC STUDENTS' GUILD: *President*, B. M. O'Connor; *Secretary*, F. O'Kane.
CHEMICAL CLUB: *President*, Miss J. P. Underwood; *Secretary*, B. E. Swedlund.
CRICKET CLUB: *President*, J. A. Carrad; *Secretary*, J. Oakley.
DEBATING CLUB: *President*, J. W. Winchester; *Secretary*, M. B. Boyd.
DRAMATIC CLUB: *President*, H. Williamson; *Secretary*, Miss P. Hildreth.
EVANGELICAL UNION: *President*, N. V. Ryder; *Secretary*, Miss Jean Brown.
FOOTBALL CLUB: *President*, H. E. Moore; *Secretary*, O. J. Creed.
GLEE CLUB: *President*, A. Alper; *Secretary*, G. S. Bogle.
GRAMOPHONE COMMITTEE: *Secretary*, J. Money.
GYMNASIUM CLUB: *Secretary*, J. Underwood.
HARRIER CLUB: *President*, P. De La Mare; *Secretary*, J. C. McDowall.
MEN'S HOCKEY CLUB: *President*, A. C. Ives; *Secretary*, S. Stacey.
MUSIC MAKERS' CLUB: *President*, J. Money; *Secretary*, Miss Veronica Bontha.
MATHS AND PHYSICS CLUB: *President*, R. Hodgson; *Secretary*, R. U. F. Denniston.
LAW FACULTY: *President*, K. G. Gibson; *Secretary*, B. Cullinane.
PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB: *President*, Prof. Gordon; *Secretary*, G. Taylor.
ROWING CLUB: *Committee Member*, P. Maplesden.
SOCIETY FOR CLOSER CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH N.Z.: *President*, H. Witheford.
STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT: *President*, Miss J. Holm; *Secretary*, Miss M. Orr.
SWIMMING CLUB: *President*, G. Bogle; *Secretary*, Miss H. Harrison.
TABLE TENNIS CLUB: *President*, Douglas Yen; *Secretary*, R. Hannan.
TENNIS CLUB: *President*, N. Foley; *Secretary*, M. O'Connor.
TRAMPING CLUB: *President*, D. Berryman; *Secretary*, R. L. Oliver.
WEIR HOUSE ASSOCIATION: *President*, N. V. Ryder; *Secretary*, B. E. Swedelund.
WOMEN'S HOCKEY CLUB: *President*, Miss D. Filmer; *Secretary*, Miss M. Marwick.

COLLEGE CLUBS

"'Tis in mortals to command success
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it."
(Addison)

It has become customary over the last few years to explain the moribund state of many of our clubs by saying "the war, you know," and assuming the look of silent suffering which characterises the club secretary. The excuse has long since worn thin and proves little beyond a sad lack of adaptability on the part of students.

The initial impact of the war on clubs was of course a heavy drop in membership. Added to this was the disorder caused by those remaining never being sure of what their committments would be from one week to the next. It is over four years since the war began, four years for the clubs to adjust themselves to these changed conditions, but still they have not done so. The roll number at Victoria is little diminished and manpower regulations have largely stabilized the formerly ever-changing uncertain situation of the students, yet the improvement in club activity which might reasonably be expected in consequence has not come about. The multiplicity of minor factors which can be produced to explain this situation can be summed up as deriving from two major causes. The first is that in the main those who have gone were the older, more experi-

enced, students who comprised, to use a military term, the club "cadres" essential for efficient functioning. The few experienced students left have little or no contact with the large numbers of young students who have since come to the college—the gap is too wide, the links too few. The second major cause more important and certainly more general is the indifference displayed by students even many former enthusiasts. The insecurity of war-time life has induced in some a "what's-the-use" atttiude to everything. Fortunate it is that these are in the minority. The great majority are preoccupied with work and study which to them appear more important in war-time than recreational activities. It is a laudable and in the main it is the correct view but it ignores one very important point. Such students see University life as something completely divorced from reality in a warring world—an irksome necessity or a pleasant sideline according to individual viewpoints but still quite detached. As V.U.C. is at present constituted this view is largely justified but even so it is no reason for student apathy. The students of the U.S.S.R., China and Republican Spain faced with the same situation in incomparably greater degree did not adopt such a defeatist attitude. They saw their responsibility and did not shirk it. Without relaxing their activities outside the University they set about reorientating the whole of their University life in order that they might more effectively play their full part in the nation's struggle. Victoria must learn from them. If the University is to change to a position where it takes its rightful place as an integral part of the community in war or peace then it is the students who must change it. To leave the job to somebody else would be cowardice.

SPORTS CLUBS

Cricket Club.

This benevolent institution provided a temporary resting place for many a transient cricketer claiming senior status in his own home town be it Auckland or Owhango. To accommodate these stalwarts various seniors retired gracefully to the seconds and consequently several seconds retired to the sidelines, the only difference being the marked lack of grace. In the words of the poet, they "made sweet moan" but what-the-hell, who are the seconds anyway? It is not uncommon for cricket clubs to be run so as to ensure that the senior team wins as many matches as possible while the other club members merely pay their subscriptions in order to aid and abet this laudable objective. It was indeed unfortunate for Varsity that the seniors caddishly failed to co-operate by carrying out their allotted task.

Anyone who, like the writer, has ever had the task of selecting Varsity cricket teams can sympathise with a committee which succumbs to the temptation complained of here, especially during the long vacation, but there are limits and last season they were certainly ignored.

There were only two teams fielded last season but they partly compensated for this by being stronger than the previous season. The seniors had an impressive batting string which nonetheless performed rather erratically until near the end of the season. By far the most consistent were Gilbert Stringer and Bernie Paetz who put up some excellent performances including a century by Stringer. The less said about the bowling the better. By contrast the seconds were relatively stronger in bowling with the two Moores and the speed merchants Brian and Anderson. Captained by the wily Henry Moore this team at one stage won five games in a row and finished well up in its grade championship.

The Hain Trophy for fielding was won by Bob Vance.

Tennis.

Last season was a satisfactory one for the Tennis Club. The weather was reasonably kind and although many of the players were busy with seasonal work during the vacation there was always a good crowd of enthusiasts present on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

The two teams took a successful part in the W.L.T.A. inter-club competitions. Owing to difficulties arising from the war these matches now consist of four doubles matches played on club courts. The men's team, playing in the first grade, won over half their matches, as did the women. Two matches played against Training College teams were also won by narrow margins.

Football.

Taken by and large the Rugby Club has had a moderately successful but uninspiring season, all its teams maintaining a high level of mediocrity. Though originally four teams were fielded one third grade team was withdrawn early in the season after considerable dithering on the part of club officials.

The seniors, making a radical change from the usual Varsity custom, started off poorly but finished up very well maintaining a high place in the Hardham Cup competition. With a bit of good luck for a change they might even have won the competition for the material to do so was there. MacLennan in the forwards and Don Patrick at five-eighth were the mainstays of the team. Both these players were selected to play for the Wellington representative team. Apart from club games the team lost to McKenzie (alias C.U.C.) and A.U.C., and soundly defeated Massey College.

The juniors, ably captained by the experienced Buck Ryder who played sound football at five-eighth, had a moderately successful season playing fast open football. The backs were a capable set but the forwards could have displayed a bit more cohesion and vigour. Outstanding were Fox on the wing and the halves Te Punga and his successor Corkhill, who was the find of the season. Pottinger, Benseman and MacLennan performed well in the forwards.

The third grade team was young and promised well under the coaching of Pat Caird. They suffered a good deal especially at the beginning of the season from constant changes in personnel. A team composed of thirds and juniors drew 6—6 with Te Aute in the annual match.

Men's Hockey.

For the first time since 1932 Varsity won the senior A championship. Truly they had to share the honour with Dorset having drawn with them in the play-off, but at least they had the satisfaction of beating them in every one of four previous encounters. The team fielded a fast tricky set of forwards with Ivor Ting outstanding at centre-forward well supported by Griff. Jones at left-wing. Graham Speight, who has now gone overseas, played excellently at centre-half and his presence was sorely missed in the final match against Dorset. Others who distinglished themselves were the captain, Ken

Kiddle, at full-back, and Arch. Ives, who made a come-back to play fine hockey at right-wing.

The other senior team was not very distinguished and finished well down the list. The captain, Bill Osten, was the backbone of the team at left full-back.

The only other team, playing in the third grade, though consisting mainly of young inexperienced players, had an excellent season and came out as runners-up in the championship. At centre-forward Mac Allcock supplied the main drive, being well supported by Jack Shapiro at left-half, Colin Button centre-half, and Brian Nash full-back.

Women's Hockey.

Like the men the women's club fielded three teams but here the resemblance stopped short. The senior team played well in the qualifying rounds and was graded senior A, an honour which has eluded them for some time, but once there they found the going a bit tough. The juniors with Shona Bell, Betty Boyes, Pat Gardiner and Marie Simpson very prominent, played well, among their victims being the grade champions. Constant changes in personnel made it difficult to work up a combination. The intermediates had a hard struggle to field a full team and had to default several games. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the team's record was not very bright.

Basketball.

Neither of the two basketball teams entered this year had a good season. There were some fine players in both teams as evidenced by the number who were selected as Wellington representatives, but the teams were constantly being changed around owing to players not being available. In several instances both the senior A and the senior B team turned out one or two short. Joyce Strange, who played sterling basketball throughout the season, was selected for the N.Z.U. team and also for the Wellington reps. Others who were selected for representative honours were Margaret Beattie, Mira Parsons and Thea Muir from the A team and Margaret Henderson from the B team.

Swimming.

As usual the swimming club's main support came this year from Weir House, though the unmelodious yelps of Vic. House B from the bank could not be ignored except by the stone deaf. The energetic Gib Bogle was the main spirit in organising several meetings at Thorndon Baths which were very enjoyable, despite the low temperatures and small attendances. Fleischl and Bogle among the men and Margaret Eichelbaum and Pat Gardiner among the women were the best of those who competed.

All summer sports clubs at V.U.C. curse the long vacation but none more vehemently than the swimming club for this period includes the best time of the year for swimming.

Harriers.

The harrier club is a glorious exception to the statements made at the beginning of these notes about moribund clubs. Its large membership gathered Saturday after Saturday scantily clad to dash madly over the hills "through bush, through briar," in mud, muck and misery interspersed with a little sunshine. After these profitless excursions they would return to their base to don respectable clothes which convention requires must be done before engulfing some tons of carbohydrates made soggy by tea. This enthusiasm was general throughout the harrier movement in Wellington, and a women's club was even formed, though which came first—the enthusiasm or the women—is hard to say. No doubt the women are training keenly for next leap year.

The club was successful, through first-class team work, in recapturing the Dixon Trophy from O.U. by a very narrow margin.

The club championship was won by Ian McDowell with Giff. Rowberry runner-up. Others to run well were Doug. Olson, who performed splendidly for a newcomer to the sport, and Peter de la Mare, the club captain.

Tramping.

Despite the loss of many experienced trampers the club maintained a very active programme culminating in a ten-day ski ing and climbing trip to Arthur's Pass. Besides several trips to the Orongorongos and Tauherenikau parties completed a southern crossing of the Tararuas, crossed from Wairongomai to Silverstream, were rained upon at Waitewaewae at Easter, and did the Arete-Dundas trip, besides scaling Holdsworth in search of snow.

These also served - - - -

One helpful sign this year has been the revival of the rowing and the table-tennis club. The former while still operating on a small scale has met with moderate success. The latter, however, under the energetic direction of Doug. Yen, entered two teams in the C and D grades of the local competitions and they swept all before them.

A newcomer to Varsity clubs, not very much publicised, is the Soccer club, which has performed quite successfully with one team in one of the lower senior grades. The Athletic club on the other hand no longer appears to function as a club, though individuals, notably Dicky Daniell and Rowberry competed at the local meetings.

NON-SPORT CLUBS—A POST MORTEM

Debating Society.

Debates included such subjects as "The U.S.S.R. is the Spearhead of Modern Civilisation," "That Weir House is a Good Thing," "British Government's Policy in India is Bankrupt," and "Swing has no Place in the Cultural Life of College." This year the Debating Society was affiliated with the Wellington Union of Public Speaking Societies and a debate was organised with the Hutt Valley Debating Society on "N.Z. Workers are Pulling their Weight in the War Effort," in which V.U.C. took the negative side, and needless to say Hutt Valley won.

In general, however, the debating was of a low standard, and the conduct of the somewhat meagre audiences showed an almost complete lack of decorum on occasions, due mainly to a mild epidemic of rather loud but ill-informed freshers, with an even louder and somewhat demagoguic leader. Their presence unfortunately rendered it at times almost impossible to treat the discussions seriously, as most of the speakers with whom they disagreed were rendered almost inaudible, whilst if a speaker had the temerity to as much as mention such subjects as the Soviet Union, the War, or Fascism, he was usually greeted with such a torrent of contumely that the premises rather resembled a Billingsgate fish market

on a Friday. The cure for this distressing complaint seems to be an immediate transfusion of mature healthy blood, before the canker completely chokes the dying body.

Dramatic Club.

This rather illusive club seems to resemble that mythical creation

" - - - Meagre and hollow but crisp:
Like a coat that is too high in the waist,
With a flavor of Will-o-the-Wisp."

Although it has, it appears, produced one or two one act plays, its major production scheduled for the second term was unavoidably postponed until the third term. The club's officers: Miss P. Hildreth is president. Miss P. Hildreth is to take the major part in the major production.

Spike 1942 suggested that this club " was tottering to a dismal grave," but as it appears to be still lingering painfully, we might suggest a speedy cremation to obviate any undue suffering, for the major production's audience.

International Relations — Discussion Peace, War and Civil Liberties.

As these two corpses have failed to stir during the last two years, we may safely conclude that they are well and truly buried.

Phœnix Club.

After a somewhat ephemeral appearance last year, this club appears to have subsided again. Perhaps, in the words of Lurcat, " L' art n'est plus un jeu gratuit; c'est une activite offensive."

Musical Clubs.

At present there are three organisations (four including the orchestra, but it is not an affiliated organisation), all fairly lively, although the support enjoyed by two of them seems to be rather restricted. There is the Gramophone Club (secretary J. Money) still providing for those unfortunate enough not to be able to find anything to do during the lunch-hour. Also the hep-cats were to some extent catered for this year by a couple of " swing sessions " conducted under the ægis of D. Yen.

Next there is ths Glee Club, still struggling, under the baton of A. Alpers, who we are informed, enjoys a very stern taste in music which seems to be reflected in the items, consisting mainly of madrigals and Bach chorales. Mr. A. Alpers has a Mus. Bach. The Glee Club has suffered this year from a surfeit of male voices, but which unfortunately does not seem to have prevented them, up to date, from arranging a concert for the third term, though on a much more restricted scale than last year.

Finally there is the Music Makers' Club, an exclusive (though not necessarily select) club where, it appears, a performance on some musical instrument (the human voice is included), is a necessary condition for membership, fortunately a condition which must severely restrict the club's activities.

In conclusion, it may be said that music still remains a comparatively healthy spot on an otherwise rapidly mortifying body.

Law Faculty Club.

Officers, 1942-43: President, Professor D. McGechan; Chairman, Mr. K. Gibson. An address on " Law and Legal Education " was given by Lt. N. J. Leidner, of the U.S.N., a former attorney. Also the club participated in debates held by the Wellington Union Public Speaking Societies. Chief attraction of the year seems to have been the dinner held in the Grand Hotel. Thus it appears " that in spite of the depleted ranks, the club was able to take satisfaction in the highly successful nature of the activities conducted during the year "—the voice in the wilderness!

Scientific Societies.

During the second term a few industrious, if somewhat misguided grave-diggers, exhumed the " Maths. and Physics Society," but the mustiness of this slightly decayed cadaver seems to pervade its few lectures, and so it was hastily interred again before the stench became too over-powering.

The Chemical Society, after being packed away from 1942, was taken out and shaken, and managed to arrange a few lectures. Mr. Keys, of the D.S.I.R., delivered quite an enlightening address on " Patent Medicines," which seemed to somewhat annoy a patent medicines manufacturer present, particularly the slander that patent medicine pushers were just racketeers. However the odour of moth-balls seemed to cling to the society, in spite of the club officers' most courageous and determined efforts to deodorise it; so the society was again hurriedly packed away. Perhaps next year, or the year after, or the year after that, the society will be given a hearty dusting, which will either bring it back to life, or choke it once and for all.

The Biological Society of all the Scientific Societies seems to have been the liveliest. Lectures included one of a Botanical flava, by Dr. Blair, and a Zoological one by Mrs. Richardson. Also a tour was arranged to Red Docks where numerous specimens, etc., were collected.

In general the Scientific Societies have relatively little to show, in spite of the fact that the number of science students has greatly increased this year. Perhaps it is due to the war. I wonder when we will reach the stage when in the words of A. Tolstoy

" We should find it very difficult to draw a line of demarcation, showing where in the consciousness of the citizen, science ends and arts begins. Both the one and the other are essential for perceiving and knowing the world as it is." I wonder!

Or why is it? to quote J. D. Bernal, " The way in which educated people respond to such quackeries as spiritualism or astrology, not to say more dangerous ones such as racial theories, or currency myths shows that fifty years of education in the method of science in Britain or Germany has produced no visible effect whatever."

Religious Societies.

Include the S.C.M., E.U., and the Catholic Students' Guild. If information is wanted on the first two societies, all that is necessary is to peruse any old *Spike*, say '42 or '41; for the disciples of these two organisations still seem to be stamping around the same old totem poles, chanting the same old credos.

The Catholic Students' Guild, judging by their advertisements, are very lively this year. Sunday discussions seem to be their principal form of amusement, and such subjects as " Socialism " and " Evolution " appear to have received some prominence, though rather than explain them, I've no doubt they were more concerned with explaining them away.