

ON DIT

Official Organ of the Adelaide University
Students' Union

"Doth sometimes counsel take
And sometimes tea"

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EDITORIAL.

This is the last number of "On Dit" for this year, and our editorial labours are now nearly over.

For the future we have no responsibility. Whether the paper is to continue or not rests with the Students' Council, and we hope that, despite the expense, they will see fit to carry on the good work.

Needless to say, the venture has deserved and received a good deal of criticism. It has also received some praise; but whether deserved or not we modestly decline to say.

The criticism has been varied, and a good deal of it only interesting for the light it shed upon the psychology of the critics. Some has been explicit, even frank, some cryptic. We take it that the gentleman who tore up about twenty numbers, tied them neatly into a parcel, and posted them in the Editors' box, meant to express strong disapproval, but his lack of detail makes this otherwise fine gesture valueless.

The most constant complaint is that the paper contains too much of a general nature and not enough of direct and immediate interest to the student population. We feel that this is just. The correspondence column has opened the way to a great deal of stuff not entirely germane to the matter. At the same time we should be sorry not to have heard Basil Jackson's views on Religion. Our contributors are generally much more ready to give us their views on Religion or Art than to supply us with the details of their last faculty meeting.

It seems that the appointment of faculty representatives to a sort of reporting staff does not do the trick. Perhaps the only solution of the difficulty would be to make all faculty secretaries ex officio "On Dit" correspondents. If the same thing could be worked by the various sports teams it would considerably ease the labour of that heroic fellow, the Sporting Editor.

For the rest, if as seems to be the case, the Editors must write a good deal of the matter, it is scarcely fair to protest that their own views on current topics occasionally crop up. In answer to one persistent critic, we would again state that none of the Editors are members of the Third International!

How Awfully Decent.

While a crowd of decent people watched a yo-yo exhibition on the Refectory lawn, a decent crowd of people had gathered in the Lady Symon hall to hear Mr. Wallace Pratt speak on "The Insufficiency of Decency."

Mr. Pratt said that he referred to the attitude which is characterized negatively by lack of exceptional idealism, strong religious conviction or unusual enthusiasm, and characterized positively by honesty, moderation, ordinary fairness of mind, ordinary self-control, ordinary generosity, and a desire to live undisturbed in fair

comfort and to allow others to do the same. "Live decently and let live decently, but don't get excited about things."

But although there was much of real good in this attitude, he said, it was not enough. It lacked those qualities which were needed if man's relation to God was adequately to be expressed, and we had not begun really to live until our lives had been deepened and enriched by the quality of love.

Apart, however, from the quality of our life, decency was insufficient from a quantitative aspect. It did not go far enough in the immediate relations of life; still less so in those that are wider.

"People who make decency their characteristic attitude generally confine it to a more or less restricted group—the family, social, class, or national group. They are decent to Nationalists, but not quite so decent to Labour people. And to be ordinarily decent to a Communist is hardly to be expected! They are decent to Australians and Englishmen, but not so decent to Chinese or Americans or Russians. It is probably true, but still insufficient, that most people would deal decently with any of these groups if they were in personal contact with them." But an attitude was required which would be sensitive to the unseen and distant obligations, and until we had that, we would have no solution to the problem of living together.

Mr. Pratt said that since it took more than a moderate ideal to keep up to a moderate standard, decency alone was in continual danger of breaking down into something less. Its own intrinsic strength was not sufficient to keep it up.

Above all, decency revealed its insufficiency in that it did not solve the problems that pressed upon us. It might alleviate the pressure at certain points, but that was all. Such problems as the relations between National States, between races, classes, and generations, and all kinds of relations between man and man, would not be solved by anything less than the spirit of Christ, whose method was the method of love, which was the method of God. And the insistent call of to-day was for people who were prepared to practise this method, and this alone.

Men's Tennis Club.

At the annual general meeting of the Club, held on Wednesday, August 31st, the following officers were elected: S. A. Turnbull (Captain); C. T. Moodie (Secretary); W. K. Taylor and J. L. Allen, together with the two first-named (Committee); S. A. Turnbull, representative on Council; S. A. Turnbull, C. T. Moodie, and W. K. Taylor (Delegates to Central District Committee).

The season opened on Saturday, October 1st, when the District Team was defeated by the strong Port Adelaide combination by nine rubbers to nil. We hope to improve on this, though Aleck Turnbull came within an ace of beating R. L. Shepherd—runner-up in the State Singles Championship in 1930. The "B" grade team defeated Kensington Gardens "A" by five rubbers to one.

Last Saturday three teams were playing, but rain came, first in a drizzle, and then in a downpour, and put an end to tennis for the day, without finality being reached in any match. The District team was down four rubbers to two against Unley—Searle's 6-2, 6-2 victory against Edwards being noteworthy. The "A" team's match against Reade Park stood at two rubbers all; while Port Adelaide "A" led the "C's" by three rubbers to two in "B2" grade. The matches will be completed later, but in all three the odds are against the 'Varsity.

Finally, under the new S.A.L.T.A. rules, umpires are to be provided for District matches by the various clubs. If any 'Varsity man knowing the rudiments of the game, and possessing good eyesight, desires to obtain the privileges of the Association without financial payment, here's his chance.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor, "On Dit."

Dear Sir,—At the beginning of the year there was much talk of forming a gymnasium club in the University. May I inquire when the club will be ready to receive members' subscriptions? Is the Sports Association building a lofty structure for the housing of the aerobats or are they still deliberating on the scenic qualities of the site? I hope they won't worry too much about it, because most 'Varsity men have simple tastes. I suggest, Mr. Editor, that something be done immediately, before men join gymnasiums in the city, or take up some less strenuous and less classical form of physical training. Yours, etc., BICEPS MORIBUNDUS.

To the Editor, "On Dit."

Sir,—I would like to offer some comment on the Editorial reviews of the books concerned with Soviet Russia, which appeared in the last issue of "On Dit."

On the first part, regarding "Proletariat, Vol. 1, No. 3," I do not wish to comment, as I have not seen that publication, but I would like to point out that the impression to be gained from the Editorial comment is, on the evidence available regarding Russia (some of which, apparently, has not been placed before the Editorial chair), too good to be true.

The experiences of Theodor Siebert, a German journalist who lived for four years in New Russia, and who, speaking the language fluently, had time to travel and see things as they really are, and not as they are misrepresented by Soviet propaganda, are really worth while reading in "Red Russia" (translated from the third German edition by Eden and Cedar Paul).

This book shows the "failure of the Marxian experiments," and the deplorable condition of the Russian people. Visitors to Russia are hoodwinked. Hotels are hastily done up for them, so as to have an appearance of comfort and decency; they see only "show places," including factories hurriedly rigged up to create a good impression of the industrial position, and are guarded against conversation with those who are in a position to reveal the "miserable realities of the Bolshevik State."

Marxianism contemplates the extinction of the State. Paradoxically enough, Soviet Russia, professing to follow Marx, has "enthroned the State more despotically than perhaps ever before in human history." "The dictatorship of the Proletariat" is a myth. Russia is really under an oligarchic government, nominally responsible to the relatively small Communist party. That the U.S.S.R. is a "workers' and peasants' State" is also a myth. The peasants constitute 85 to 90 per cent. of the population, but in the Congress of Soviets they have only one vote to five for townsmen.

The Soviet idea hypnotizes many workers in other lands. What the Bolsheviks have actually made of it in Russia "cannot but be a scorn and a hissing to all true democrats" (Siebert). The working class in Russia, Siebert states, is well aware that it has no power. Voting statistics show that the pretence of democratic rule is merely "window-dressing."

There is still in Russia a remnant of the old bourgeoisie, but it leads "an existence more unhappy than that of Chinese coolies and the pariahs of Hindustan."

Fairy tales are told about the Five Years' Plan. Statistics are issued throughout the world which amply illustrate the old saying that there are three degrees of falsehood—lies, adjective lies, and statistics. During the second year of the Plan Russia paper currency was doubled, and thus the whole basis of the financial calculations was vitiated. The Plan has been constantly modified, both in general scope and in detail, and, as originally prepared, it no longer exists. In the meantime, "poverty and distress are unquestionably as severe as during the civil war, and the standard of life is falling instead of rising." "The proportion of workers who receive less than a 'subsistence wage' is very large." There is no freedom of movement for the workers under what is called "the mobilization of labour." The worker "cannot change his residence without a special permit from the authorities. Offers of work may no longer be refused. At any moment the workers can be sent whithersoever those in high places please to send them."

Much could be added concerning the suppression of free speech, the mockery of justice in the Soviet courts, the judicial murders therein sanctioned, the terrorism exercised by the OGPU, which arrests people and puts them to death without even the pretence of a trial, and a State-sanctioned standard of morality which appears to be built on the principle that "chastity is by no means a virtue".

All the above go to prove that the Editorial comment in the last "On Dit" was too good to be true. It may be said that I am quoting from but one author, but allow me to point out that this is not so, as the opinions expressed above are those formed after browsing in a large and well-stocked library which has on its shelves not only most of the books mentioned in the Editorial comment, but also quite a number which do not seem to have come into the ken of the Editor. Yours, etc.,

ANTI-DELUSIONIST.

The Editors, "On Dit."

Dear Sirs,—In the last issue of "On Dit" there appeared a letter dealing with "Chaos in the Law School," which for some reason or reasons unknown, took the place of an Editorial, though presumably it was not written by the Editors. I consider that criticism in it unfair, undeserved, and ungrammatical.

It is ridiculous to say that such underlinings as there are in the law reports impede one's enjoyment (?) or decipherment of the text, as your correspondent would have us believe.

I agree with the writer's second contention, but the third statement reveals a disgruntled and disagreeable nature. If your correspondent worked hard in an office, instead of moping round the Law library all day long, by reason of having a soft job or no job at all, he or she and the University would be much better for it. There is a certain amount of noise inseparable from the comings and goings of students, but the normal brain can concentrate through it all.

Possibly, also, the writer has been reading in the Bible about a "vapour of smoke," but it seems unnecessary redundancy to refer to a "din of noises," for what other sort of din can there be? Yours, etc., LAW.

The Editor, "On Dit."

Dear Sir,—The "Wreckers" in their zeal for the destruction of the Public Library sign on North Terrace, omitted to draw attention to the neglect of the City Fathers to put up the sign "Kindergarten," which appears to be the nature of the University building. Yours truly, N.D.W.C. (No Destruction Without Construction).

The Ab Intra Society.

Students who are interested in the drama should certainly make it their business to visit the Ab Intra Society.

The society is a small group of people interested in the drama, not from the box office point of view, but as a means of expression. They bring to the production of their shows fresh, keen minds, a great deal of enthusiasm, and unmistakably sincerity. It is quite true that they are hampered by lack of adequate materials: they have only the most sketchy stage and properties; but they decidedly have ideas about acting, and make their performance vivid and convincing.

The more blasé observer will probably be a little amused at the attempts to find some sort of theatrical basis, for what he will admit to be excellent practice. Some members of the studio have dug deep into the more esoteric aesthetic mysteries of the theatre, and the result of their research is a weird blend of theories, perhaps half understood, certainly almost unintelligible, and slightly amusing to the detached observer. But the shows themselves are extremely well done, and very moving.

The studio atmosphere seems to make the audience a part of the traffic on the stage. There is a close and intimate connection between spectators and actors, heightened by the fact that between scenes it is often possible to see the bare bones on the stage being clothed for the next act.

The programme included several short plays of Thornton Wilder; not remarkable in themselves, but well done; a stained-glass window dance, which was very attractive, and a very beautiful mimic representation of a apocryphal incident in the life of John the Baptist. This was a poem recited by John and the two trees; it achieved an astonishingly beautiful effect.

Boxing and Wrestling Club.

Boxing and wrestling have made a successful entrance into University sporting activities. At present there are about 30 active members, and although nothing could be arranged this year to allow them to gauge their capabilities, they have nevertheless shown great enthusiasm for these sports. Two members of the Club, McBain and Wyatt, represented the 'Varsity in the finals of the State amateur boxing championships, and it was unfortunate that, after both fighting in a hard and keen contest, one championship at least could not be brought to the University.

On the wrestling side, there are three outstandingly keen members, Howell, Boundy, and Eckersley, all of whom have shown great improvement during the last month or so. Howell, in particular, shows promise of developing into a good wrestler.

On Wives and their Education.

It may seem a trifle premature, perhaps even precocious, that a University paper should treat this subject at all. But a previous editorial on women in the 'Varsity calls it into consideration. Phrases like "sympathizers and comforters," "lord and master," "powerful people with bad digestions," carry logically on to speculations about the future Mr. or Mrs. X.

The question is, whether one's wife need be "educated" or not; that is, I take it, whether she should have attended a University, or picked up her experience somewhere else. The Bishop of London appears to feel seriously that an uneducated wife is a menace. But what human creature, I wonder, with whom you are closely associated is not? Even things like drink and jazz and hiking and seductive music are menaces; they can upset your equilibrium; and then, the Bishop is a university man himself. If a B.A. wishes to live quietly with an understanding mate, let him marry another B.A.; and they can talk about literature and art ('Varsity brand), and what fun they used to have in lectures. She will know the difference between Keats and Yeats, and who wrote Rabelais, and why not to compare Cézanne with Landseer. People who hear them at it will think how cultured they both are, and how perfectly they suit one another. Perhaps they do.

For my part, I would sooner marry a menace. It would be a great risk, but I appeal to all those in whom the pulses of adventure beat strong to take the plunge with me. My only stipulation is that the girl shall be, if not educated, at least potentially clever. For I presume, perhaps rashly, that you marry because you are interested primarily in the woman, and not in the things she happens to be interested in. And certainly not because you think that the things which interest you might also interest her. I feel how good it would be for the university man to be met, after an exposition of his pet theories, merely with a puzzled look. "But I don't know what on earth you're talking about: I like other things." Ten to one, if this man begins looking for the other things, and if he has not blundered initially, he will find them intensely interesting in their way. They will not interfere with his studies, and the change will positively do him good. The whole man will broaden.

The thought of two people having "so much in common" is lovely, but it does not satisfy. If they had a little less in common they might take more trouble to understand each other. You must allow in the first place that they would not fall in love unless they felt the same about many things: then it is unnecessary to give them a common standard of education. It is even possible that types quite dissimilar intellectually may communicate to their satisfaction in other terms than those taught in our universities. All this, of course, is only one of my theories.

Stinging Nettles.

It is a pity that D. H. Lawrence is not better known in the University. Only this year I read "Nettles" for the first time,

and a few weeks ago met Lawrence himself as Mark Rampion, in Huxley's "Point Counterpoint."

To judge him merely by what "Nettles" contains, I should say that he would act like as cascara on this sluggish city of culture. He isn't just daring, like the young Sydney people who write about the private relations of nymphs and satyrs. You will find things in his poems which would ordinarily make you laugh—or blush. Either way, you are given a shock, and the stimulation is good. The first few poems in "Nettles" are of hatred and contempt, the last few of pitying love—Whitman or Edward Carpenter might have written them; their vehement earnestness is troubling, and you realize that you are more squeamish about unclothed souls than unclothed bodies.

It is apparent that Lawrence loved the people, and that he hated them under the collective title of "Man in the Street." Successful Victorians like Browning were strong and calm (and, of course, successful) enough to tolerate the British public—"ye who love me not." But Lawrence's success was small. The public blushed and giggled and gloated at his pictures; its officers destroyed them; they lectured him for his indecent behaviour; they hurt him badly. Therefore he describes these people who had hurt him as a great uncleanly baby, pap-fed by its kind aunty of a government.

Of course, he was consumptive. So were Keats and Stevenson. But the disease stimulated Keats to sensuousness, and Stevenson to fineness and sympathy, and they wrote in some sense apart from it. I do not think Lawrence could get away from his disease. He is very much the centre of his own universe, and it is a fevered, restless, despair-and-hope universe.

Hatred of the social system consumed him as fiercely as consumption. Civilization is all wrong: we have too much subordinated our animal natures to our mental. The glorification of sexual love may be our salvation if only we can keep sophistication out of it. Lawrence himself, I have been told, was impotent.

So, in the same spirit that wizened Nietzsche created his superman, and little Norman Lindsay his fat riotous women, Lawrence preached his own exultant gospel. Which means, I think, one of two things. Either it is only the weak who trouble to glorify the ideal of strength—like poor children who play at kings and queens; or else, only the weak, having no strength, can comprehend its value. Lawrence's attitude is either wistful desire or sane understanding.

If a sane critic, do we consider him a potential reformer? Or is he a warped creature whose views have only their fire to commend them? This is evidently what Mr. Mead and the policeman thought when they condemned him for leaving out that most essential fig leaf from his pictures. You are reminded of the trial of the poet in Wolfe's "Uncelestial City." The poet is charged for writing filthy and blasphemous verse, which turns out to be a passionate outcry against war. The speech for the prosecution is a miracle. Prosecutor begins in traditional British fashion by shuffling all responsibility on to the shoulders of the

Almighty. Then there is much talk about "slain heroes," "chaste ears of our wives," "loyalty to God and king," "safety of our great Empire," and so on.

Wives and children, God and the king, may all be invoked against D. H. Lawrence. I suppose most people feel that with all his courage he is a bit of a plague spot. The public must not be seduced at all costs. Socrates, you know, and Christ, and vested interests. It is expedient that he, poor man, should die for the people.

They killed him, therefore, not directly and cleanly. He was unquestionably an artist—in some of the prose works, I understand, a great artist. We admire him for this.

We may entertain varying opinions of his value as the reformer which he considered himself to be. His gospel about the body and how to use it was wrong-headed, perhaps, and most un-Christian. But was it more unnatural than Calvin's, or more sweeping than Savanorola's? It goes in the other direction; but who cares about directions in a relativity-age which does not recognize an absolute?

At all events, he had three great qualities of a reformer: zeal, courage, self-sacrifice. He set his face against what is unthinking and prohibitive in life. We could love him for this.

The Idyll.

On either side the Torrens lie
Long banks of grassy greenery,
And on the left the road runs by
To the Adelaide 'Varsity.

Here, where milk and honey runs,
The maids come forth in browns and duns
And blues and greens, and hair in buns,
At the Adelaide 'Varsity.

And many goats on lawns do browse
(Few sheep the library doth house
What though the profs. in vaia do rouse?)
At the Adelaide 'Varsity.

And now Exams. are drawing nigh,
(With many a curse and many a sigh).
And in the sun the Lawnites cry,
"Oh, bring them on, and let us die.
We live but once, and then pass by,
At the Adelaide 'Varsity!"

So come ye to this Sylvan wood,
See "R.I.P." where Learning stood,
Chew Lotus leaf in lazy mood,
And whisper, "Truly life is good,
At the Adelaide 'Varsity."

Yours, etc.,

LUCAN IV.

[Women can now have "plumpers" attached to their plates by a dentist, thus filling out the face and removing wrinkles.]

When as so haggard Julia goes
To countless dentists, goodness knows,
And there endures most painful throes.

When next again I chance to see
Her cheeks as pink as rouge can be,
O how their smoothness taketh me!

H. ERRIC.

Boat Club.

On Saturday, October 8, the Boat Club conducted the Tyas Cup Regatta for 1931 and 1932. The condition of the Torrens last year made the postponement of the inter-faculty race imperative. The regatta just held was most successful. Medicine succeeded in retaining the Tyas Cup, defeating Engineering in the final. They are to be congratulated on their fine performance.

The winning crew was seated: H. E. W. Lyons (bow), A. C. Douglas (2), J. M. Bonnin (3), J. R. Barbour (str.), M. W. Fletcher (cox.).

The scratch races were rowed over a short course and the competitors made up with enthusiasm any deficiency there may have been in rowing ability. The final was won by Maitland's crew after an exciting race with Goode's crew. Maitland's crew were seated: C. A. P. Boundy (bow), J. H. Reynolds (2), N. F. Bonnin (3), J. A. Maitland (str.), J. Connolly (cox.).

After the last event the trophies were presented to the successful competitors by Mr. Arthur Nichols, who made a graceful little speech.

Mr. Nichols coached the winning crew, and is now engaged in coaching the St. Mark's College Eight. We hope he will have as much success with them as with the Medicine crew.

The Boat Club Committee would like to thank all those who helped by their participation or attendance to make the regatta a success, and feel sure that the same enthusiastic response will again greet their efforts next year.

The S.A.R.A. year is just commencing, and a draft of the programme is now to hand. Regattas will be held on the Torrens on November 19 and December 3, and on December 17 at Port Adelaide. Henley-on-Torrens is to be revived on December 3. These regattas, together with others to be held later in the year, offer opportunities for racing practice which should stand men in good stead when the inter-'varsity crew is being selected next March.

Tennis Club.

Judging by the number of students who have had their tennis racquets repaired lately (let alone those of them who are prosperous enough to buy a new one), it looks as though there may be just a few at the opening of the Non-Pennant Tennis Club down at our 'Varsity courts on Saturday afternoon. Professor A. L. Campbell, as president of the Adelaide University Sports Association, will (we hope) start the game going for the 1932-33 season. And now it remains to be seen who on the committee will make up the three other players required for that much looked forward to set. But, of course, the other three courts will be used at the same time, so there is no need for all to stand around and watch the progress of the official set.

The women's committee, headed by Misses Jean Gilmore and Gladys Pank, with the aid of some others, will endeavour to feed the multitude on the balcony of the boat shed. So we do hope that 6d. per head will not be a big strain on the pocket

or the purse as the case may be, as you will be rewarded with all the latest in "home-made" eats. In conclusion, we sincerely hope that the water in the copper will boil earlier this year and that no male member of the committee will have his nice clean creams ruined from his efforts as a stoker of the fire at the copper.

The committee of the Adelaide University Non-Pennant Tennis Club invites any member or intending member of the Adelaide University Sports Association to the official opening of its club on Saturday afternoon at 2.30 p.m. The club's committee for the 1932-33 season is as follows: Messrs. D. O. Haslam (secretary), H. E. Irving (treasurer), Misses Jean Gilmore, Gladys Pank, Messrs. J. D. Searcy, W. C. Beerworth, and R. D. McKay (committee).

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