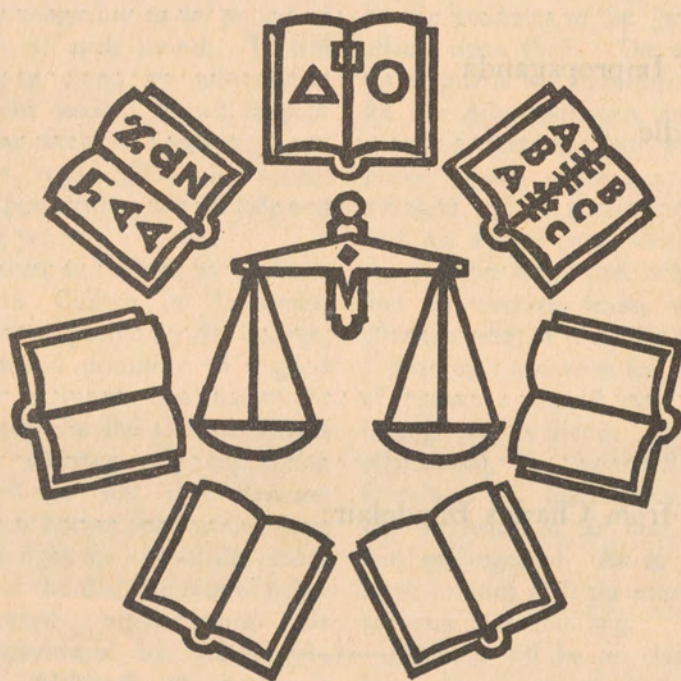


ST. JOHN'S TRIVIUM



The War and the College.....by *Scott Buchanan*

We Are Not Alone.....an undergraduate statement

Two Poems from Baudelaire

NOVEMBER, 1940

Twenty-five cents

CONTENTS

The War and the College.....	7
History, Geography and a Temporal Sequence.....	11
The Letter Setteth Free.....	13
We Are Not Alone.....	15
Athletics.....	17
In Praise of Impropropaganda.....	18
Second Fiddle.....	19
Trivia.....	20
Books.....	21
Cinema.....	24
The Play.....	25
Contributors.....	25
Two Poems from Charles Baudelaire.....	27

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TRIVIUM

VOL. I

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Editorials

Prospectus. The St. John's *Trivium* is a monthly magazine to be published on the 25th of each month. It will sell for \$.25 a copy, by subscription \$2.00 for eight issues. It will appear beginning the 25th of October, 1940, through May, 1941. This same schedule, if found practicable, will be followed in succeeding years.

It is published and edited by students of St. John's College in Annapolis. *Trivium* is not supported by the College, and was founded primarily as a good magazine for St. John's, one that would incidentally provide the College with a new student activity. By supporting itself, the editors feel that *Trivium* will be a much better publication, since it will have to fight for its own life-blood, and in view of the diabolic fate of other College-supported organizations. It will be a magazine of, by, and for liberal artists. Although its name is *Trivium*, signifying the three liberal arts most applicable to a magazine of this sort, it does not intend to ignore the remaining four.

Originated by students, *Trivium* is itself an undergraduate of St. John's, and is not an official spokesman of the College. It will provide a means of expression and publication of the typical and best of undergraduate thought at perhaps the leading liberal arts college in America, toward the end that outside persons may acquire a knowledge

of what is happening to St. John's, to the students of St. John's, and the effects upon them. The official College Catalogue is the counterpart of *Trivium* for the Administration, and it is to be expected that the two will both complement and contradict one another. *Trivium* will be a critic of the College, and an active one. Criticism, despite the popular belief that it has a negative and destructive sense, will mean to *Trivium* what it truly denotes.

Trivium's midwives feel that a medium of exchange should exist between the College and its friends. Passing through officialdom, the information that the friends of St. John's obtain concerning the students is, at best, second-hand and pre-digested. As in geometry, so here, contact with the source is essential for true understanding.

Trivium will be no classical journal, but always aware and immediately contemporary. The mistaken impression among students that college publications are for the few and particular should be heeded and corrected here. Students who have never written think themselves unable to write. The editors of *Trivium* will welcome, above its off-campus contributions, suggestions and submitted material from their fellow-students.

Trivium will contain no advertising, as it is the opinion of its editors that advertising in college publications is,

in the main, a gesture of condescension on the part of those who give so profusely with their funds. Instead of depending upon this *largesse*, the price of *Trivium* has been set so as to insure its economic independence. Our business managers will therefore concentrate on the circulation of the magazine for its subsistence; a minimum of five hundred subscriptions is our goal.

Trivium asks for no blind subscribers. Complimentary copies of the first issue will be distributed to those requesting them, previous to any solicitation of payment. A person receiving one of these copies is not obligated in any way.

Trivium will not be copyrighted. This is done to give to the magazine the air of freedom so necessary for its survival. We, unlike some other college publications, do not assume that *Trivium's* contents will be felt worthy of reprinting by many others, but wish in any case to place no restrictions in their way; as our precedent, we note that the *trivium* has never been copyrighted. *Trivium* will, however, attend to the details of copy-righting a single article, if requested to do so by the author.

Trivium seeks to make no profits for its own sake, and will use any additional funds for the welfare of the College, preferably as student aid.

Contributors: *Trivium* looks toward the student body with anticipation. From it *must* come the stable portion of the magazine: the editors, the departments, and the many minor details which are so necessary in its make-up.

Trivium also eyes the College Faculty with hopeful expectancy. Besides requesting the St. John's tutors to write upon subjects of personal interest to them, *Trivium* also hopes for repetition

and supplementary comment upon their individual work in the College.

Off the campus, *Trivium* seeks articles from visiting lecturers, members of the Board of Visitors and Governors, and any other person who, in the opinion of the editors, would write in a manner and upon a subject suitable for the character of the magazine. In this category fall undergraduate students on other campuses. Contributions to *Trivium* are voluntary and without payment.

Contents: In content, *Trivium's* first few pages will be devoted to comment by its editorial board. This part of the magazine is not departmentalized, but will include paragraphs of opinion on subjects immediately relevant to the College and its community, as well as commentaries upon modern American and foreign life. Since *Trivium* is a product of an educational program unique in American colleges today, its primary concern will be with matters educational, although this will definitely not restrict its subject matter. Its editors aim to escape from the traditional negative policy of college publications, and will not be subservient, and only deliberately revolutionary.

Departments: Its departments will be conducted by the members of the editorial staff, devoting themselves to the following subjects: Books, the Theatre and Cinema, Contributors, Letters to the Editor, Department of Impropropaganda, and Trivia. *Trivium's* book reviews will be both ancient and modern. By ancient we do not mean only those books studied at St. John's; *Trivium's* literary critics will be at pains to point out that the Great Books List is not an index of exclusion: that it is a list which forms the foundation for the immense structure of progress in the liberal arts,

and should be studied like the Preamble to the Constitution. Guest reviewers may have articles here.

Complementary to the columns on books will be a subsidiary department, concerning itself with pertinent comment on new and old editions and translations of the Great Books, the books mentioned in each issue, notes on their authors, and modern publications.

Believing that the theatre provides both entertainment and incentive for enjoyable living, *Trivium* will devote space each month to dramatic criticism. We will try to review as many plays as possible, prior to their performances in cities near Annapolis. The motion picture department is interested not only in the latest films, but in the history of the motion picture as evidenced by the collection and supplementary material found in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

The remaining departments—Trivia, Department of Impropropaganda, Letters to the Editor,—speak for themselves. *Trivium's* off-campus contributions and articles by those not on the staff will be signed; staff articles, outside of editorial comment, will be initialed.

A Return to First Principles. Here at St. John's the students are for all practical purposes indoctrinated with the idea that they are in a college where the true liberal education is the rule. St. John's is the return to first principles—the first principles upon which every educated man must found his life, and is the rock which serves as the foundation for his philosophy, as well as being the path to its discovery.

As a natural result of this, there is much criticism, in the popular sense of destructive, of the rest of the modern American colleges and universities; crit-

icism that is leveled at them because they are, by and large, obtaining money under false pretences, and are not giving to their students that which they have so fervently promised to them. There is some basis for this contention, indeed more than is usually found for the mud-slinging engaged in by rival candidates for the same office. Yet, there is one point which seems to have eluded us thus far, and occurred to us long after we were supposed to have had our "intellectual awakening," if that nebulous event has yet taken place.

The criticism of all, or almost all, other colleges is the equivalent of the remarks which might be directed at a restaurant: one of its customers could say, "That's a terrible place—they have no caviar listed on the menu." A perfectly valid fault, indeed, provided anyone would want caviar in sufficient quantities to warrant the maintenance of it in stock.

That is the error which we make here at St. John's: we assume that young people, starting out in the game of education, *want* a liberal arts course, i.e., to be educated. Until that is verified, then the harsh words tossed at them are harmless, except for their nuisance value.

After all, the average youth of today could want nothing more of the future than security and health and a modicum of happiness, and all he can therefore desire of his college is that it take some steps to make his future earning capacity reasonably secure. Health and happiness are his own concern, and to his mind the money is probably the first consideration. As Henry Adams, in his *Education of Henry Adams*, said, "...in sum, education without capital could always be taken by the throat and forced to disgorge its gains,

nor was it helped by the knowledge that no one intended it, but that all alike suffered. . . . The failure of the scientific scheme, without money to back it, was flagrant."

This means to those entering college that it is better to think of the shekels than the intellectual shackles which bind them. Once they are financially secure, then it is time enough to be educated. The only trouble is, this doctrine is false, for rather too obvious and lamentable examples point out its failure. Gramps, in *You Can't Take It With You*, had the right idea.

In short then, the fault lies largely with those who pick out their colleges: they are a little too spineless to revolt and demand that society give them their birthright, or a free mind. If man is a rational animal, then it is his heritage to be rational: having only the potential capacity to reason is not enough. Society too is at fault; though its sin is one of omission rather than commission. And we at St. John's are not at fault, strictly, but only because the other colleges still insist that they are educating their students. Once they would come right out and say, "We offer you a secure future, for we will teach you one profession, and make you a decent mechanic, or economic specialist, or whatever you, in your sublime ignorance, choose," then we wouldn't have a leg to stand on. Then both of us, both the other colleges and St. John's, would be much happier.

A note on Trivium's cover . . . Difficulties are inevitable when the founders of a magazine feel that the cover needs an appropriate design. The temptation to include all possible symbolism in a representation of the Liberal Arts is irresistible, and the complications

resulting therefrom are immense. Through the kindness of Mr. Graham Carey, who has long been interested in the program at St. John's, the present design has been arranged. The aim was to give easily recognizable symbols for the Trivium and to somehow include the other four arts. The New Program seal, which Mr. Carey himself designed, made an ideal model for such an arrangement. The seal consists of seven opened books, denoting the seven arts. These are placed in circular form around a primitive balance. The seal is also endowed with a Latin motto meaning "I make free men out of children by means of books and balances."

Since *Trivium* was not to be an official publication, we could not duplicate the seal in detail. It was also necessary to exaggerate the three books representing grammar, rhetoric and logic, for which the magazine was named. The first step in this direction was to make these three books face outward from the balance. Then the symbols presented themselves.

It was first suggested that the first three letters and the last three letters of the Roman alphabet be used for grammar. These were to be situated on the separate pages of the opened book. Mr. Carey, however, rightly feared the algebraic connotations of these significant letters, upon which the present design was adopted. As the cover is now, grammar is represented by the first and last letters of the three leading alphabets of our Western tradition—Hebrew, Greek and Roman.

Rhetoric, which was to be represented in the center book, made the most difficult problem. Two hearts (*Con ad con Loquitur*) seemed to explain communication, but the suggestion

of a double valentine greeting on the cover of a magazine whose name has enough variations seemed to invite more comment. Again coming to our aid, Mr. Carey mentioned that in modern symbolism the circle, square, six-pointed star and triangle have been used for the Final, Material, Efficient and Formal causes respectively. Being a communicative art, rhetoric involves two persons—the sender or artist and the receiver or patron. Artists are concerned mainly with Formal causes, patrons with Final causes. Using the Material cause to connect these two

and effect the copula the three symbols signify the necessary features of the transmission of an idea, such as the art of rhetoric.

The syllogism seemed the application of one of the first principles of logic and the most immediately recognizable identification of that art.

The help given us by Mr. Carey cannot be exaggerated. His patience with our frequent criticisms was great. The cover design he has made for *Trivium* warrants thanks we are not unable to give, but which we can never complete.

The War and the College

FOR the last year we have been doing our lessons, reading our books, and trying to listen to peaceful, reasonable discourse about human affairs, while special newspapers have been let loose outside the window telling us of the latest crack and ruin in the affairs which human reason should control. That the College has recently dedicated itself again to the ancient purpose, that it is three years along on the new road to recover the lost arts of reason, that there are signs of success, all this is reassuring. But there are also signs that the greater human project of which this is only a part is at least temporarily failing, that it is failing perhaps because one of the proudest products of human reason, the machine, has taken charge of affairs, and that we shall have to harness ourselves to it, to save ourselves and our reason from total ruin.

In a recent pamphlet Archibald MacLeish, the new Librarian of Congress, has accused people like us, the liberal

artists in this and other countries, of being irresponsible, of not seeing the practical effects and implications of the literary and intellectual arts. He thinks that we have imitated the laboratory scientist who has shut himself up in the laboratory and the artist who has shut himself up in his studio and forgotten their responsibilities as citizens and as men of authority. There have been students and teachers in this College who have agreed with Mr. MacLeish in the last year. One of the older students who came here last fall said then that he did not know how long he would be able to stay; he sailed for Europe in May for ambulance service. He is now somewhere in France. His departure made a deep impression on us all. We are not sure, as the rest of the country is not sure, what we should be doing. We are not sure that we have settled the matter when we have comforted each other by saying that we are saving, for ourselves and for the world, the most precious and important part

of the civilization for which it has worked from the beginning. That may turn out to be irresponsible talk tomorrow or next month.

In the last war the colleges turned themselves over to the R.O.T.C. and the S.A.T.C. instead of athletics, and their classrooms to gunnery and navigation along with courses in War Aims. Some of us remember that we were unable to carry what we got with us. The military training didn't work or we never used it, and the war aims turned out to be sour propaganda in our mouths. We couldn't use either one after the war, and we turned out to be a lost generation drifting towards another war. It would be good this time if we could concentrate on something that we could take with us—into the war and beyond the war.

It may be well to recall that some of the work and thought that went into the present St. John's Program came out of an early recognition that the world was drifting and that something must be done, something fundamental and perhaps drastic, to discover our position and direction. The list of books that we are reading now at St. John's was begun immediately after the Armistice by the American Expeditionary University at Beaune, France. It has been taught, revised, and added to ever since by people who had direct and vivid experience of the last war, the Peace that followed, and these last years of bewilderment. It has always been the aim of these collaborators against demoralization to rediscover and to make available again the things that human beings, young men, and old men, can take with them wherever they go and whatever happens to them. Those of you who have seen the play *Journey's End* know how *Alice in Won-*

derland went to the trenches; you have heard how Alexander always slept with Homer's *Iliad* under his pillow, how General Smuts became a philosopher general by reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* during the Boer War. The books have gone many places with human beings, have made them see, and know, and do many things. Wherever you "have to take it," you can take these books—especially if they have become a part of you.

But one of the troubles with war is that you have to go through it and come out the other side. You have to go on, when nobody knows where to go. War destroys roads and landmarks as well as cities and dwellings. It destroys familiar and reassuring things inside you. Again these books have seen many wars and have gone on afterwards with those who were left to go on. It is often said that the great books have stood the test of time. They have done more than that; they have gone on through the fire and destruction of many wars and told men what to do afterwards. It is somewhat comforting to know that the St. John's books have this deep, practical use in the present crisis.

Still this is not enough. We are members of the American community and the College has deep roots as an American institution. We must know what its full function will be in the immediate future. There seems to be wide agreement that we Americans should have universal military training and that therefore boys of college age will be asked to train themselves for the manifold specialties of modern organized defense. This time we should not have the mad scramble for preferred positions and special competing services. It would seem likely therefore that

some general basic training in the manual arts would be desirable. Again the plans in the minds of the collaborators in the St. John's Program have been better than we knew at the start.

It used to be said that a young man who worked his way through college was getting a double education; he was studying books and in addition he was learning the value of money. In the old American college it was not the value of money that was being learned, but the dignity of work. We at St. John's have long thought it necessary to add the manual arts to our curriculum, because hands are as important as eyes in the training of the intellect. Laboratories these days have become streamlined and demand too little of the manual skills that went into the training of the older scientists. We have wanted to have the students build their own apparatus so that they would know just what has gone into the experiment and the observation. We have done some of this already, but we have had plans for carpentry and metal working shops. Modern industry has need of men trained in this way, and now we have had it demonstrated to us that modern warfare is also scientific in this sense.

But just as we have not wanted to professionalize our scientific training, so we would like to give our students a general viable training for what they will probably face when they are called for national defense service, a training that will make them intelligent, versatile agents of the American spirit defending itself, not merely mechanical parts of the military machine. The books will make them adult human beings; what will make them effective agents in action?

We have done considerable inquiring and considerable guessing about this matter at the College recently, and we have a suggestion to make, a suggestion that comes from the inner structure of the Program, and a suggestion that might be followed by other colleges. We should focus all of our training in the natural sciences on the gas engine and the electric generator. As the steam engine and coal were the living parts of the industrial system for the last hundred years, so the internal combustion engine and the electric generator are the vital center of the industrial revolution of this generation. Their immediate utility in national defense has become painfully obvious during the last two months.

To those who have grasped the constructive, aggressive program that we have projected for ourselves in the natural sciences this apparent reversion to immediate utility may be shocking. But we have discovered in our attempts to liberalize and intellectualize the experimental techniques of modern science that the major strategy must be the focusing of our training on a concrete problem that will bring the theoretical and speculative issues out and force them on our attention. The application of the natural sciences to human beings in medicine has been our aim so far. The mathematician, the physicist, the chemist, and the biologist, as well as the medical man and the philosopher will bear witness that this is not a simple, easy task that we have undertaken. It will take a long time to carry out. On the way to the solution are the sciences and the arts of heat and electricity, represented on our list and in our laboratory by Fourier and Clerk Maxwell. The immediate practical problem soon to be forced on us by

our national emergency and the suggested solution in terms of the gas engine and the electric generator point out the nearer focusing points for our curricular problems in science. Shops for the mechanical arts connected with them would extend our liberal arts and sciences as well as provide the elementary training for those who may have to play important parts in the immediate historical occasion.

Napoleon once said that an army moves on its stomach; it might well be said now that an army lives and moves in its internal combustion motors. The educated soldier of a democracy should know more than the British or French soldier know about their prime movers. The colleges should see that their students know about the prime movers of industrial cultures, not only for purposes of war but also for purposes of any hopeful peace that may follow.

Archibald MacLeish's article suggests that the liberal and the intellectual should use their pens as weapons. I hope [but I am not sure] that he does *not* mean that they should turn their intellects to the dark purposes of propaganda and their literary skill to the arts of recrimination. I am persuaded that he *should* mean that the literary, artistic, intellectual man should not be snooty about technology. Technical education has long been known as an integral part of culture by the anthropologists; one learns as much about primitive peoples by studying their tools as one learns by studying their language. One of the disturbing things in modern culture all over the world is the false sophistication of the liberal intellectual who ignores mathematics, machinery, chemistry, and biology. On the other side is the engineer who can not read poetry and has childish ideas about morals and

politics. This rift is as shocking to those who have discovered it as the rift between the military intelligence of the Allies and the technological intelligence of the Germans. The present apparent victory of one is as horrible as the defeat of the other, and they both symbolize the great issues in our bewildering culture.

It has been from the start the major concern of the St. John's Program to lay the foundations for the mending of this rift.

In the modern world there are two great traditions which are represented best by religion, ethics, and politics on the one hand, and by science and industry on the other. The former is usually understood to be conservative and established; the latter is radical and progressive in the popular mind. Technically considered, religion, ethics, and politics move in a medium of literature, talk, words; science and industry use a mathematical medium. The task of any civilization is to assimilate the new to the old, and the failure of a culture results in a revolution of the new against the old. We at St. John's have tried to put the new and the old together in a way that will force the assimilation. We have been criticized for having too much religion, ethics, and politics, too much literature and philosophy of the old-fashioned variety. On the other hand, we have been criticized for having too much mathematics and laboratory science. The criticisms balance pretty well, and we hope they accurately reflect the balance in the curriculum itself. Actually the balance is a dynamic one, and has a direction. Arming ourselves with the traditional disciplines in language and literature which include poetry, religion, and politics as subject matters, we hope to move

into the baffling problems in mathematical physics and medical science. This is our way of facing the modern world and of preparing ourselves to solve some of its problems.

There are grave dangers in the project, dangers which some of our wisest critics have pointed out. There is the danger of simple failure, there is the danger of too easy a solution with consequent disillusion and despair, there is the danger of a further reduction of the humanities to the natural sciences and a consequent slip of science into magic and black arts. But these are dangers of the modern world whatever we try to do in it. If you are ill you are forced to choose between a priest and a psychiatrist, between a psychiatrist and a medical man, between a medical man and a quack. How and why do you choose; why should you have to choose when you are a man, a human being with all these dimensions and potentialities? Is there an escape from the choice for the individual? No, we must

face the dangers in life, and therefore all the more we must face them in a liberal education.

But they can not be faced without an integral attack from many sides. St. John's has books written by men who had faith and courage in the prospect of solution. We have laboratories where the problems can be posed in detail and in easy stages. It may be that the war emergency will hasten our determination to face the problems in the machine shop with our hands as well as our intellects and our eyes. We shall wait to see what the national government proposes, hoping that the deliberations now in process will give something to the colleges to do that will be effective for the immediate practical purposes which we all share, and that, whatever the government gives the colleges to do, it will be something that they can take with them through the war to the other side where we shall want to be able to do our part in finding a way into the future.—SCOTT BUCHANAN.

History, Geography and a Temporal Sequence

THE only reason that men care to study the past, other than that of pure intellectual curiosity, is that history apparently is repetitive, and a knowledge of it makes the present and the future potentially understandable. Perhaps it may even have the effect of making man aware of his mistakes and failures, his successes and strokes of genius, in the events of ages long dead, and thereby he may learn someday to profit by this vicarious experience himself. Through understanding of the past,

in other terms, may come control of the future. The implications of this are of importance beyond the power of words to express.

The statement that history does repeat itself is nearly prehistoric, proposed by Plato in the Fifth Century B.C., and lately by Spengler. The cyclical theory is old and seemingly true, as far as our observations go. Working on this basic assumption, men have attempted, with some notable successes, but many more remarkable failures,

to fathom and predict the future. They can do this if the things which they observe are natural to men and are not merely incidental causes acting upon them. That is, the language of a people is a product of their environment, civilization and culture in the first instance, and later on, through its richness, color and implied meanings, may serve to keep that culture alive, or even to revive it, long after the original impetus is dead. So long, then, as men will adhere to observations based upon natural causes, and not incidental ones, their attempts to read what is written in the book of Fate has some logical justification.

In this article, I will deal with a phenomenon which I have observed, but one which can lead, sadly enough, if I am to stick to my above statements, to no logically founded results. I therefore shall try to draw no conclusions from it; if I should be so rash, you may be certain that I apologize.

This observation, which came to my attention one evening when I was gazing at a Mercator projection of the world, would apparently make the progress of civilization's *centers* in a directed curve, which is not, so far as this aspect goes, as yet repetitive. From the small amount of history which is at my command, the theory seems accurate in its facts. Fortunately, those upon which I find it necessary to draw do not have to be correct to the last detail: an error of a century or two makes no basic difference to me. This is fortunate, for the knowledge we have of the past is generally still the subject of learned debates. The geography which I demand, and you must possess to understand this theory, is also unhampered by even considerable errors. In short,

only a superficial knowledge of the generalities of both is essential at all.

The historical aspect of the theory requires only a list of the successive centers of civilization, arranged chronologically. These are, I think, as follows: China, India, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Spain and/or France, and England. If you feel that I have erred here, the order in which I have placed these nations is my own personal opinion on the matter, and your agreement is now necessary. However, I do not make the claim that each of these countries added something to the general sum of civilization. All I ask is the admission that this is the order in which the countries named seized or had supremacy or dominance in the world. This is not taken to mean in the sense of economic or military leadership, although some surely possessed this, but in the sense that the culture which each country had at some time was the best to be found; this, of course, also implies that we have the same viewpoint on culture, but that is not important.

Having granted this order, we now pass to the geographical field. Here, I wish that you would look at, or imagine, a map of the world. That is all.

Having obtained the ingredients, we will now essay a mixture, hoping that the elements will fuse in some way. The first nation on our historical list is China; let us then direct our attention to China on the map. Then to the second on the list, India; to reach it on the map, we move to the west of China. Then Babylon; we move now west of India. To Egypt, west from Babylon; then again west to Greece; now we sail into the setting sun and reach Rome; ever moving westward, we sweep into Spain and France; the

trail seems to move westward across the Channel, and hesitates in England as though unsure of its future movements.

We have now made a regularly westward progression from China to England. The direction of our travel has not changed or suffered reversal. There could be, if we were on the watch for conclusions, only one drawn: the progress of civilization is from east to west. Where can it go now? Only west again, and the logical country west of Britain is the United States. But there, I have drawn a conclusion, and I apologize.

There are a multitude of objections to this theory, if such it be, and no one is more conscious of them than I. But it is an observation, and one which may prove of value in reassuring the sophisticated Americans that they are not perishing from the earth, but are, on the contrary, just beginning to rise from the ashes.

The first objection to this is that there apparently is no reason for the geographical progression: that is, geography is only incidental. Probably this objection is valid; I cannot dispose of it, except to repeat the statement made about geography affecting culture

through language. The Frenchman speaks six times as rapidly as the South Sea Islander, and the ratio of their cultures is even greater; could not the climates be the cause of this? In the absence of greater research work than has been done to the present time, this will be purely a matter of personal opinion.

Another objection would be that there now is a water gap between the old and possible new centers of civilization. But cannot the water gap between Egypt and Greece be likened unto it, when the two means of transportation are taken into consideration, as in a proportion to the distances? Then they are, I think, comparable.

There may be, and probably are, many other more serious objections. But they are all objections to the attempt to predict; not to the observation itself. It is made, and can be taken for whatever value you wish to assign to it. I am not capable of a valiant defense on its behalf, but I hope that there is something of truth both in the observation and the almost totally embryonic conclusions which I have drawn from it; apologetically, of course.—J. L. H.

The Letter Setteth Free

THE spirit killeth; the letter setteth free." Thus did T. S. Eliot once paraphrase an old and venerated epigram, the memory of which led President Stringfellow Barr to deliver one of the most stimulating lectures we can remember hearing at St. John's. As is customary, Mr. Barr gave the first Formal Lecture of the scholastic year to the students and members of the Faculty, on the topic, Grammar.

The lecturer, speaking of grammar, gave an excellent exhibition of rhetoric. His talk was smooth, yet animated, and he somehow managed to space it with anecdotes which did not distract the students' attention from the theme. Mr. Barr has that happy faculty of making the complex seem simple, while still giving credit to the listener for understanding the complex. Not that one may ever boast of understanding

a lecture here, except in part; the lecturers force the students to raise themselves to the speaker's level, or fall by the wayside.

Though we do not pretend to have understood it, the most exciting thing Mr. Barr said pertained to the Renaissance, and indirectly to the "intellectual awakening" which every student should undergo at some stage of his career here. The Renaissance, he said, consisted of men using words, and using them often, without realizing their meanings, and then suddenly discovering just what those words did stand for. Words are the parts of grammar, they are the marks we make on paper, or the sounds we utter, or the tools we use to convey ideas. Words, here, as a term, is also symbolic, since it stands for *any* tools which may be used for the communication of intelligent meanings. The mechanic, the soldier, the sailor, the farmer, the sculptor—each has his proper grammar.

The reduction of the Renaissance to these terms made it something vital and comprehensible to the students. For many, it will also serve as a clue to

distinguish the "intellectual awakening" from another case of understanding of one term.

Mr. Barr, in his similar lecture last year, called grammar "frozen logic." He has since realized that this would make it static, and its dynamic quality, which he brought so forcibly to our attention, belies this definition.

The President also referred to a statement he made in the College Convocation, concerning the courage it required to embark on a liberal education in times like these. Instead, he said, it requires faith. Certain it seems, to us, that to a student who as yet does not know the real meaning of the term he is using, it takes more of the latter to continue using it than it does of courage. Faith in the men who insist that the word has a meaning; faith in the men who use the word; and above all, faith that some day he himself will discover that meaning, and have the use of grammar for his own ends. Having only the spirit will kill; "the letter setteth free."—THE CIRCLE.

We Are Not Alone

SINCE a year ago September, some of us have surveyed the generation which we may call our own by birth, and have found little to make us proud of this allegiance. A short while ago, we were appalled to read in the pages of the August and September issues of the *Atlantic Monthly*, a gentlemanly and distressed query by Professor Arnold Whitridge of Yale University, and its attempted answer by two undergraduates of American colleges: Kingman Brewster, Jr., also of Yale, and Spencer Klaw of Harvard. We were appalled because Mr. Whitridge's honest and interested open letter to those who would fight in the war he foresees, received a reply just as mugwumpian as the young men who had so mystified him. Believing that he did not wish to have his unenviable position magnified but clarified, we feel obligated to answer him further. And this is not only because we seem to be misunderstood ourselves, but also for the reason that we think we represent a sizable bloc of other students in American colleges. Like the gentlemen from Harvard and Yale, we do not presuppose that our views are shared by all, or even a majority, of the rest of us, but we are happy in knowing that we are representative.

Succinctness was not one of the virtues of the gentlemen from Harvard and Yale. We shall try to make it ours through natural sympathy and respect for Mr. Whitridge's propitious question. His open letter was more inquiring than challenging, and we propose to treat it as such.

Mr. Whitridge's first pertinent remarks dealt with the traditionally impulsive, generous, and idealistic qualities of youth as witnessed in the college

press. Not unreasonably, he had gone directly to student publications for his answer. What he discovered there was justly horrifying to him. The *Daily Dartmouth* was afraid of swinging its emotions to that side which might have less than *all* the right, and dove headlong for shelter from British and French propaganda; the *Harvard Crimson* (Mr. Klaw's journal) Munichally demanded peace-at-any-price, and branded expression of belief in the Allied cause as war-mongering; three-hundred students from the same college informed the President that they would never follow in the footsteps of the 1917 alumni; the *Yale News* (whose chairman is Mr. Brewster) placidly discovered that neither the Allies nor the Nazis had a decided stand as either friend or foe of morality and religion. Regretfully, Mr. Whitridge extended the list.

To counter this evidence, we ourselves have had some experience with collegiate editorializing, and unless the journalists of larger campuses are better for their offices than we were, the great bulk of their printed matter was written in a frenzy with but superficial thought, and taken post-haste to the printers. Authors have been more than once amazed to find what they have written, and since there are not many lexicographers among us, too few have analyzed their own words with the keen incisive investigations that have been made into the words of others. This may serve as a reminder that Mr. Whitridge's sources of information are not infallible. It is an extremely simple matter to make a profession of faith; this is the *a priori* cause of Mr. Whitridge's inquiry. Precisely because it is not difficult to pay lip-service to strange

gods, youth has often left its heart out of its mouth, and kept its traditional impulses, generousities, and ideals obscured, to the understandable bewilderment of Mr. Whitridge and his kith.

We realize that thus far we have made an apology; a conclusion on our part which the gentlemen from Harvard and Yale evidently failed to comprehend in their own reply. We cease to fight the duel; there is little need for one.

We believe that never before in the world's memory has there been an issue as clear-cut as the one being settled now by the Battle of Britain. As proof, it may be seen that from the conflagration in England, there leads a highly incendiary fuse to numerous small but powerful powder kegs dotting the entire surface of the globe. Upon the worst fate of Britain hangs the worst fate of South America, the Empire, the British navy, which has so long and with so eminent a success guarded, and still guards, our Atlantic coast; the Dutch East Indies, Indo-China, and thereby the sole supply route to Chiang Kai Shek's armies battling the Japanese invader; thus the fate of China herself; Japan's policy will be shaped by the outcome, and this, it is agreed, will profoundly effect America's Far-Eastern policy, and subsequently our naval plans for national defense. Further may we cite the fact that the Nazi philosophy of life is based upon the assumption that man is by nature an indolent, weak, and indecisive animal, not social, but seeking to be left in his own small world, and desiring to have his decisions made by men whose word he has not the right to question. Opposed to this is the British democracy, which may be classed by some as a poor example of what the democratic state should be,

but yet firmly believes that man is by nature a rational, social, idealistic, strong animal, each individual having a certain fundamental dignity, which requires that the first duty of the governing power shall be to have the consent of those who are to be governed.

This is as clean a philosophical break as could be imagined in any abstract argument. But this is by no means abstract; it is living, forceful, yet profound. The very physical means which the combatants choose to wage their war may be the same. But the manners by which these instruments are used to achieve the ends sought are just as vitally incongruous as the philosophical assumption that led to their construction. Religiously, one side has found the Church its greatest stumbling block; the other has found God a source of comfort. Morally, there is no military compunction on the part of the one, but when the enemy has chosen his weapons, none but a fool would use those inferior to his, regardless of the moral indignation at being forced to use them.

Some suppose that Britain's ideals are not our ideals, but they are ours if only because those of Germany are not and could never be American.

We have said that the choice of weapons is not England's own; likewise if, though God grant it not, we should ever be compelled to fight, it will not be ours to make a choice. Conscription has been condemned as a dictatorial method of raising physical strength, but we must fight fire with fire in the absence of something stronger than flames.

It has been said that democracy cannot combat total war without itself becoming a dictatorship, and that also once the fundamental liberties contained in the Bill of Rights have been usurped for a period, then we have

forever sold our birthright for a pot of porridge. This is profoundly and historically untrue. It has been the experience of every democracy that, in time of crisis, freedom disappears, but certainly not forever. And may we present as evidence the authority of Woodrow Wilson in 1917 and 1918, and inquire as to whether the freedom of the American individual failed to re-appear.

The word *propaganda* today has the same connotations that the word *witch* had in old Salem. Applied to any article, to any written or spoken word, it labels it as untrue, malicious, and inciting emotional epilepsy. The gentlemen from Harvard and Yale seem to have forgotten that it was propaganda that made our Founding Fathers liberty-conscious in 1776; that it was propaganda that aroused the nation to fight infantile paralysis, and is now forcing it to fight syphilis; that it is propaganda that elects the President of the United States. Yet we feel that they would be the first to condone its use here. Propaganda, then, is another term for high-pressure salesmanship, and must be judged not absolutely but relative to the product it attempts to place in popular favor. Bearing this in mind, the name of propaganda need frighten no one who retains his intellectual freedom and reserves the right to make his individual judgments.

Mr. Whitridge's attempt to excuse our generation by placing the blame on his own is an appreciated gesture, but no more actual than the dogma that the Versailles Treaty is the fountainhead from whence flow all our troubles today.

The preservation of democracy is an intricate task. It calls for more blood and tears, sweat and toil than any other with which we may confront ourselves. If

the past has taught us at all, it has taught us that America is capable of heroic exertions. We believe that the victory of sweetness and light over the forces of evil and darkness can be attained. And if only because it can be, we shall see it done. Here we take our stand, in the name of our impulses, our occasional generousities and, above all, our ideals.—F. S. M., JR. AND J. L. H.

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

AN annual visitor to St. John's, were he observant, would notice the distinct improvement in the equipment of the athletic corner of the College. A new diamond shines in the setting sun, and the coaches and referees now caper energetically in smart, though ill-fitting, blue tights. Inside the red-brick gymnasium new rowing machines have been installed, new wrestling mats laid down, and an extra squash court built.

The reason for all this development is not that there has been an athletic endowment, but rather that the size of the College has been doubled by incoming freshmen, and accommodation has had to be made for their desire to blow off steam. Another result of the increase in numbers has been the redivision of the teams. Instead of banding together in respective houses, players are now vaunting the current prowess of their seminars, although the highly technical method of numbering seminars is rather cumbersome for the supporter, who roots loudly for his beloved "seminar 2ab." Perhaps the names of the seminar leaders might make the teams less impersonal, and more worth risking one's neck for. However the main result of the redistribution has been to create more teams, and thus make competition greater, and possibly healthier.

The only two veterans of the palmy days of intercollegiate athletics are sailing and fencing, and they are continuing in this vein throughout the year. Apart from these two sports the program is an entirely intramural one, having been established with the object of fuller participation by more scholars, and a shift of the emotional energy expended on intercollegiate teams to other presumably more worthy fields. There are, however, rewards offered for individual and team achievements, in the forms of golden charms, college blazers, and a choice of athletic equipment for the winner of the "outstanding athlete" race, competed for on a points basis.

And now the season is beginning, the seminars, stimulated by dialectic, are ready to throw themselves into the feast of sports that awaits them. Touch football, softball, sailing and soccer are already here. Fencing and basketball are on their way. Harder studying makes for more free time, it has been said, so let everyone wallow in an orgy of mental calisthenics, and then participate in the sports program, making it fulfil its purpose of greater enrollment and greater enjoyment for all.—W. T. H.

IN PRAISE OF IMPROPAGANDA

PROPAGANDA is addressed to passion and prejudice. But you seldom find any in the dead letter office. This means that we should cultivate sweet reason—within the walls of the dead letter office.

Subversive elements are always injecting propaganda into our national life. For instance, now comes the rumor that someone wants to do away with the Army Regulations that require in every soldier ten pairs of teeth, upper and lower, capable of meeting between decks. This appears a monstrous propo-

posal, and the rumor is probably propaganda. The army has always required ten pairs of teeth.

But impropaganda immediately suggests that perhaps it wouldn't be so bad to modify the rule anyway. After all, such a regulation is undoubtedly a survival of earlier days and not justified by the conditions of modern warfare. In a cave man army, ten pairs of teeth, capable of meeting each other, were also capable of meeting the enemy. And even as late as the Civil War, when teeth were used for opening cartridges, a toothless infantryman looked dangerous to the enemy—until he smiled. But we think this antiquated rule has now become subversive.

Why should our army continue to insist upon naturally grown teeth when science has demonstrated the acceptability of the mechanized units on sale by reputable dealers everywhere? Of course, only genuine replacement parts, bearing the Seal of Approval of the American Dental Association and installed by an authorized dealer, should be recognized. This is our guarantee of satisfactory workmanship and the maintenance of prices in keeping with our national defense requirements. But with these safeguards the army could well relax the rule and thereby make available for national defense untold thousands of our citizens in this emergency.

In fact, the whole set of physical requirements should be streamlined and brought up to date. The conditions of total war require that every possible resource be devoted to the service of the state. This is no time for rejecting any reasonable proposition. Science and industry, if left unhampered, could undoubtedly throw into the field countless secret weapons of proven quality

and recognized effectiveness. We might even see the day when the flower of our army would be a mighty pansy

division of 100,000 mechanized eunuchs, all bearing a Seal of Approval of Good Housekeeping Institute.—ERASMUS.

Second Fiddle

ALTHOUGH we had not heard any orchestral music for three months before Leopold Stokowski's performance in Baltimore some weeks ago, we were almost sure our untrained ears were not deceiving us when they told us that the All-American Youth Orchestra was considerably better than it was before it left on its South American tour of glory. The coordination of the different sections of the orchestra, particularly of the strings, was less seamy, and far above that in the recording of Dvorak's "New World Symphony." Mr. Stokowski has certainly done things in weeks to this orchestra that he spent years doing in Philadelphia. Can it be that the musical youth of America is more docile?

The playing was the Youth Orchestra, the program was Stokowski. The Bach was entirely composed of his "arrangements" of that notable composer. It was better than the newest renditions of Tchaikowsky in dance bands, but it was far from being Bach, although no mention of Stokowski's free transcriptions was made in the program. No orchestra alive could hope to reproduce the shades and interweavings of tone and parts that Bach intended for a small orchestra, and although the Youth Orchestra attempted the impossible rather heroically, they lost too much of Bach to make it a great performance from the composer's point of view, or for that matter from the Bach lover's standpoint. But it was a gratifying display of technique and orchestral experience.

Shostakovich is a Soviet composer, and

despite the efforts of the orchestra to straight-jacket the music into some order, he remained a composer for the Soviets. The drums were very finely played, and well used musically, and the marimbaphone did much more than merely excite the audience's curiosity, but the stimulus given by this music was not the one we associate with concert halls, but rather with ballrooms—exciting and vigorous, nevertheless.

In all the Bach was well arranged, but only 50 per cent Bach, and Shostakovich was novel and stimulating. The orchestra was fine, and played like veterans, and Stokowski is undoubtedly the best "Arranger," besides having those unforgettable hands.—NERO.

Decca has issued an album of New Orleans jazz, played by some twenty musicians who are from that city or thereabout. There have been attempts to vulgarize New Orleans jazz in order to popularize it, as in the case of Bob Crosby's orchestra, but this album is an earnest effort to represent this early jazz in its original and best form, and by its most reputed artists. In trying to reach the apex in this type of jazz, Stephen Smith and Charles Edward Smith, who directed these "sessions" for Decca, succeeded in recording together, Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet for the first time since the days of the Red Onion Jazz Babies and the Clarence Williams Blue Five. The fact that these two musicians are considered the greatest jazzmen to have blown into a horn shows

the degree of importance of having recorded them together once more.

However, in this album, Decca achieved something greater than recording "King" Louis and "Pops" Bechet: it waxed some discs by Johnny Dodds, the greatest clarinet player in the realm of jazz, the man whose name is synonymous with the hot clarinet, but most of all, the musician who played righteous music until his dying day; a day when his sincerity could bring him nothing more than a bare living, if not poverty.

New Orleans at the turn of the century was the center of gambling, drinking and prostitution. At that time, it was also rocking the cradle of jazz, a music that arose from and had become a combination of the work songs and the blues of the slaves, of the festive New Orleans marches and of the French quadrilles. Naturally, New Orleans holds a very sentimental place in the hearts of the followers of hot music.

A New Orleans type of band usually consists of a trumpet, a trombone, a clarinet and a rhythm section. In the ensembles, the trumpet plays the melody or the lead, while the clarinet plays above the trumpet and complements it. The trombone plays between the harmony and the rhythm and "pushes" the trumpet from below. Of course, in its ideal form, New Orleans jazz should be played without a written score, that is, it should be totally improvised.

In many cases in this album, the music lives up to the New Orleans tradition. Unfortunately, in other cases, the Fifty-second Street influence has been too great to overcome and the old spirit seems to be lost. This is especially apparent on the Red Allen sides.

The classical collective improvisation works at its best on the Johnny Dodds

and the Jimmy Noone sides, which were made in Chicago. The musicians here seem nearer to the real thing than the other groups which recorded in New York. At the Chicago session, Preston Jackson plays a trombone which establishes him as one of the greatest. He is greatly instrumental in making those records what they are.

As the listeners will notice, most of the sides are blues. I found Johnny Dodds' "Gravier Street Blues" to be the best in that it is the most nostalgic blues and that it keeps its intensity of sadness from beginning to end. It is played in the old tradition from Lonnie Johnson's guitar to Natty Dominique's trumpet. The "219 Blues," played by Louis and Bechet, is one of the earliest blues known. "Jelly Roll" Morton, the living legend of jazz, says that it is "the first blues I have no doubt heard." It is about two trains, the 219 that goes west and the 217 that returns to New Orleans. Sidney Bechet, the most lyrical of jazz musicians, plays a beautiful obligato to Louis' vocal on this blues. He is also excellent on "Perdido Street Blues," although he doesn't equal Johnny Dodds on the earlier recording of the same tune by the New Orleans Wanderers.

This album is the logical beginning for the uninitiated. For those familiar with this thing called jazz, there are more than enough kicks to make up for the disappointments.—AHMED ERTEGUN, '44.

TRIVIA

HERE at the college, we welcome a new Director of Music; and note that the old one is safely over the border.

Dorothy Dunbar Bromley told us last month in *Harper's* that "Wendell L. Wilkie's self-assurance is great." We wonder why she bothered?

Mr. Barr passed a persistent Indian Summer with Mr. Strohmeyer of the Annapolis Housing Authority.

Someone asked the other night, "Why do we need Eliot, we have wars."

On the whole, the innovations at Convocation the other afternoon had us rather tipsy—especially Mr. Barr.

With Jolson back on Broadway, who could possibly object to one more Barrymore divorce?

One of the townsfolk asked us on the street the other day if "that Dr. Martin" had had any trouble with the Federal Investigation of un-American Activities which took place in Annapolis this summer.

Last week we got involved in a stuffy political argument. The Republican gesture definitely had the majority. For our part, we're still in doubt. What do you think, Willkie or won't he?

The War and the College—One of the Freshmen has the largest collection of tin soldiers in the world.

Somebody had it that under a long range upward and onward movement, the administration has its eye on Bancroft Hall.

Those who know the St. John's seal will recognize the cover's mother. Some may wonder about the spots on the top three books, and some may recognize them as symbols for the three Liberal Arts: grammar, rhetoric, and logic. What we like about the whole thing, however, is that little business in the middle book, the sign of rhetoric. The triangle represents the formal cause; the square, the material; and the circle, the final. After scratching our heads over this for a while, we decided that it must be that the triangle was chosen because it was so sharp, or so hot as Plato says, the square was obviously earthy, and together they made the circle which, being the result of the hot and earthy, was perfect.—R. H.

Books

Out of Time and Mind. Mr. L. H. Myers is a novelist who is forever surprising us. Each of his four novels is a thing apart, having few similarities. *The Orissers*, his first work of fiction, was written fifteen years ago, but the book seems to have come from a more distant past. Peopled with indeterminate and brutal characters, the family of Orisser was a strange mixture of vengeance, supplication and discontent in an early nineteenth-century atmosphere. The prevailing catastrophic mood of the book has placed it in the

gallery of the grotesque, where it has not perished.

For his second novel Mr. Myers took us on a yachting party down the Amazon with modern English sophisticates. *The Clio* was a light book compared with *The Orissers*, and we should not have known Mr. Myers capable of so charming a comedy of manners but for the signature. *Strange Glory*, published only a few years before *The Root and the Flower*, convinced us of the author's versatility, but reminded us

that that quality is more often indicative of progressive talent.

Mr. Myers' new novel, *The Pool of Vishnu*, is a sequel to this last, and although it can be accepted out of sequence, recollections of the first book can do little harm, and will perhaps do much toward an understanding of the other.

To detach himself and his readers from the problems of our time for the purposes of fictionizing problems of all times, Mr. Myers has made India in the reign of Elizabeth his scene. The temptation to write a purely historical novel has been resisted, and only a few of the characters are drawn with particular attention to fact. The Emperor Akbar, his difficult sons, Salim and Daniyal, and the ruler's personal adviser, Shaik Mobarek, did actually exist, and provide the novelist with the screen on which to present his own creations. The two heirs in their ruthless battle for their father's favor supply intrigue and melodrama enough to please Mr. Louis Bromfield, whose more minor personages find lesser troubles in a similar setting.

Involved in the royal indecisions are Rajah Amar and his family, who are Mr. Myers' main concern. Prince Jali, son of Amar and his wife, Sita, is the principal in *The Root and the Flower*. He is twelve years old at the beginning of the book, and although he remains obscure in the first chapters, the second part is titled with his name. It is here that Jali is most closely studied. An adolescent introvert, Jali is eager for spiritual and worldly happiness. His hesitations, his sudden leap toward the latter, and the remorse that follows afford Mr. Myers the opportunity to show Jali to us. And what Mr. Myers shows us

is the premature bitterness in a young prince, his realization of anticipated pain, and the wisdom gained from unfortunate but revealing experience. Prince Jali of Vidyapur is comparable to Doctor Aziz in Mr. E. M. Forster's *Passage to India*, for these two with their remarkable insight, their grudging delight in human relations are closely akin. The analogy, however, cannot be stressed, for the lessons derived from their separate experiences are not even distantly like. Mr. Forster's novel ends in a failure, Mr. Myers' in a fulfillment.

Prince Jali is not as prominent in *The Pool of Vishnu*, but we leave him in a completely happy and resolved state. He has been helped toward this solution by the Guru, who is the habitual philosopher of Mr. Myers' long novel. Poet, priest, and doctor of spirits, the Guru makes all other characters subservient in the sequel. It is through his quiet conversations that the spiritual and romantic complications and bewilderments are solved. The inclination to call the books philosophical novels because of the great quantity of speculation is treacherous. In the prefatory note to *The Root and the Flower* Mr. Myers disproves personified abstractions, and in his novel he has made fast his belief.

Mr. Myers has a great passion for detail, but it is scarcely a laborious one, and requires no labor to enjoy. He is a good novelist; that is to say he presents his characters in detail not by conveying their every quality immediately, but in revealing them gradually in the characters' relations to other characters. Seemingly a basic aspect of the novel, it is seldom performed with more facility.

The attraction India holds for the

British novelist is one that has increased that country's place in fiction. The difficulty before has been in combining East with West. Rudyard Kipling believed the two could meet "When two strong men stand face to face." E. M. Forster does not care for the strong and indicates that the union is impossible. L. H. Myers has departed from the Anglo-Indian conflict and given us India alone. But his individuality in so giving it resembles Mr. Forster's problem of "Only connect" in the fact that there are no novelists quite like them. We liken Mr. Myers to Mr. Forster, but hope he will not be so silent.

Virginia Woolf has forsaken experimentation and written a pleasing biography of Roger Fry, the English art critic. If we judge from the brief prefatory note, the book may be called the 'official biography', but Mrs. Woolf has by no means succumbed to Victorian tradition in that field. Like the biographers of the late nineteenth century, she has made use of letters, Fry's autobiographical notes, and recollections by his friends, but she has not connected these with superfluities. Virginia Woolf knew Roger Fry intimately, which fact enlarges her scope considerably, but not once are we aware of their friendship. Indeed, the author is often unreasonably impersonal. She is putting her theory of biography into practise.

Mrs. Woolf has had a great deal to say about biography, and before his death, Roger Fry remarked that she might write his own life. She has done so, but there is nothing exceptional in her methods. The conceptions she might have had have already been demonstrated. *Orlando*, a novel in the

biographic style, is not admittedly fiction, and if Orlando did not actually exist she/he certainly should have. Mrs. Woolf here created a character about whom she could write a biography. This is a method others have resorted to with persons who have lived. Knowing that that is the wrong way to go about it, the author was wise to invent a personality she could know thoroughly.

In *Flush*, a life of Elizabeth Barrett's spaniel, Mrs. Woolf observed the Brownings in canine adjectives; words that smelled and saw, words that did not hear, but words that understood. The book is delightful, and an interesting experiment, but unfortunately we can't generalize about *Flush's* mind.

Mrs. Woolf has come back to regulations in *Roger Fry*. She has shown us the Quaker home of the artist, Cambridge, Bloomsbury, the War, and their effects on a sensitive mind. She has also given us Fry's own record of experiences with Pierpont Morgan. This makes the most amusing part of the book. Morgan, who bought pictures as he did stocks, was the power behind the Metropolitan Museum, of which Fry was curator for several years. He was dismissed because he had bought for the Museum a picture Morgan wanted for his own gallery. In Roger Fry's own words, Morgan's "crude historical imagination was the only fault in an otherwise perfect insensibility."

Mrs. Woolf has concentrated on recording things that happened. She has not mixed fact and fiction. For herself, she does not have much to say, but her way of saying things about Roger Fry convinces us of his talents and of her own.—F. M.

CINEMA

WHEN Vincent Sheean wrote his autobiography more than a dozen years ago, there followed promptly a series of memoirs by other journalists who had witnessed extraordinary occurrences abroad. The personal historians brought together their old articles, connected them with impersonal beliefs, were briefly praised, and went back to the relative obscurity of the newspaper columns. In the past few years there has been a revival of reportorial recollections. This has produced books by Pierre van Paasen, Lillian Mowrer and others—books superior to Sheean's. And now Hollywood has adopted the fashion. Judging from their first product, Alfred Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent*, the adoption is not to be deplored.

Concerning themselves with Europe, motion picture producers have given us a varied assortment of attitudes since September a year ago. From the charming satire that was *Ninotchka* they have arrived at the ostensibly revealing but eminently saturating type of production. When such novels as *The Mortal Storm* are turned into movies, any subtleties the books might have possessed are considerably diminished.

Mr. Walter Wanger's original plan for *Foreign Correspondent* was to dramatize Sheean's *Personal History*, but all adaptations were unsuccessful. Recalling that book, we understand the difficulties scenarists must have had with the Rayna Prome episode—the one memorable part of the memoir. But Director Hitchcock, "master of suspense," saw an opportunity to dispense with all his directorial inhibitions, and somehow created a story to accompany them. Surprisingly, a conglomerative mass of melodrama does not result. The assassination, the scenes in the windmill in

Holland, the moments in the tower of Westminster, the sinking Clipper, the final air raid—all are pleasantly joined. The whole film is one big chase. The American reporter is after the assassin of one of Europe's most distinguished peacemakers. He chases right through to the end, when he discovers that his potential father-in-law is the British agent for a foreign government. We aren't told which foreign government, for Hitchcock was well aware that we all knew about that before the film started.

The spy is played with customary suavity by Herbert Marshall, whom it is nice to see out of martyrdom. Joel McCrea is admirable as the correspondent. The chase becomes his talents. Laraine Day joins the hunt attractively. George Sanders, Albert Basserman, and Robert Benchley combine to make the cast well proportioned.

Foreign Correspondent is the best example we know illustrating the powers of the movie director. The story and players are not particularly notable, but the camera asides, the gestures of the extras—each of these means something to Alfred Hitchcock, and he develops their possibilities. The overhead view of the umbrellas at the assassination, the pantomime of the man trying to cross the street as the pursuing cars rush by, the brief glimpse of the broken letters in the neon Hotel Europe sign. These are moments that we remember above the climaxes. Hitchcock directs movies as Miss Leslie Ford writes detective stories—with concentration on atmosphere. He is the one director in Hollywood who manages to create as well as duplicate the script. Immediately classed as melodrama, *Foreign Correspondent* does not depart from the category. But when good melodrama comes from California, we are reassured of the cinema's forte.—S. VASHTAR.

THE PLAY

LATE last spring, Flora Robson deserted the Warner Brothers and came to New York to appear in Gilbert Miller's production of *Ladies in Retirement*. It was good to see her out of Elizabethan costume, especially in so fine a play. There are seldom successful attempts to write murder-mysteries for the stage. Playwrights either create the absurdly grotesque or try to turn popular detective stories into balanced dramas. Both ventures are invariably disastrous. But *Ladies in Retirement* is as pretty a piece of murder as we've seen in a long while. Not since Emlyn Williams' *Night Must Fall* has there been such accomplished artistry in the portrayal of crime. Reginald Denham and Edward Percy, who wrote the play, are adept in creating inhibited ladies. In this case, the lady protectorate over her pleasantly insane sisters, kills her employer, the lady with a past. Her motives are admirable, and after the deed is done at the end of the first act, we heartily sympathize with the character in her naïve methods of concealing the crime. The murder is done, by the way, with the victim sitting at the piano playing "Tit-Willow." Never again will we hear that tune without remembering Miss Robson creeping up with the sash to the dressing gown.

The Theatre Guild has apparently bought the play from Mr. Miller, and intends to send it on the road. *Ladies in Retirement* is a play the Guild itself would have done well to produce. There is something in the suggestion that they purchase all their plays from Mr. Miller.

Flora Robson's performance as the murderess is flawless. She is an actress of splendid stature and distinguished talent. Her job in *Ladies in Retirement* is bloody, but it reminds us of the English school boy who was asked for

Mary Tudor's common epithet. "She was known as Bloody Mary," he said, "but she wasn't half as bloody as you might think."

The Theatre Guild has gone back to the classics again, and Mr. Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* will be acted again after many years of undeserving silence. Helen Hayes will appear in her second Shakespearian drama, Maurice Evans will add Malvolio to an already overflowing repertoire, and June Walker will speak blank verse for the first time as Maria. Remembering Miss Walker's past performances as a comedienne, she and Sir Toby will undoubtedly steal the show. The production is directed by Margaret Webster, whose experience with Shakespeare is by now complete.

We are pleased that the Guild has revived William Saroyan's *Time of Your Life* for its out-of-town subscription audiences. This will serve as an auspicious reminder of the days before the daring young man fell off the flying trapeze. We needn't tell you that this play is a masterpiece. Mr. Saroyan has previously done so.—SOCRATOTLE.

CONTRIBUTORS

SCOTT BUCHANAN (*The War and the College*) has been the Dean of St. John's College since the summer of 1937. He had been a member of the Committee on the Liberal Arts at the University of Chicago with President Stringfellow Barr and several others of the present faculty during the previous year. Before this Mr. Buchanan had taught philosophy at the University of Virginia, the College of the City of New York and Harvard. He had also been associated with Everett Dean Martin as Assistant Director of the People's Institute in New York.

Mr. Buchanan studied at Amherst, where he later taught Greek; Balliol College, Oxford, and Harvard. He is the author of two books: *Possibility* and *Poetry and Mathematics*.

A. GRAHAM CAREY, who designed *Trivium's* cover, is a partner in the firm of John Stevens in Newport, Rhode Island, which has practised designing and carving of lettering and ornament since 1705. Mr. Carey has also been an architect and silversmith. With John Howard Benson, he is the author of *The Elements of Lettering*, a discussion of the theoretical, practical and historical elements of that craft. Mr. Carey lectured at St. John's during the first year of the program on medieval craftsmanship.

CHARLES GLENN WALLIS (*Two Poems from Charles Baudelaire*) is the Editor of St. John's College. He was graduated from the University of Virginia in 1936, and was the youngest member of the Committee on the Liberal Arts at the University of Chicago during 1936-37. Coming to Annapolis with other members of this Committee in 1937, Mr. Wallis immediately set about translating some

of the books that were to be used in the St. John's Program. With other members of the faculty, he has translated those great books which are either out of print, or those which had not been previously published in English. Mr. Wallis has also made new translations of works which had been done before in our language. His translation of Plato's *Meno*, the dialogue that is most intensely studied in the Greek tutorials in the freshman year at St. John's, was published by the College last spring. The first four books of Aristotle's *Nature* and *The Fifth Ennead* of Plotinus have also been newly translated by Mr. Wallis.

Among the books he has translated for the first time into English are St. Bonaventure's *Reduction of Arts to Theology*; *On Light* by Robert Grosseteste; *On the Revolutions of the Spheres* of Copernicus; and Kepler's *Epitome of Astronomy*. Each of these books has been made available in mimeographed form for students at St. John's College, although copies may be bought by persons not in the College.

Mr. Wallis' translations of Copernicus and Kepler are soon to be published by Random House.

Two Poems from Charles Baudelaire

UN VOYAGE A CYTHERE

Like a bird my heart rose up in joyful flight
and soared in liberty above the shrouds.
The boat rolled on 'neath skies unmarred by clouds
like an angel drunken on the radiant sunlight.

What is that sad dark island?—Cythera's strand:
how well our songs and legends tell its joys:
banal eldorado for aged playboys:
observe it: all in all, rather poor land.

—Isle of the heart: holidays, billets-doux,
the ghost of Venus in her arrogant bloom
floats o'er your waters like an old perfume,
charging our minds with love,—and langor too.

Sweet island of green myrtles and brown flowers,
always in honor held by every nation,
where sighs of hearts in loving adoration
roll like the fragrance from roseladen bowers

or like a dovecote cooing eternally:
—Cythera had become but desert land,
where only shrill cries troubled the stones and sand.
And yet a singular object caught my eye:

no sculptured temple shaded by tall trees
where the young priestess, cherishing her flowers,
walked on, her body burnt by secret powers,
half-opening her dress to the cool breeze:

In following the shoreline rather closely
(our white sails caused the seabirds mild alarms)
we saw a gallows stretching out three arms
like a cypress, blackly separate from the sky.

Ferocious carrion birds perched on their prey
destroyed with rage a corpse now over-ripe.
Each thrust his foul beak, like a monstrous drain pipe,
into each bleeding morsel of this decay.

There were holes for eyes. And from the overflowing
belly, the heavy bowels spilt on the thighs.
His executioners, gorged on their hideous prize,
had absolutely gelded him with their pecking.

A pack of brutes, with muzzles lifted for
his feet, competed ravenously for the feast.
Amid them raged one even huger beast
like an executive among his corps.

Cythera's dweller, son of a sky so blue,
how silently you suffered those insults
in expiation for your infamous cults
and sins that have denied the grave to you.

Corpse-clown, your sorrows are my own: I felt
—at sight of your limbs dangling wretchedly—
like a long vomit, rise up from my belly
the gall and sorrows my past years had dealt.

With you, poor devil of too dear memory,
I suffered every beak and grinding jaw
of stabbing ravens, panthers with sharp claw
that loved to lacerate my flesh and me.

The sky was lovely, and how calm the sea!
But all I saw was blood and blackness there.
Alas! For as in a shroud heavy and bare,
my heart lay buried in this allegory.

Nothing found upright in your island, Venus,
but an ideal gallows where my image sways....
Give me the strength and courage, Lord, to gaze
on my body and my heart without disgust.

LE CYGNE

I

Andromache, I think of you!—This stream,
a weak and tarnished mirror where once shone
majestic sorrow in your widow's dream
—false Simois that with your tears has grown,

has fertilized my memory like begged storm.
O'er the new Carrousel I walked apart;
old Paris is no more (a city's form
changes more quickly than a mortal heart):

The stalls and booths of years back shape the scene:
I see what broken columns in my mind,
brown bushes, slabs by rain and slop turned green,
the paving too with glittering rubbish lined.

There used to be a zoo here, long ago.
I saw one morning when beneath the fair
chill skies Labor awakes, and when the flow
of traffic darkens through the silent air,

a swan that had escaped from his ribbed cage
scratching the pavingstones, sickly and weak,
on the hard ground trailing his white plumage.
Near a dried stream the bird opened his beak,

bathed nervously his wings in the fine dust,
and said (his heart could native waters feel),
—Rain, will you pour? Ah! thunder, will you peal?
I see this bird, (the myth is hard and just)

like man in Ovid, sometimes toward the sky,
a sky ironical and cruelly blue,
on quivering neck thrust his head avidly,
as though to God he spoke reproaches too.

II

Paris changes, yet in my melancholy
nothing has budged, scaffolds and towers and blocks,
old suburbs, all become an allegory,
and my dear memories are hard as rocks.

Before the Louvre a shape troubles me too:
I think of my great swan, his crazy style,
ridiculous and noble like an exile,
gnawed by desire forever. Then at you,

Andromache, fall'n with your husband's doom,
dumb cow beneath the hand of proud Pyrrhus,
kneeling in ecstasy by empty tomb,
Hector's widow, and wife to Helenus.

—And of the thin, consumptive negress too,
tramping through mud, seeking with haggard eye
for absent palms of superb Africa
that despite wall of the deep fog shine through;

—of those who've lost what's never found again,
 of those whose tears fall in unceasing showers,
 who suckle Grief (their cradle shewolf's den);
 of puny orphans withering like flowers!

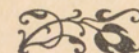
In the forest where my spirit's in exile
 Reechoes an old memory like blown horn:
 I think of sailors lost on desert isle,
 of captives, vanquished, . . . and of many more!

—C. G. WALLIS.

TRIVIUM—ON THE STAGE

Now that you have read *Trivium's* first issue, you can judge its faults and merits. If you like it—if you would like to see more of it—you may subscribe for this year by sending a check or money order to "Trivium," St. John's College, Annapolis, Md., with your name and address. Your criticisms of the magazine will be accepted gratefully.

Trivium is meant to be a good magazine, of interest to the reading public, but especially of interest to those who are following the new program at St. John's. If you belong to either class, or if you wish to read what undergraduates write in both their lighter and more serious moments, it is hoped that you are pleased with this, its initial appearance, and will witness its sought-for improvement and growth in the issues to come.



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212

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