

St. John's Collegian

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Euclid IV, 5

Mr. Mark Van Doren, who is a poet, lectured last Friday as a cautious amateur on *Rhetoric*; understandably, the lecturer was awed by the mystery of the trivium, which he described as a sort of sub-cellular to all human knowledge, and which seems to be a strange mirrored cave where grammar, rhetoric, and logic reflect each other and become Nine.

That rhetoric has no meaning by itself must be a primary postulate; the inseparable three can be considered as a triangle, a revolving triangle indistinguishable from a circle; thus to see one art at the apex is a distortion of the essential unity of the trivium. (If this becomes precariously theological, we might recall Mr. Mortimer Adler's opinion that the trivium is "not a simple symmetry, as no trinity could be.")

A history of three eras, Greek, Roman-Pre-Renaissance, Modern, could be written in trivial terms: we suffer from an excess of inadequate, unbraced grammars. The Greeks, though inclined to place dialectic at the top, had surer grammatical and rhetorical supports. The Romans forgot dialectic and reduced rhetoric to oratory, and from there on in, the collapse was complete. Rhetoric comes to signify tricks of speech, platitudes, vulgar propaganda, advertising; and with it the oratorical art of making statements is dragged down until even the making of moral judgments is despised. Left only with grammar, which can then manipulate nothing but itself, we see a proliferation of grammars with no reciprocal arts and therefore no relations. The Roman rhetorical revolution antedated Descartes considerably.

Mr. Van Doren made his notion of rhetoric to include poetry, and went beyond that to define rhetoric as the whole of everything that gets said, the complete and final result of the three trivial arts. In nature, rhetoric is in what nature says to be understood; in music, rhetoric is the harmony of the

formal pattern of notes; in religion, rhetoric is the body of myths that are impossible to dispense with wholly and to explain; in history, and here the difficulty of including all three under rhetoric is somewhat resolved, rhetoric is life itself, or *poetry*. Rhetoric is the final art, or madness, an art peculiarly human, what man does when he is most himself; it is most highly personal, perfected it is genius. The grammar of man makes the tragic hero recognizable. Logic could make him predictable, but he is more than recognizable and more than predictable; he is a work of art, a person, a product of rhetoric. Mr. Van Doren began by saying that the trivium is mysterious because it is so closely identified with man himself. The identification of the man and his art would seem to be complete in the case of rhetoric, which then becomes that which makes the *individual* to be what he is—that ambiguous and distressing word "personality." Thus the epigram, "the style is the man," gets fresh significance. Mr. Adler also gave a definition: "rhetoric is not truth, not correctness, but style." By which he meant "elegance an effectiveness."

In a particular consideration of certain Shakespearian plays and their several styles, *Coriolanus* appears as a bundle of oratorical statements lacking the personal, consequently not a good play. *Hamlet* is so intensely personal as to defy criticism, which is successful only with mediocre art. *The Tempest* is one of the most beautiful, not one of the most powerful, of plays; in it Shakespeare practices the art of making statements not of representing life. Like all the later plays, it is more an arrangement of symbols that were sensed vaguely in the plays of his prime.

In the question period, marked by the recovery of that which was lost, Mr. Buchanan suggested that the trivium exists inside poetry, the name of the circle inclosing the triangle. Mr. Van Doren's "rhetoric" is as poetic in

conception as was the form of the lecture itself, which was distinguished by such startling metaphors as "the bloody bones of *Hamlet*" and courageous phrases as "the fascination of Socrates is possibly more important than his profundity." This rhetoric may be poetry, which in turn may be that "universal rhetoric," which, after Mr. Adler's lecture, was played with quite rhapsodically.

R. M.

Co-op Meeting

The St. John's Student Employment Bureau Co-operative was launched at a heated three-hour meeting last Sunday evening. Launched without champagne, to be sure, but not without fireworks. At this meeting, attended by a group of 18 hot and cold followers of the College Co-op movement begun at last week's College meeting, the constitution of the organization was officially adopted by a 15-2 vote, more than the two-thirds majority by the constitution. Accepted article by article, rather than as a whole, the constitution with a few changes remains substantially the one read before the College assembly.

All was not rosy-hued, however. His Majesty's loyal opposition, led by Messrs. Wakefield and Hammel, although declaring themselves in favor of co-operation on the campus, eloquently refused to go on record as endorsing "co-operatives as supplanting the present economic system," a connotation they read into the preamble.

The bone of contention was the phrase "action on a co-operative basis," which seemed to imply all sorts of nasty social upheavals all the way from un-Americanism to communism. The bogey, argued Wakefield wasn't that the phrase would be misunderstood on the campus but that others reading it would jump to wicked conclusions. This precipitated a ninety-minute discussion reminiscent of some of the attacks made on one M. Adler within the same four walls. The

others refused to be yoked to what one termed the "tyranny of words," and on the grounds that all generalities are susceptible to misunderstanding and non-understanding by those who see through the glass darkly voted 13-5 to retain the original phrase as it stood. But the Wakefield-Hammel filibustering team remained adamant to the bitter end, to the consternation of the sweating chairman and the indubitable joy of the gods of strife.

There were numerous points of order raised and some apparent bad manners, but on the whole, notwithstanding the heat of the discussion, the meeting was a healthy display of democratic action; and since one of the incentives to organizing on a co-operative basis is to insure participation, the results were more than heartening and show promises of awakened political intelligence.

At the close of the meeting, a committee of four, A. Hyman, T. Fulton, S. Sheinkman, S. Bergen, to apply to the College administration for a charter sanctioning the operation of the Employment Bureau Co-operative. The committee has obtained the charter and will call a meeting of the members of the Co-operative for the election of a Board of Directors after which the Committee will disband. All members of the College are urged to attend and further the discussion of the Co-operative program.

Our Own Plan For The Post-War World

-----Then Doctor Obnubile bent his head in bitter reflection. "Since wealth and civilization admit of as many causes of wars as poverty and barbarism, since the folly and wickedness of men are incurable, there remains but one good action to be done. The wise man will collect enough dynamite to blow up this planet. When its fragments fly through space an imperceptible amelioration will be accomplished in the universe and a satisfaction will be given to the universal conscience. Moreover, this universal conscience does not exist.

ANATOLE FRANCE.

Letter to the Editor

On Sunday, Aug. 8, a promising experiment was launched at St. John's College; the first meeting of the Student Employment Co-operative was held. The meeting which was open to the entire College community, interested in attending, accomplished its prime purpose of temporary organization but was not free from controversy.

In the Preamble to the Constitution of the Student Employment Co-operative the following statement is found: "Whereas it is desirable in any community to organize all communal activities for the common good, and whereas this is best accomplished by participation of all concerned, and whereas such participation is most fully realized by action on a co-operative basis-----" Because of the last part of the Preamble, a lively sixty-minute debate took place in which this writer took part.

As a general rule, is action on a co-operative basis the best means to realize the common good? Even if such a method of organization were the most effective one in the case of one particular part of the St. John's community, is it right or wise to state that such a method is the best way anywhere, anytime?

St. John's College is an institution misunderstood by the world at large through no fault of its own. The Dean and the President have often complained of the lack of and the confusion in the use of contemporary terms in describing the program. If the Dean or the President could however find terms by which they might clarify the Program, they would indeed use them. The term "co-operative basis" is one which leads to confusion or lack of meaning through modern use or misuse. "The Great Russian Experiment," "The Grange Movement," "The Neighborhood A & P,"—all these widely diverse organizations are brought to mind by the word "co-operative."

The truth indeed may be that there is no way to avoid confusing terms when describing the St. John's program; but there is most assuredly a way to avoid misunderstanding in this case and I would think that it would be wise to do so. Merely by chang-

ing the phrase "co-operative basis" to "basis of co-operation," the sting taken out of the phrase but the meaning remains.

Ambiguity is not a thing to be strived for nor is clarity to be avoided. An error has been made; it is not too late to rectify it. Let us do so lest the antagonists of the St. John's Program find another outlet for their wrath and lest the proponents of the Program discover a grave error in judgment concerning the workings of the Program.

B. H.

The Tempest

We find it difficult, and indeed, we do not wish to do so, to ignore the King William Players' production of *The Tempest*. We peeked behind the stage—or all three stages—and tried to find out things. (We were advised by a member of the stage-crew that this seeking after knowledge was not only unethical but also unhealthy.) We learned; 1. the play will begin at nine-thirty on Friday next week; 2. the price of admission will be thirty-ninety cents for St. Johnnie and dates; 3. there will be at least fifteen spotlights used; 4. there will be all sorts of surprising scenic effects (they hope). All this and Shakespeare, too.

The play is directed by Messrs. Abramson and Nabokov, special effects by Mr. Standen, designs by Jack Landau. We cannot urge too much that you attend. This is a rare opportunity to see a good play. Extra-curricular activities of this order suffer greatly at St. John's, and the few brave souls that persist deserve our co-operation.

THE EDITORS.

THE KING WILLIAM PLAYERS

present

THE TEMPEST

McDowell Plaza

FRIDAY, AUGUST 20th

Nine-thirty P. M.

Admission

Gown	-----	\$.39
Town	-----	\$.83

Daedalus

Those few and hardy souls who dared to cross the dark and stormy wastes leading to the Library last Wednesday night were rewarded with the story of the Sowitas-Gohr V as told by her builder and co-owner, Franz Plunder. She was built in a small Austrian town just after the last war.

When the keel was laid, Plunder and his three partners had plenty of money, but inflation had hit and the mark had added a few more zeros behind it in the foreign exchange. Nevertheless the boat was started, and they felt that come hell or high water it must be finished. One of Plunder's companions was put in charge of propaganda and supply and sent into Germany to see if he could get any support from the sports people there. He came back sixty pounds lighter with the report that people weren't giving money to such causes, but he did get some response from tradesmen who gave such things as sails and paint.

Next they started showing school children through the almost completed boat. This money and the contributions of interested parents enabled them to complete the boat, the time of construction being fourteen months.

On the day she was launched, their minister of propaganda persuaded two local bands to come and, of course, the crowd was charged a nominal fee for admission. Next the boat was sailed across the Lake of Constance and shipped to Hamburg, and from there sailed to Dover.

The next stop was South Hampton, where they hoped to exhibit the boat and thus get enough money to buy gas and potatoes for the trip. Although disappointed in this respect, Plunder met two Austrians from the crew of the *Leviathan* who promised to take up a collection among the other members of the crew. In this manner, they finished the provisioning of the ship and set out for Madera.

The trip south was through heavy tail winds and wet weather; the wetness did not only apply to the weather but also to the clothes, bunks and food. One night Plunder awoke and realized from the sound of the waves and the way the boat was acting that she was not on her course. Going on

deck, he found no one in sight and then noticed that the hook which held the log line trailing astern was slowly straightening out. Realizing what was on the other end, he grabbed the line and found the missing man half-drowned on the other end. The rest of the trip to Madera was relatively uneventful.

After a short stay at Madera, the comrades set out on the lonely stretch across the Atlantic. For twenty days they sailed the same course, the same swell, the same wind, and with the same three companions. Conditions reached the point that two members of the crew had a serious fight as to whether coffee or hot chocolate would be had for breakfast.

Then came the storm clouds which covered the whole sky. The cyclone broke with a heavy wind which made rain and spray indistinguishable. The boat bobbed up and down like a tin can but like the tin can stayed afloat. Plunder spent eighteen hours in the engine room pouring oil into the motor to keep the boat on the move. During the storm, which lasted three days, there was a constant display of lightning.

The storm ended in a deluge of rain during which everyone took a bath and then the rain passed over leaving one-half of the sky clear and the other dark. Allowing the boat to take care of herself everyone went to sleep.

A while later, they met a friendly freighter which gave them some canned food and water. They entered New York having covered 5,862 nautical miles in two months sailing time. As regards this story, this is Sowitas-Gohr ("As Far As It Goes").

Madrigal Group

Due to increased time being spent on the production of "The Tempest," there will be no meeting of the Madrigal group on Tuesday, August 17.

Swimming

Due to sinus and ear infections probably caused by swimming in College Creek, the Dean has announced that swimming has been suspended until future notice. This, of course, cancels the swim meet scheduled for Saturday.

Backcampus

Backcampus is a column on the backcampus, about indoor sports played outdoors and outdoor sports played indoors, and vica-versa. We may find it necessary to confine our activities to that region in front of Mr. Barr's vetch field and back of the boat house. If anything of interest occurs in the other regions, do not hesitate to notify us since we understand that the administration and others have great plans for the region which we (as a poor freshman) have as yet been unable to cover.

Well, even within our confines some exciting things happened. Saturday Dawn arose from her couch, and miracle of miracles, two whole teams appeared, Chase and Randall (wiping out tradition and sleep). A tight and well-fought game which vascellated back and forth for all nine innings in which Morehouse hit the single that brought in the deciding runs. Since our games do not take on epic proportions, it might do well to mention that Tony Hammond hit a triple and a home run. Randall, having read Homer ages and ages ago and having become interested in co-operatives showed fine team spirit. Could it be that the battle between private enterprise and co-operatives will be settled in other columns?

By the bye, the score was 12-10, with Chase-Stone on top.

Tuesday came and Paca went crazy with the heat (lab. should tell us more about these facts of life. Dead cats don't do it) and beat Randall 17-9. George Smith (also inspired) pitched and the Randallites made practically no hits in the last four innings.

Randall and Chase-Stone played again on Wednesday. The upper-classmen, being quite awake midweek afternoons, won by the score of 9-6. Home runs were made by Wensel and Marshall; Nussbaum (R), Van Sant (C-S), Powder (C-S) were the pitchers.

Sports Announcements

The athletic department has officially announced that the first round of the tennis singles tournament must be finished by the 15th of August. Finals are yet to be scheduled.

Arts

There are fewer movies coming into Annapolis this week than usual but that's all for the best. Most sensational of all is *Stage Door Canteen*, called "the biggest thing to hit the screen." And that it is. Except that it lacks Technicolor and Vivien Leigh, it is just like *Gone With the Wind*. There are at least forty-eight or nine *greats* of the stage and screen and six famous bands—count 'em. We found it rather difficult to follow what plot there was because we kept looking for the complication and it never occurred. Aside from that, there were fleeting images of some fine actors saying some pretty awful things. It all takes place in the Stage Door Canteen in New York, and the heroine's name, originally enough, is Eileen. Best of all are the bits by Ed Wynn, George Jessel, Gypsy Rose Lee, Ray Bolger and a few other entertainers of that order. Bolger's song and dance is certainly worth packing a picnic-lunch for and going to the Circle. It is the best sample of contemporary dance on the screen since the early Astaire-Rogers films. Some dialogue writer dealt Katherine Cornell a foul blow by making her quote Shakespeare in the middle of a canteen-handout. There is not only not enough of too few good things, but too much of too many poor things, or something.

Pressure of current events has kept us from keeping up with the *Secret Service in Darkest Africa*, at the Republic every Saturday. The last we saw was Chapter three which ended with a fire that obviously killed everyone. But Chapter seven is coming up tomorrow and that doesn't prove anything except that we were fooled. Also Gene Autry.

Note

In a frantic attempt to beat the 1944 *Year Book* to the deadline, Horn-Shafer & Company have cleaned their type and are ready to present a ham sandwich without the bread in about a month. We elucidate to this extent: the 1943 *Year Book* will be ready for distribution before the end of the present term. This is strictly an upper-classmen's dish. Freshmen must wait to make history.

THE EDITORS.

CALENDAR

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

Fri., Aug. 13—Sat., Aug. 21, 1944

Friday, August 13:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
6:30-8:00 P. M.
7:00 P. M.
8:00 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Music Seminar
Bible Class
Formal Lecture—
Geometry—Jacob
Klein

Back Campus
Great Hall
Humphreys Hall
McDowell 22
Great Hall

Saturday, August 14:

10:30 A. M.—12:00 M.

Athletics

Back Campus

Sunday, August 15:

7:00-8:00 P. M.

Recorded Concert

McDowell Plaza

Monday, August 16:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
7:00-8:00 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Recorded Concert

Back Campus
Great Hall
McDowell Plaza

Tuesday, August 17:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
7:00 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Bible Class

Back Campus
Great Hall
McDowell 22

Wednesday, August 18:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
7:00-8:00 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Recorded Concert

Back Campus
Great Hall
McDowell Plaza

Thursday, August 19:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
7:00 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Dormitory Managers
Meeting
College Meeting

Back Campus
Great Hall
Senior Common
Room
Great Hall

Friday, August 20:

3:00-5:00 P. M.
5:00 P. M.
6:30-8:00 P. M.
7:00 P. M.
9:30 P. M.

Athletics
Vesper Service
Music Seminar
Bible Class
The King William Play-
ers present *The
Tempest*

Back Campus
Great Hall
Humphreys Hall
McDowell 22
McDowell Plaza

Saturday, August 21:

10:30-12:00 M.
10:30 A. M.
9:30 P. M.

Athletics
Faculty Meeting
Movie—*The Scarlet
Pimpernel*—and In-
formal Dance

Back Campus
McDowell 24
McDowell Plaza

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