

St. John's Collegian

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The Cartesian Diver

In some old textbooks of physics that used to tease me in my father's bookcase there was described a simple but wonderful experiment with a laboratory gadget called the Cartesian Diver. The soul of the experiment was a little glass man floating immersed in a jam of water with a tight India rubber cover. If you pressed the cover and compressed the contents of the jar, the little man changed his specific gravity and gracefully floated down to the bottom of the jar. If you removed the pressure, he quickly came back to the top, bumping his head against the rubber cover. On rainy afternoons I used to collect a fruit jar from the kitchen, a small pillbox and a piece of rubber from my father's office, and sat fascinated with the graces and wonders of nature in this small closed universe. Later I discovered that the principle was useful in submarine navigation; later also I found out who Descartes was. Still later I met Jacob Klein, last Friday night's lecturer. This must be the reason I am invited to report the lecture.

The lecture was a voyage in a glass submarine to see the wonders of the deep. Come into my System, said the Skipper, and we shall see. We all stepped in, and when the hatches were shut, we went down, down, watching the pressure gauges.

In the first dive the Skipper announced the formula for submersion: If you describe, explain, or analyze anything with a system, you will have to describe, explain, and analyze that system; where one thing was, you will have a system or systems. Look at all the dials and valves around you and you can see that this is so. Now look out through the walls of this System, and in the distance you will see the Great Volcano rising majestically and magically from the floor of the sea. This is Plotinus, the home of all Systems. From its single cone there emanate twin Forms, Being and Intellect; from them Soul, from Soul Nature, and from Nature the forms of elements, plants, animals, and men. If

you ask about Matter, the answer is Never Mind, and if you ask Where's Mind, the answer is No matter. Seeking gold you find nous, and only nous.

If you ask How to get out of here, the answer is that as an hypostasis you must become ecstatic, because you have lost your form-matter composition, and the only way to be yourself is to be an ecstasis.

There are two ways to be ecstatic, one by the aspiration of an artificial lung, and the other by moving from one System to another. All these systems are to be found in caves in the sides of the Great Volcano, and Leibniz will be your guide. Each cave is a monad, and we can see the Monads as we sink lower and come nearer. Now we are inside one and we see ourselves in our good ship System mirrored in the sides of a crystal cave. No, those are mirrors, not windows, and we are having perceptions. No, those are not other subs, they are ourselves as matter, though not really matter, but notes in the music of the monads. No, we can't get out, we just think we are conducting an orchestra.

But, Mr. Skipper, we were once only half submerged; what, please, is the water. Oh that, why it's only the System of Systems within which we dialectically float or sink. You sink or swim with Hegel who has the chart. Good ships like Plato and Aristotle, can keep afloat if they are only partly submerged, and good subs can always surface when they want to by pumping out water. No, you mustn't shoot the torpedoes at the good ships Plato and Aristotle; that's what Plotinus did and you see he is now a volcano. But why do they keep afloat? Because they have lots of ballast, necessity, matter, irrationals and they never heard of Descartes. But Platonists and Aristotelians have had shipwrecks. Yes, but

I, the shipwrecked sailor of the sub, Bid you set sail.

Here you are, put the cross-hairs of the periscope on the flagships; take bearings; trim ballast; we're going places. Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!

—SCOTT BUCHANAN.

Mr. Martin On Law

Like the prodigal son, James Martin returned to repent and confess, by delivering a lecture on "Law, A Lost Art", and the introduction which the Dean gave him was nothing short of being the fatted calf. Unfortunately, however, (if we may be allowed to mix our metaphors), Mr. Martin had to return to the lion's den after the feast.

Law, Mr. Martin said, has been lost, not only as an art, but almost altogether. Instead, a kind of liberty or license has taken its place. Apparently, this springs from a common human conviction that man has an ultimate end but that this end is vague and cannot be known unless one indulge in metaphysical and theological discussions. Since this is obviously too dangerous, one of the acknowledged means towards this end, namely liberty, is treated as though it were the end in itself. There is a general failure to see that liberty itself is supported by other means, and that it is therefore absurd to destroy these by an abuse of liberty.

These are the means all of which—and especially law—have become lost in the mad struggle for a perverted kind of freedom: Manners, which supports and makes possible Law; Law which supports and is the cornerstone of Justice; Justice which supports and is the basis of Liberty. Thus these four terms constitute a kind of hierarchy; each of the lower terms is necessary for all the higher ones to exist. Good manners are needed for good law; good law makes for true justice, and justice makes man truly free. For each of these provides paradigms enabling man to climb up the ladder, which he would be unable to do without such paradigms because of his free will.

Like the four virtues, these four terms can be considered as means between extremes. Thus good manners are obviously the means between absence of manners and the absurd rigidity of a righteous code of manners. Similarly, good law is the means between a situation in which there is a

multitude of particularized laws, and one in which there are so few and so general laws that when applied to particular cases they are bound to be often harsh and even unjust. Justice, again, must neither be merely a general sentiment for the "fair" course, nor must it be puritanical, close-mouthed, and predominantly punitive. Finally, liberty must neither be license, nor such that (as in "free enterprise") it gives liberty only to some and restricts everyone else's freedom.

But nowadays, in our anxiety to have freedom, we fail to see that we must have the other three conditions. First; rather, we introduce too much freedom into manners, law, and justice and by that very process make it impossible to have true liberty. There is now an utter absence of formality in all of these. Especially in law, we seem to be getting away from all formal procedures, and are substituting "talking it over", and arbitration for any due process of law. We scorn, and rightly, the many absurdities which overly formal procedure often leads to, but in doing so we have also forgotten the things which this formalism stood for. It is true that hypocritical "good" manners are shameful, but must we assume that all good manners are hypocritical? Apparently, this assumption is made generally today, and in our desire to get away from hypocrisy, we have swung to the other extreme and have forsaken all manners. The analogous process has taken place with respect to law and justice.

Instead of climbing up the ladder and reaching liberty after having first got the other three, we have started from the top; we have assumed a kind of liberty and thus have destroyed the other three. To regain them, and a true kind of liberty, we must again start at the bottom and have proper manners, law, and justice.

Mr. Martin illustrated his main point, that formalism in law is nowhere to be found today, with many amusing examples from Washington bureaucracy. We thought that there were too many of them, and that the otherwise fine lecture lost somewhat by their excessive number. We hate to say this, for lecturers with the rhetorical grace and charm of Mr. Martin's caliber are a rare gift for us who listen. Indeed, if here too we must choose between extremes we greatly prefer Mr. Martin's end of it.

Art Exhibition

In spite of what has been rumored about to the contrary, the committee for the second Spring Art Show will open its exhibition of work by students next week, on Saturday, May 8th. The exhibition will be held in the Junior Common Room.

It is not too late. If the committee has not visited you personally and inquired as to whether you dabble in the plastic arts, do not hesitate to see them and present your work. Entries for the Spring Show may be submitted to the office of the Assistant Dean or directly to the committee. Said committee consists of members Landau, Atterbury, Maikoffsk, Ertegun, Mason. These people will accept anything from a large marble group to a small pen-and-ink. The committee reserves the right to judge which entries shall be exhibited. There are no fees and no prizes. However, the committee acts as agent in the event of sale of work, provided the student wishes to sell and someone else wishes to buy.

A formal opening for faculty and friends of the college will take place in the afternoon. In the evening the gallery, nee Common Room, will be open to the student body and their dates of the evening. The exhibition will be open during the dance Saturday evening and everyone is urged to come. The Spring Show will also remain open for two weeks.

War Meeting

A week ago Sunday night, Nicholas Nabokov provided the audience of the Revolution: War and Peace Meeting with a highly informative and exciting lecture. Although he said he had originally thought of talking of Russia's post war demands, he felt a discussion of that country's outlook on cartels would reveal the problems involving Russia and the other United Nations at the peace table.

In the United States we waver between two contrary conceptions of Russia and Stalin; either Russia is the hungry bear with the monstrous unshaven Stalin hovering over us or she is the savior of Europe with a suddenly clean-shaven Stalin bravely carrying on the struggle for civilization.

As a background for the discussion, Mr. Nabokov gave a summary of the

recent history of the Soviet State. Three divisions may be made:

1. 1917-1921: The period from the Revolution to the end of the Civil War which is often termed the War of the Interventions which involved the U. S., England, Japan, etc.

2. 1921-1923: In this period, the Soviet government escaped collapse from the forces of hunger and intervention. However, no economic policy was definitely formulated. The Right Wing finally persuaded Lenin (1922-23) to adapt the New Economic policy.

3. 1923-1929: The assumption of complete control by Stalin with the destruction of the left opposition under Trotsky and the right under Kaminiev. It was in this period when Stalin felt that by introducing foreign capital, engineering and techniques, Russia might strengthen her new industry, banking and transportation. Lenin spoke of this dangerous policy as "copulation with capitalism" and Trotsky swore Russia would become the hinterland for the western world.

Between 64-68 concessions were given to various foreign concerns. These companies netted only 25 million dollars in 1926 and much less in 1929. These investments were small because: 1) The contracts were short-term; 2) The government stipulated that products must be sold within a definite time and within the U.S.S.R. and very little exportation was permitted; 3) Cartels made money through the exchange rubels but regulations made this extremely difficult while similar red tape made importation of machinery also a task; 4) the general policy of the Russian government was uncertain.

With the aforementioned in mind, the cartels tried to harvest money as quickly as possible with the least expense resulting in the use of bad technicians and machines. Meanwhile the concessions were doing "economic espionage" by reporting the nature of soil, economic conditions and the general potentialities of the country to another regime were but there.

In 1929, Stalin stopped concessions and the first 5-year plan came into being. Strangely enough it opened up the doors for foreign capital. Any state or concern that wished to invest could do so on the concession policy but under government supervision and

under the "tempo" of the plan. Although few companies took advantage of the plan, this policy might again be used.

In 1934 the second five-year plan was begun. The project was shrouded in secrecy but the sphere of action seemed to be Siberia which may well indicate Russia's interest in the East as a market.

In regard to the problem as to whether Russia is or can act as a cartel, she is other than a cartel in the sense that she is a government of the people through the elected chambers of the Great Soviet. If Russia were to become more democratic and reach the communistic stage out of the national socialistic, industry would then operate without profit through the electorate which, in turn, operates for the people.

What Russia will want after the war is suggested in the Soviet Economic Journal which stated that Russia is interested in who owns Central Europe industry. The feeling is strong that no such industry should ever be allowed to become the backbone of military power. Therefore, Russia will probably suggest that this industry be nationalized and that private capital be removed without remuneration and that an international administration with Russia participating supervise.

In conclusion, Mr. Nabokov attempted a guess at the present opinions of a Russian citizen on these problems:

- 1) Russia must have three-quarters of the say on the re-organization of Europe.
- 2) Although Russia's future may be in freeing Eastern countries, her security must be made in Europe and that Russian citizens should therefore be willing to fight to prevent a recurrence of the present situation.
- 3) A belief in Federal Union in Europe which should preferably be Socialistic.

II

Cartels continued to monopolize the Sunday evening discussions. This week Mr. Martin returned to outline the anatomy of these international organizations which are imposing their economic force without regard for the political sovereignty of national states. The texts he explicated were the full page advertisements of the Standard Oil Company's offer to allow any

company use of their synthetic rubber patents royalty free, a court decision against two important concerns dealing in tanning chemicals and the setting up of a mythical corporation in Connecticut with factories in occupied countries.

Not altruism or desire for advertising was the motive of Standard in giving use of patents to possible competitors. Mr. Martin recalled some interesting statistics which would indicate that more than the peace-time need of synthetic rubber is already being produced in plants that after the war will probably be turned over to Standard or allied concerns. So one giant corporation offered patents not profitably usable in exchange for the right to use processes not under their control, which any party entering the deal would have to relinquish without charge. Mr. Martin's interpretation of the offer differed from some newspaper accounts which further said that the patents to be relinquished by Standard were not theirs but the Federal Governments. In any case the motivation is questionable.

A slightly more involved skeleton of an English company with subsidiaries in South America who control the production of a product needed for tanning and also control through the government of one South American country the export quotas to the U. S. was the next evidence submitted. Only recently has the government interfered to prevent the English concern from regulating prices in this country which they have done because of their monopoly.

The most interesting point was Mr. Martin's analysis of a trend of before-the-war activity and continued according to recent reports from Europe about the use of plants seized by Germany. Control is not placed in the hands of Germans but production is so converted while the original management is in charge that sub-assembly parts are made which need for completion articles made in Germany proper. A set of production and management habits are set up which will likely persist after the war and give Germany one of her economic objectives—an integral part in European economy—whether she wins the military battle or not. Thus cartels serve not only to rationalize competition by dividing markets, fixing prices and sharing profits but are also forces in economic warfare among nations.

The relationship of war to cartels is not any more disturbing than a drought or bad flood. A fighting front is just a wall behind which inter-competition effort is made to dispose of markets and resources of the fighting nations. The sole concern of the members of the cartel is their profit. Legal codes of an unfriendly country can be avoided by shifting headquarters.

Super-national, armed with the technological methods needed throughout the world and independent of existing restraints cartels are a challenging problem of great dimension. Perhaps we should be less concerned with post-war planning than with finding out what has already been planned for us and adjusting our lives to it.

DONALD S. KAPLAN

Eggs

The annual Easter Egg Roll last Sunday established itself as a St. John's tradition—by running for two consecutive years. Doubts that the second time might prove anticlimatic seemed to have been pretty well dispelled by an enthusiastic faculty. Not only did they find their eggs but they also rolled them up the greater portion of the front green Mr. Stanley being acknowledged victor in this invigorating contest of high-powered intellectuals.

The faculty were given various first sentences of Great Books and had to find an egg with a picture corresponding to that particular book and they enjoyed varying success. Mr. Barr was among the first to find his egg ('Gulliver's Travels') but the Dean had trouble with 'Tom Jones' and had to be given several broad hints. The Scofields compiled the best team record with two eggs apiece (Leonardo, Rousseau and Locke, Aquinas). Approximately ten children ran amuck throughout the entire proceedings, pausing only to listen to the resonant strains of a recorded quartet playing Rondos by Susato, a XVIth Century Dutch composer. All in all the roll was a success from the weather to the children's candies.

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Arts

We had hoped that when we would appear in print again it would be with a number of happy surprises about Spring and new life in *events artistic local*. Nothing like this has happened, nor does it look as though it were going to happen. Happily we have retired for the past few weeks. Our best friends and severest critics (they are not the same people) tell us we should do so more often.

There are nine films coming to Annapolis next week and we can't find any excuse for telling you to see any of them, with the possible exception of *The Moon Is Down*. This (at the Circle next Wednesday) is the film version of the Steinbeck play and novel. It wasn't exactly great shakes in either place, theatres or bookstores. However, it has received a great deal of popular critical space and stands as one of the most sincere dialectics on the question of whether the invader of a country that quietly opposes is not his own conquerer. Cedric Hardwicke and Dorris Bowden are only two of the excellent featured players.

At the National in Washington John Golden's *The Home Front* completes its first test run and will soon find itself in New York. It is apparently a very funny play about a war-wife with a baby. On Monday *The Eve of St. Mark*, by Maxwell Anderson, begins a two-week run. Having left Germany with the candle completely out, Anderson now tells the story of Bataan—its heroes, their loves and families. Virtue and integrity, on all levels, is demonstrated to win, and death scenes are conducted in majestic blank verse.

At the Little Theatre in Baltimore there is a revival of *Algiers*. This has Boyer, LaMarr and Sigrid Gurie (re-member). An excellent film.

College Meeting

Last night Mr. Barr related system to matter by giving an analysis of the theory and practice of vandalism. He ably pointed out that the college is not in the business of replacing furniture. Advise to Pinkneys: behold the Seniors and similar to them strive to acquire an understanding of the functions of a common room. Threat to all: system of punishments rather than mere cost of replacement might become necessary. Its rhetoric is persuasive under circumstances. Mr. Barr is going to continue being bothered next week.

Calendar

St. John's College

Fri., April 30 — Sat., May 8, 1943

Friday, April 30:

8:30 A. M.
7:00-7:45 P. M.
7:00-8:00 P. M.
8:00 P. M.

Chapel Service
Chorus Rehearsal
Bible Class
Formal Lecture — *Constitutional Representative Government*—
Mortimer Adler

Great Hall
Humphreys Hall
McDowell 21
Great Hall

Saturday, May 1:

8:30 A. M.
9:30 A. M.-12:00 M.

Chapel Service
Athletics

Great Hall
Gymnasium

Sunday, May 2:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
8:00 P. M.

Recorded Concert
Revolution: War and Peace. Series II, No. 10. Cartels and World Law—String-fellow Barr

Humphreys Hall
Woodward Hall

Monday, May 3:

8:30 A. M.
7:00-7:45 P. M.

Chapel Service
Chorus Rehearsal

Great Hall
Humphreys Hall

Tuesday, May 4:

8:30 A. M.
5:00-6:00 P. M.
7:00-8:00 P. M.
8:00 P. M.

Chapel Service
Recorded Music
Bible Class
Town Meeting — *Tax Policy and Inflation*—
Randolph P a u l,
General Counsel to
the U. S. Treasury.

Great Hall
Humphreys Hall
McDowell 21
Great Hall

Wednesday, May 5:

8:30 A. M.
7:30 P. M.

Chapel Service
Cotillion Board Meeting

Great Hall
Paca Social Room

Thursday, May 6:

8:30 A. M.
7:30 P. M.

Chapel Service
College Meeting

Great Hall
Great Hall

Friday, May 7:

8:30 A. M.
7:00-7:45 P. M.
7:00-8:00 P. M.
8:00 P. M.

Chapel Service
Chorus Rehearsal
Bible Class
Formal Lecture — *On Truth*—Leonard Eslick

Great Hall
Humphreys Hall
McDowell 21
Great Hall

Saturday, May 8:

8:30 A. M.
9:30 A. M.-12:00 M.
4:00 P. M.

Chapel Service
Athletics
Formal Opening of Art Show — by invitation
Movie—*The Cat and the Canary*—an informal dance

Great Hall
Gymnasium
Junior Commons

8:30 A. M.-1:00 P. M.

Iglehart Hall