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Trivium

Socrates: "Writing, Phaedrus, has this strange quality, and is very like paintings; for the creatures of painting stand like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence. And so it is with written words; you might think they spoke as if they had intelligence, but if you question them, wishing to know about their sayings, they always say only one and the same thing. And every word, when it is written, is bandied about, alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to protect or help itself."

—:O:—

Since most of the audience heard Mr. Kieffer's lecture musically, which is to say scarcely at all because of an altercation between a circuit and a fuse, any lecture review in the conventional manner seems impossible. A compromise solution has been reached. A kind of transcription of the lecture, accompanied with a kind of commentary, will follow upon a tedious statement concerning criticism. Then, sometime later, Mr. Kieffer will follow up this transcription with an essay on the trivium, in which the distortions of this review will be rectified and the omissions stated.

Tedious statement: Probably the rarest creature but for the duckbill platypus is a critic. By nature critic is that which has neither gender, nor number, person or case. By nature critic is nameless, and, like the one of the Parmenides, can be talked about and understood only through other things.

Now a lecture is a thing to be talked about and understood. It is a thing, whatever else it may become, which is independent of you. If you wish to say that it depends on someone in order to exist at all, this can be granted—without understanding what is meant—provided that the someone or the you can be any "someone" or any "you." In short, the opinion of any person is irrelevant to what the lecture is.

Just as the name, age, voice and "personality" of the lecturer is irrelevant to what the nature is and is not. It is irrelevant whether a critic likes or dislikes a lecture. His own particular, sentimental thoughts about it are unimportant insofar as an understanding of the lecture is the end.

If a critic's "I liked" or "I disliked" is relevant, it is only on the occasions when he could just as easily and even more correctly have said that "It was a bad lecture" or "It was a good lecture." Suppose, then, that either a good or a bad lecture has been given and the critic is faced with the peculiar problem of reviewing it for an audience which has heard the lecture and is itself critical. Since everyone has heard the lecture, he need not repeat it in his review. Since it is a critical audience to whom he directs his words, he can talk about the world surrounding the lecture. He has seven pens with which he can write, using them separately or in any of innumerable combinations.

He can borrow the principles, stated or unstated in the lecture, and, with the help of a calculus or the Categories or the Elements explicate the kind of world the lecture postulates. He can retell the lecture in a different dress, as a myth or a dialogue; he can write a lyric poem—though this form is reserved to the cloistered few; he can simply state the principles.

This may require the critic to discover and reveal to you the elements of the formula which, in terms of his critical principles, runs through any poem. Thus, in Mr. Kieffer's lecture, both the critic and the audience should be concerned with the mode in which such symbols as original sin, redemption, hell, purgatory, paradise are handled. What have the furies become? Where are the libation-bearers? Who lets fly the shafts from Apollo's bow? Why must Lit' Abner go to the city?

In conclusion let it be postulated that no good critic or lecturer has ever bothered to say that man is a rational animal in precisely those words. For both know that man is most serious at the times when he is most metaphysically nostalgic. It is only when the good lecturer looks himself in the face that he is tempted

by gods and rational animals. Then he enraptures and enthalls. Then are the question periods exciting and full of sound.

The foregoing clearly supposes that there is possible some communication between the critic and the critics. It requires some amount of discrimination and a great deal of temperance to be critical. If the critic selects his form well; if his own critical faculties are sufficiently developed, then his review should enable you to discover what the lecture was about and whether or not it was a good one. End of tedious statement. The review follows. The statements in parentheses do not belong to Mr. Kieffer explicitly.

"And she—Phoebe—conceived—through the love of the god Coeus—and bore Hecate whom Zeus the son of Kronos honored above all. He gave her splendid gifts, to have a share of the earth and the unfruitful sea. She received honor also in starry heaven, and is honored exceedingly by the deathless gods. For to this day, whenever anyone of men on earth offers rich sacrifice and prays for favor according to custom he calls upon Hecate. Great honor comes full easily to him whose prayers the goddess receives favorably, and she bestows wealth upon him; for the power is with her. For as many as were born of Earth and Ocean amongst all these she has her due portion. The son of Kronos did her no wrong nor took anything away of all that was her portion among the former Titan gods: but she holds, as the division was at the first from the beginning, privilege both in earth, and in heaven, and in sea. Also, because she is an only child, the goddess receives not less honor, but much more still, for Zeus honors her. Whom she will she greatly aids and advances: she sits by worshipful kings in judgment, and in the assembly whom she will is distinguished among the people. . . . And the son of Kronos made her a nurse of the young who after that day saw with their eyes the light of all-seeing Dawn. So from the beginning Trivium is a nurse of the young, and these are her honors."

Her name was born of the three crossroads where she was worshipped. Later she was associated with black magic (and it is here that Mr. Kieffer confessed that he could remember but the three parts of Trivium: Grammar, Rhetoric and Dialectic).

In the beginning what tradition separated the trivium from the quadrivium? Was it, is

it the nature of the symbols? But symbols are determined by their objects. If this is so, then suppose the quadrivium to be concerned with quantity and the trivium with anything in the world. For in its most common guise language—whether it be the shorthand of mathematics or the longhand of poetry—seems to range from one end of the world to the other. Since, however, no word symbolizes one, unique and individual thing, what does it mean to say "anything in the world?" ("Again some things are one in number, others in species, others in genus and other by analogy; in number those whose matter is one; in species, those whose definition is one; in genus, those which belong to the same category; and by analogy, those which have the same relation as something else to some third object. In every case the latter types of unity are implied in the former.")

How can we escape from symbols to the things symbolized? Perhaps the answer lies in the symbols themselves. Three Greek words analyze the problem of the trivium: *phone*, *mythos* and *logos*, respectively "speech" or "sound," "tale" or "communication," and "reasoned thought." The Greeks concerned themselves with speech. Language was interesting only insofar as it was in use. The trivium is in some way the use of language. Like Hecate, *phone*, *mythos* and *logos* appear everywhere and help in everything.

Conversation and literature, whether it be history, oratory or poetry, is full of trivia. She embraces the social, the individual, etc. Thus it should be possible to arrange such terms in an order: Social: individual::communication: learning:: dialectic: rhetoric:: knowledge: action. The problem of symbolization becomes the question: What are the objects of knowledge? If they are idea, when is a symbol illuminated by an idea and when is it not?

A symbol is naturally useful because it refers to something beyond itself. When it is being used as a sign or trace of something else, it is being used in the first imposition. Used in the second positional sense it becomes a noun, a pronoun, an adjective. Imposed in this manner it refers to itself. The intentions of a symbol or signature are concerned with the one and the many. The first intention of a symbol is a particular thing or thought; the second intention is a universal thing or idea. ("Now I myself, Phaedrus, am a lover of these processes of division and bringing together, as aids to speech

and thought; and if I think any other man is able to see things that can naturally be collected into one and divided into many, him I follow after and 'walk in his footsteps as if he were a god'.")

If the trivium is the three-headed genius of language, then, from what has been said, it should be possible to discover the truth or falsity of such a postulate by a kind of self-examination. There is the story of Virgil. (It should not be confused with another story of Virgil. The one about the magician Virgil who had himself cut into pieces and put into a kettle to be boiled for a certain amount of time in order to renew his youth. He hired a man to stand guard so that no one would peep into the pot. The temptation was too great. The watchman peeped and Virgil vanished with a cry like a little child.' Virgil's other story) the *Aeneid* imitates the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. They are its grammar as it in turn becomes the grammar and the rhetoric of *The Divine Comedy*.

The *Aeneid* comes at a turning point in history. The sixth book is especially appropriate because it is in it that Hecate is most explicitly present. "Aeneas repaired to the heights, whereover Apollo holds ward aloft, and to the cavern, vast and remote, that guards the secrecy of the dreaded Sibyl, on whom the seer of Delos breathes his great mind and soul, and unfolds the days to be. And now they drew to the groves of Trivia and the golden fane. . . . Where Daedalus "consecrated, Phoebus to thee the oarage of his wings, and reared a mighty temple. . . . Twice he assayed to depict thy fate (Icarus') in gold: twice the father's hand sank impotent. . . . The threshold was barely gained, when the maiden (Sibyl) cried: 'It is the hour to inquire your fates! The god, behold the god! . . . Art thou slothful,' she cried, 'in vow and prayer? Slothful, Aeneas of Troy? For only so shall be unsealed the mighty portals of this awe-stricken fane.' . . . 'And thou, prophetess most holy, who foreknowest the days to come, vouchsafe—for I ask but the kingdom due to my destiny—a home for the Teurrians in Latium,—a home for their *wayworn* gods and the *storm-tost* deities of Troy! Then will I raise to Phoebus and Trivia a fane of solid marble, and in Phoebus' name ordain days of festival. Thee also a solemn shrine awaits in our realm: for there I will set thine oracles and the mysteries of fate that thou shalt reveal to my people; and I will consecrate chosen men to thy

service, gracious maid! Only commit not thy songs to the leaves, lest disordered, they flit abroad, the sport of boisterous winds. Let thine own lips prophesy, I entreat thee'."

At last, the spirit of the god Apollo exorcized from her soul, she *prophesies* war. Aeneas replies: "Maiden, affliction can display no lineament that is new or strange to these eyes. All this I have foreknown and debated erewhile in my spirit. One boon I entreat! Since here, men say, is the portal of the infernal king and the sunless pool of Acheron, be it granted me to pass to the sight and presence of my dear sire! Teach me the way, and unlock the hallowed gates! . . . Seed of lineage celestial, Troy-born son of Anchises, light is the descent to Avernus! Night and day the portals of gloomy Dis stand wide: but to recall thy step and issue to the upper air—there is the toil and there the task! Few only have the power—sons of the gods, whom gracious Jove hath loved, or the flame of virtue exalted to the stars." The key is to be found, "In a shady tree." In it, "a bough lies hidden, golden of leaf and pliant stem, and dedicated to Juno below. . . . To none is it given to enter the viewless places of the earth, ere he have plucked from the tree its golden-tressed fruit. . . . When the first is rent away a second, golden no less, succeeds, and the bough blossoms with ore as precious. Therefore let thine eye be piercing in the quest, and thine hand pluck it when duly found. For if thou are called of Fate, lightly and freely it will obey: else, the strong shall avail thee not to subdue it, nor the tempered steel to sunder it." But before he can go in search of the golden bough he is warned to return to his ships and bury a friend, newly dead. One who challenged Heaven to dispute the palm; plunged amid rocks by jealous Triton.

He buries Misenus and then, under the guidance of two white doves sent by his mother, discovers the golden bough and, guided by the priestess, descends to the land of the dead where he meets (1) Grief, Care, Disease, etc., at the portals of Hell. And full in the doorway doom-fraught War and the iron chambers of the Furies, and raving Discord. Amongst them (2) an opaque tree "and in it, men say, dwell vain dreams adherent to every leaf." At the banks of the Styx he observes (3) the unburied dead and across it he finds (4) Dido of whom he asks forgiveness. He could not have done otherwise. Dido, mute, stands motionless for a

time and then she seeks the arms of her former husband. Passing on he sees (5) suicides and terrible murderers. "Theseus, unblest, sits where he shall sit forever, and Phlegyas in agony cries warning to all, and, loud-voiced proclaims through the gloom: *Behold, and learn to do justice and condemn not the gods!*" At last he finds Anchises, "deep in a green valley . . . lost in thought, surveying the prisoned spirits, destined hereafter to the sunlight, and reviewing, as it fell, the full tale of his people—his loved posterity, and their fates and fortunes, their manners and deeds." He unfolds to Aeneas the secrets of the world of becoming, speaking also (9) of the purification of the immortal spirit and (10) the re-incarnation of Rome in reverse, passing in review its unborn greats. He points out Marcellus, son of Augustus, likely had he been put on to have proved most royally.

(The fairy tale become complete with the harvest. Phone is there and the symbols to be arranged: Daedalus, creator of an imperium, artificer of the little men of the *Meno*, a father; Augustus, also creator of an imperium, artificer of little men, a father; Aeneas and Anchises; the Sibyl, Apollo and Trivia; the shades and the Furies; mourning and talk of funerals at the beginning and the end; the easy entry and the difficult departure and the Golden Bough.

Thus it ends: "There are two gates of Sleep:—of horn, fame tells, the one, through which the spirits of truth find an easy passage; the other, wrought smooth-gleaming with sheen of ivory, but false the visions that the nether powers speed therefrom to the heaven above. There, with these words on his lips, Anchises parted from son and Sibyl, and dismissed them by the ivory gate."

—ANDREW WITWER.

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THE FINE ARTS Prospectus For Music

Singing, which for the past few terms has been confined largely to showers and the basements of Chase and Paca on Saturday nights, is, it is hopefully announced, to be coaxed from anarchic spontaneity and formalized into a chorus—in fact, into two. One will serve as the nucleus of an after-supper community singing project, the other will devote itself to learning more serious music. Singers who are apt to flat, due to embarrassment because they aren't

sure how they're practising the liberal arts, or who show timid tendencies to miss entrances on account of this may-be-some-form-of-satanism, will, we trust, be encouraged to drop such dialectically defensive attitudes and leave the morals, metaphysics, and mathematics of music to whatever their appropriate place may be (but we'll let you have three guesses what we'd like to see done with them).

We have a new music director now, Mr. Fraker, who comes to us by way of Yale where he studied with Hindemith and Kirkpatrick. He tells us there will be at least one formal concert a term, the first being a return engagement (in late November) of the harpsichord-violin team of Kirkpatrick and Schneider. Unless there are a lot of people around hiding their piccolos under bushels, there seems to be no possibility of an orchestra. Some chamber music combinations may develop. Then there will be something which we certainly don't want to make sound as though it were going to be a seminar, and yet which there's no reason to discountenance with so insipid a name as music appreciation: but rather a sort of general class for anyone interested in knowing something about how to write, read, and listen to, music.

We shall now pause briefly to point out a possible use of such a class. Since the music performed at formal concerts is apt to be chosen more for its fineness of quality than for its popularity, it is conceivable that that portion of the audience which would call the Peer Gynt Suite "classical" might come to a concert of music they had never heard before and with no sort of preparation for listening to it, might hear that once and only that once, might (nay, would) find nothing in tutorials or seminars to illuminate it, might become bored, call it esoteric, highbrow, for aesthetes; and they would, of course, be wrong. Even those who assume the aesthetic pose might profit, it occurs to us, by a little more attention to technical analysis and a little less to the pose. Such a class might provide some concrete basis for intelligent listening to serious music, both for those who insist it isn't for them, and for those who think it's all wonderful but of course you can't talk about it. (And if anything at all definite ever comes of this fuss about connecting music up with the liberal arts, our guess is it will come as kind of a by-product of the study of actual music, by persons disciplined, to be sure, in the liberal skills, but with score in hand, phonograph

at ear, and *not* with the constantly mentioned and conscious intention of find such a relation.) Anyway, if something isn't attempted in this direction, formal concerts would seem to be completely without context, and in the end would amount only to a form of snobbery.

The College *does* possess a record collection and player, which is being housed in the Tower of MacDowell. Sometime before those who are currently reading Homer find themselves reading Hegel, or possibly even before this Collegian goes to press, it will be ready for use by the student body. And that, for the time being, is all we have to say about music.

—WILLIAM C. BUCHANAN.

Except that it *is* ready now.—*Ed.*

—:O:—

The Age of Gold

Ours is a day of the shadow play
With a small weak light hung at wrong
height;

And wave on wave, as in Plato's cave,
Dark worlds swing by; yet though we try
With might to know, we cannot show
The reason why all shapes that fly
In such profusion and great confusion
Across the screen are not illusion.

Deeper, deeper, deeper grows the canker of our
doubt,

And round the bedsides of the sore afflicted
Gather friends and family worrying on death.
But the never-lost Adonis dies and is born again,
While the tree-gods frolic still
Nourished never by a prayer.

A shepherd and a king's son,
A soft, white boy, more girl than man,
Was asked once, long ago, to choose
The perfectest of three perfections,
('Tis fate's curious way to make judges of
boys).

He chose that beauty which bribed him best,
Died from the bribe and wasted his nation,
A remnant of which destroyed the world.

But in loving memory of the pretty boy
A house now stands and bears his name,
Within whose ornate doors, naked, soft and
white,

Wander the shepherd's votaries
Searching for judgments to make and bribes.
And while they search they pass the time

Writing bodeful fables exactly like this.

Shall they soon die who seek a bribe?

Shall we soon die though oft we try

To separate us from the weight

Of being kin to the shepherd's sin?

Shall a crawling band from that ghostly
land

Destroy this race now grown so base?

Shall the cycle pain all over again?

If it shall, O God, send thy mighty rain!

—EUGENE V. THAU.

—:O:—

Quadrivium?

The second part of the liberal arts, the quadrivium, was explored by Mr. Klein.

The earliest mention of the quadrivium we have is in a fragment of a treatise on harmonics by Archytas, a Pythagorean and friend of Plato. We find Plato concerned with it in the seventh book of the Republic where he lays out the education of the guardians. With the advent of the Neo-Pythagoreans and the Neo-Platonists, the quadrivium undergoes abuse and the only man who seems to have transmitted it correctly to the Christian monasteries is Boethius. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries find it in full bloom, it disappears in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the last vestige of it in the twentieth is its use in such terms as Liberal Arts College.

"Why should we revive what seems to have died a natural death?" Mr. Klein asked. But the question arises whether its death was due to some insufficiency of the idea or our lack of understanding of it.

Archytas was concerned with the nature of the cosmos and by cosmos he meant not all things or things themselves but the orderly arrangement of them. He found two things: (1) a general continuity of all parts, (2) distinguishability, i. e., counting, the grasping of a many as that many; of a one among other ones. The first two forms of being then were bounded extension (figure) and number. By the consideration of what figure and number mean in themselves, we have the key to the world. Here we learn, understand and know. It is the Greek, *ta mathemata*, mathematics, the unchangeable results of certain operations with figure and number.

The operations present a real problem, for in understanding the figures, we must operate with such auxiliary lines as diagonals and di-

ameters. It should be possible to understand the figures without them since the figures are images of things unchanging in themselves, i. e., something grasped by the intellect. But we draw lines inside the boundary. What then are these lines the image of? The problem seems not to have been solved in Plato's school, and later schools made it a new problem by stating that these lines are a peculiar sort of intelligible matter. The realm of number also presents a problem, namely, the kind of existence number has, and this is a source of great conflict between Plato and Aristotle.

The Pythagoreans attempted the reduction of all figures to numbers but this became impossible with their great discovery of the incommensurable. Continuous expansion could not be expressed by means of signs which are in turn numbers. This placed certain restrictions on bounded and extended figures, made possible the science of geometry and kept it distinct from arithmetic.

Modern mathematicians however were able to identify arithmetic and geometry by operating on signs by means of signs instead of signs which mean number, i. e., by using second intentions as first intentions. This results in the science called Algebra, which for one century was an eighth liberal art. There is then superimposed on the world a set of signs of signs by which it is understood how the world is arranged. The tendency then is to accept this set of symbols as the true world.

The other parts of the quadrivium, astronomy and music, may be considered in terms of Ptolemy and modern physics. In Astronomy, Ptolemy is concerned with the solids of revolution and the understanding of the whole and their parts. The sphere is chosen for the understanding of change because as much as it rotates, nothing is changed in it. We arrive at a meaning of change by eliminating it as far as possible. One can operate inside the sphere with plane geometry and arithmetic. Angles, lines and proportions but never motion itself enters our computations. The art of the sphere is indeed ingenious because something in itself, not a *mathemata*, by a detour becomes one. Modern Physics however puts the ratios of Book five of Euclid in motion and conceives them as moving towards a limit. At the limit there is no motion and since the limit is understood, motion is therefore grasped and caught.

The science of numbers in motion has been

considered by moderns as Music. But this is not correct, it is bodies and strings that are in motion, not numbers. If the speechless world of signs upon signs tries to speak, its mode of speech is music and the question of whether this is a higher or lower form of speech is left to the audience.

In conclusion, Mr. Klein stated that we must be aware of the separation that exists between the visible world, the *mathemata* (the proper object of each science), and the proper operation one performs on the *mathemata*. In the modern world, these three things coincide and become identical. A true revival of the quadrivium can only come about by being aware that they are separate and distinct.

The question period was concerned with which part of the quadrivium modern mathematics might fall under. There were several alternatives proposed, the leading one being that music was the most suitable. However, some felt that this question properly belonged to the trivium, probably under grammar. This last point is significant in view of the fact that Pythagoras was considered by the mediaevals as the paragon of grammar. It was Pythagoras who attempted the union of arithmetic and geometry and modern mathematicians who accomplished it.

Mr. Klein's treatment of music was inadequate, as he admitted himself, and he did not answer the question he began with, about the true reason for the death of the idea of the quadrivium. But by clarifying the quadrivium he put before us in a forceful way the possibility that our lack of understanding, rather than the insufficiency of the idea, is responsible for its demise, and in this way provoked thought, we hope, which may either revive the quadrivium or lay its ghost for good.

—MICHAEL KEANE.

—:O:—

Sports

As the football schedule moved past the halfway point, turnouts were still not good, but only two forfeits were registered. An erratic Sophomore team held doggedly to the lead in the championship race, with a record of a win over second place Junior 3, a tie with last place Junior-Senior 1A, and two wins by forfeit.

In second place was the high-scoring Junior 3 powerhouse, paced by the Gallup-Terry

passing combination which has clicked for most of its 99 points.

Still in the running for the title are the Freshmen, who have lost only one competed game, but have also dropped a forfeit to the Sophomores. Bringing up the rear are the two Junior-Senior combines, who have shown occasional streaks of promise but not enough to qualify for the winning column.

Standings as of October 26:

	W.	L.	T.	Pts.	Op.	Ave.
Sophomores	3	0	1	24	19	.875
Junior 3	3	1	1	99	34	.700
Freshmen	2	2	1	32	23	.500
Junior-Senior 2B	1	3	0	19	45	.250
Junior-Senior 1A	0	3	1	30	83	.125

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A Political Dialogue

"If, O St. Johnnie, you were offered a philosopher king or the democracy described by Plato, which would you choose?"

"Mr. Barr and Mr. Neustadt, please, your honour."

"Now that we have an audience, give us your reasons. Speak, O St. Johnnie!"

"There are only two kinds of reasons. One sort has to do with the thing, in this case the STUDENT POLITY; the other has to do with the subject. It's psychological and concerns only myself."

"Begin with the Polity."

"The STUDENT POLITY has three functions. One of them, the formulation and the enactment of laws meant to govern the dormitories, was dispensed with by the Assembly before college closed last June. The second, the election of its officers, has in the past been effected by means of the secret ballot. The third function, the granting of charters, requires one or two sessions of the Assembly this year. As things stand the Assembly must meet only twice a year: to nominate candidates for office; to grant charters;—and, once for fun. In short, the Assembly has virtually nothing to do. If the Assembly, which consists of the entire student body, has nothing to do, the Steering Committee will obviously have nothing to do. The Court supposedly judges violations of the law with respect to both the dormitories and the chartered organizations. Again supposedly it effects some sort of liaison between the Administration and the STUDENT POLITY. But in

fact, it has met with the Administration because no crimes have been reported and no liaison—but that of inactivity seems possible. It is as frustrated as the Assembly!"

"Why have no violations been reported?"

"Because it is an American habit to separate law and the individual. Whereas by definition a law is for the good of the individual, most persons consider it a mere formal restraint and are ashamed to identify themselves with it. If anyone were to come to the court, he would be admitting that he thought that the law might be good for someone."

"You mean himself?"

"No."

"This inactivity which you spoke about. Is the Polity naturally inactive?"

"If you mean by that, could it do more, the answer is perhaps it could but it undoubtedly won't. The point is that it could be much more than it is but . . ."

"Before the 'but,' tell the audience, which is reaching the size of epsilon, what else it could be."

"All right, but promise to remind me about the 'but.' It has something to do with the psychological reason I have against the Polity."

"Rodger."

"To begin with, then, all organizations which require either funds from the college or the use of its facilities and which, moreover, fall outside the formal curriculum are subject to the laws of the STUDENT POLITY. This mode of inclusion obviously permits the Polity to consider the dining hall, the coffee shop, the book store and the heating unit as subject to its laws. If the organization which handles Sunday night meetings is included and if it resurrects the monthly town meetings, the Polity could not only order the extra-curricular activities of the college but it might become the means of integrating the life of the college with the communal life of Annapolis. Unfortunately, the humblest activities require the identification of thought and action. When this identification is not forthcoming in the least responsible activities, it is clear that it is not going to be forthcoming in the others. Therefore, even if I were to argue that the Polity has its roots in the order of Benedictine monasteries or in the Socratic conception of learning, nothing would be answered nor resolved."

"And nothing would be explained. What have you in mind when you speak of Benedic-

tine monasteries and the Socratic conception of learning?"

"Do you happen to recall the organization of the monastery?"

"The day was divided into three parts. One part was devoted to the manual arts, one to the liberal and one to the theological. The virtues of such an arrangement are not clear."

"Perhaps not. Can I answer the second question by saying that action is superior to passion?"

"It's Thomistic and therefore unclear."

"I'm thinking of the early dialogues in which questions are asked, answers are given and subsequently refuted. The dialogues seem to end like politics, in frustration. How do you understand this so-called Socratic method?"

"Usually as a disguised lecture."

"All right. Tell me this. If it weren't a disguised lecture, what would it be stating about the nature of man, which—although not denied—is frequently forgotten or neglected by lecturers?"

"I don't know what you're thinking of. Do you want me to say the *Meno*?"

"Now you're treating me as though I'm a lecturer."

"Well, aren't you?"

"Possibly. It assumes, does it not, that it is in the nature of man to err?"

"That may be so, though I don't see anything so good in that."

"Since man is an animal which makes mistakes, he does not learn best by imitation. Though, like a dog, he does learn in this manner. For example, Socrates requires his stooges to both suffer and act as much, if not more, than the discoverer of a new theorem in geometry. He knows or perhaps just believes that learning is bound for unsuccess if the whole man is not involved in the act. Do you remember his definition of a virtuous action?"

"Yes, but—before that one over there leaves—tell us what your psychological reservation is."

"Simply this. That I am here to do a certain kind of job. I can't do it well if I am also required to be a so-called political animal. After I leave college, these responsibilities can be assumed. The Greeks equated thought and action and every Athenian citizen participated in the polity. The STUDENT POLITY is try-

ing to say that St. John's should be an Athens. Well, in Athens there were slaves to perform the duties which the citizens could not perform and still remain citizens. Even if thought and action are identical, and they're not, this Polity would still ask too much since it demands not only that I be a citizen, but that I be a slave as well!"

—ANDREW WITWER.

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More Spengler

A rapid reading of Mr. Thornton's cheerful essay on the relation of Spengler to the St. John's program indicates that perhaps he has not given quite the whole of that relation. First, Mr. Thornton says that according to Spengler, St. John's has no hope of producing a "Great Book." This is an equivocation on "Great." St. John's considers the "Aeneid" a "Great Book." Spengler does not deny its greatness, only its originality. It is a copy of a number of earlier works, notably Homer, but it is a 'Great' copy (in the St. John's sense of "Great").

More important to the College, which has always been less hopeful than trustful about its producing a "Great Book," there is another function which figures in the End of the College which is not only permitted by, but necessary to Spengler. This is the unification of the modern science with the Art, Philosophy, etc., already produced during the rise of The "Faustian" Civilization (ours). These, and especially the Philosophy are the necessary bases, not only of modern science, but of all Science, Engineering, History, Jurisprudence, etc., to come during our period of decline.

This Unity must come through the men who at this time compose the organism called "Faustian Civilization," and who must be men that have absorbed the tradition and operate in or with modern science. St. John's could be a tool to this end, and, as it could never be more than a tool at any time, it is better to be a tool toward an end which is attainable than one which it not. In this respect, St. John's and M.I.T. would seem about the only candidates. Spengler would say that the necessary men would appear, but as there must be some tool, why not us?

—JOHN NORGAN.