SOUTH SEA ISLAND MAGIC

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead, who never tho’ two of you on the deck of a home-bound ship twain saw out from Fiji. One of the advantages of a Varsity education is that it leaves one with an endless collection of tales and quotations, laboriously assimilated for the delusion of examiners, whereby to furnish the ready quip or the cynical paraphrase.

I am tell of Fiji, the Isle where Romance Still Lives, the Trope Playground of the Pacific, as you see it before the eyes of the troops. What the troops said doesn’t matter. Romance was late, but beauty there was, and all the rich colour of the tropics; lofty palms in dark silhouette against a rising moon and a silver sea; the deep blue of tropic waters cut by the creamy-white line where the reef meets the eternal Pacific rollers; Indian women in height-hued saris, tilling the lands by methods old when the Pharaohs ruled the Nile; the incredible green of paddies — fields; beauty enough for those that have eyes to see, and whose soul is not too sickened with heat and labour to enjoy.

They were a good crowd, those chaps. Drawn from all walks of life, they had all been tossed into a curious uniformity that is the product of the Army. One doesn’t realise the essential decency until one sees them "down to it." The little shy kindness, the occasional offer of a smoke, that flow from these women is most marked.

In retrospect, it seems as though there was a lot of fun in Fiji, and were quite happy much of the time. Australian beer was a shilling a bottle, when supplies didn’t run out, and tobacco was cheap. Our chief trouble was boredom. In the absence of an enemy, Army life is apt to pall. Sava was small and the white population rather exclusive, and once the glamour had worn off we found it dull and dirty. The natives are interesting, but ethnology does not provide much entertainment for the average man; as, in short, it is not a native place.

Of the three fighting services, the Air Force demands the highest educational qualifications from its recruits, and a high percentage of university men enter this service. Many of them have gained commissions, many been on operations over England, and now are training for the Far East. Some have been on garrison duties, some in R.A.E.C. work with the Quebec staff, some in the various technical units. There are V.U.C. men in the training of New Zealand, Canada, and Belgium. Among the familiar names are those of Les Cundall, Lloyd Stubbins, Alex Hilder (now making an excellent recovery from his injuries), John Curnow, Jim Croxton (doing meteorological work on a Pacific island), Kingi Tahiwi, Bill Austin, Bruce Drummond, and Athol Howarth.

Canada is quite a reasonable place. But I do miss the mountains. Admittedly the Rockies are of the highest order. We have nothing in New Zealand to equal them with their different-hued strata all running horizontal. There was not much snow on them when we passed through, and I was rather glad of that, as snow is only white anyway! —Flint-Offer L. Stubbery.

In addition to her men serving overseas, V.U.C. has numbers of students and ex-students who are stationed in the British Armies in Europe. Science students are working for the Armament on special wartime jobs — Rex Collins recently told New Zealand to do research under heavy fire. Among students recently reported overseas are: Bill Pasley, Hep. Dowies, Eric McCormick, Phil Kinnauck, Bill Smith, Stewart Wilson, and Peter Holthouse.

DRAKE, NELSON, ETC.

For a number of years no Extra-curtain went up without the blessing and supervision of C. G. Steele, who stage-managed a number of Varsity’s most successful shows. He was in the Navy now, and writes from England:

"Since leaving New Zealand I’ve had the time of my life — it’s the best rykyark I’ve ever been on. It’s a bit grim to time off only, but there are some exciting moments. The initial training in Suffolk was a glorious summer holiday; they taught us knots and splices and Navy language, and ship-rigged us up to sea in bellying-bottomed pants.

"We just have come in from six months at sea on a snappy long-range destroyer, and during the period we had only six hours’ shore leave. The packet was a tiger for work, and holds the steaming record for our flotilla. We managed to be in at most things, and took part in most of the scopes that hit the headlines of the national press.

"U.S.S.R.:

"Spent two months in Russia — had Christmas Day at Murmansk with a temperature of 11° below zero. We did a trip around at Archangel, and had a week ashore there. It’s a pretty bleak part of the world, with the sea as far as the eye can see. All wooden buildings of solid good construction, electrically powered, and motor-cars; broad streets, patrolled by dashing Consouks, who gallop up to you with revolvers and swords and tassels and all. No young men about; all at the front. Lots of women guards, complete with rifle and bayonet, on sentry duty, and women working everywhere. They tackle some heavy jobs in the timber line, and appeared to us to be almost down near the beast of burlac line.

"Have been into a couple of fjords in Norway, and had plenty of smurks at Fokke-Wulf and other miscellaneous old bodies, and chased smurks all over the Atlantic. The blockes on my ship were a pretty tough bunch, and life on our mess deck was as colourful as anything Eugene O’Neill ever moved into a play."

I had these comments first-hand from a Varsity Officer, R.A.F., who spent several months with Russian troops in Iran: "Armament and discipline — wonderful; discipline — very good; morale — the best anywhere. Evidently these blokes believe that something better to fight for than we see led-to-be-lieve." —Rt. John Love.
TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

Tohruk has fallen, the Commons are in revolt, Sebastopol is besieged, a New War Administration controls New Zealand, the Chinese have made important gains, Mr. Churchill is in Washington, the Headline News from London, a Second Front in 1942. Against this background I am writing a few lines to Victoria's many students overseas. This issue of "Salient" is about yourselves, whether you are in Egypt, Syria, Canada, or Great Britain. You may be serving in the Army, the Navy, or the Air Force. We are all eager to know how you are, where you are, and what you are doing, and the common question is, "Had any word from so and so lately?" Above all, we like to hear what you are thinking, what are your ideas, your hopes for the future.

Some, I know, would like to return to New Zealand, for they feel their homeland is in more urgent need of their services, others because danger threatens those who are near to them. New Zealand, I can assure them, is well prepared to stand any attack that may come, and has already achieved the reputation of the most mobilised dominion of the British Commonwealth. Every week we become stronger, and the additional influx of supplies from the United States will supplement New Zealand's already formidable defence forces.

And remember, fellow students overseas, that you and your comrades, wherever you strike at the Axis, are striking a blow for the defence of New Zealand, a blow for freedom and democracy. The subjugated peoples of Europe look to you for the fulfillment of the Atlantic Charter, for "that peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will ensure that the men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want."

We have implicit confidence, that despite incompetence in politicians and high commands, the day is not far distant when we will be able to raise our glasses to the victory of the United Nations and the destruction of fascism.

Friday, 17th July

Wanted

CO-OPERATION OF STUDENTS

Unless library books are returned punctually, a system of fines will be instituted.
On Coastal Defence

No battle is only the reluctant entry
And many a virtual monarch that threaten death
Betray the purpose of a nation.

No bugle blows to stir the sleeper,
But at dawn
A scattered group drains back to billet,
Heavy-eyed, and weary at the thought of day.
Yet, in the billet life springs back
Elusive from the torpor of the night,
And, in a talking corner, the rough and earth-
rich wit,
There lies, born of a common wrong,
The pledge of a new day bursting out of wintry night.

No Man's Land

Sir,—Surely the Alcoholic Reform Association is too modest in its plat-
form. I suggest that they further
(a) urge the Government to reduce the fizzle content of lemonade,
(b) urge the Government to remove the excise duty on lemonade,
(c) urge the Government to allow publicans to sell both.
Sir,—the Light Fantastic

Gentle jollity was the motif of the year's second tea dance, with respec-
tibility again triumphant, though not in quite such a depressing form as
previously. With perhaps one or two exceptions all normally spent the afternoon in an exemplary manner, and many a stout waif was weighted and strost treated during the two hours and more the dance lasted. Boys and girls were to be seen talking to each other quite freely, which in the first place was an improvement on the previous tea
dance, and in the second place showed how the artificial barriers of conven-
tion can be broken down by the blessings of higher education. It also showed that a common room would be neither a toger of inhibited silence nor a dive of doublet revenge.

The number present comfortably filled the women's common room, and
was comfortably filled in the cañ, during the interval. Considering everything, the dance smacked more of a well-managed drawing room than a Broadway hot spot, but it was fun for all that. Such evenings would draw dancers if held every fortnight, and it's more than likely that the boys and deb's and so on are not so well supported. It's worth a try, you who haven't been along to a tea dance. Remember, boys, 'Varsity girls are not so unreasonable as crouching behind piles of books on the anatomy of cats, etc., etc., etc., there are still some New Zealand boys about.

TEA DANCE
SATURDAY, 17 JULY
3—7.30 p.m.
Proceeds Student's Union

No Man's Land

Sir,—Surely the Alcoholic Reform Association is too modest in its plat-
form. I suggest that they further
(a) urge the Government to reduce the fizzle content of lemonade,
(b) urge the Government to remove the excise duty on lemonade,
(c) urge the Government to allow publicans to sell both.

Sir,—The letter from Orm
Served well to inform
What students are thinking
Of attacks on their drinking.
Yours, etc.,
STRAIGHT

Dear Madam,

In the first issue for this year you declared that two inches of valu-
able news space with the command "Write for 'Salient'." There is no request at all—just by a typical totalitarian fanatic's fascism.

The second issue a grey editorial appeared on Army Education. I replied early in May. No letters were published in the third copy, probably due to the terrible swoop on "Oxford" and Mr. Hilts.

The fourth issue again demands articles, this time with the words "Salient in Your Paper" squeezed in—a little compromise on the part of the recent honours on "Salient" staff. There are three policy letters, occupying eight inches, to the Editor which in effect say it's time (with the exception of the last), which, strange to say, are published.

Frankly, I've a prevailingly policy of the little that's left of Salient to be—"An Organ of Student Opinion at Victoria". I will come to take it.

I will regret this step, as I feel everybody should not only "Salient," but also write for it.

Trusting that this effect will keep the egocentric and self-ish (lack of contact with students and with facts) from the communist-propagating "Salient" staff.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
J. G. READ.

It is regretted that this letter had to be abridged drastically to bring it near the 100-inch limit on letters.

Sir,—Congratulations to the Executive on scrutinising the presumptions of these Hamilton women on the secretary to the letter he wrote them, and to yourself on publishing the correspondence. Of course, the prospects of prohibition at such important female organs are good, being for many years when they returned from World War I, and would do so for ever after they had won this war. But though I hope our soldiers return to the best jobs possible, I suggest that carrying on for bootleggers is a desirable profession.

Yours, etc.,
ANTWOWSER

The Light Fantastic

Sir,—The secret's letter in your last issue—rum and raspberries on the
THREEPEACE DOWN
SPORT

HARRIERS

SORROW

A shadow of sorrow lay over the Harrier Club at the week-end last Saturday when O’ Flynn, promising member of the Club, had lost his life.

The Club was represented at Requiem Mass at the Basilica on the Saturday morning, and we hope this opportunity of again offering Frank its sympathy.

With Frank not running, and with Myles O’Connor plucked from us at short notice to go Home Guarding, the team for the inter-club race over the Dorne Cup course at Hutt Park was sadly weakened. Had Myles and I been able to turn out, we would have held high hopes of beating Scottish, but without them we were not good enough.

Giff Rowberry ran a splendid race, but, alas, was beaten. And, as the race was not for the Dorne Cup, the best of the season, so instead of being our best, he will have repeated the week-end’s affair by being beaten.

We landed a nice gap in getting twentieth, fourteenth and fourteenth places, but they were too far back to help. The rest of the green-shirted colts scrambled aimlessly through fences, splashed boisterously through pools of mud, and stumbled and lugged with equal enthusiasm and varying effectiveness. There were more of us in the first half of the placings than in the last half, anyway.

SUCOUR

For those who've been tempted to do anything between 8 and 10 of a Saturday night, I am pleased to say that this team is still in a robust state. All the boys who have been tempted to do this, I am pleased to say that this team is still in a robust state.

R. Stanley Green

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and

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THIRD

v. Miramar “It” 21-10

There had been a big day against Miramar, and deserve great credit for the way in which he kept on the board against them, and Paki, Maralister and Cooper made the most of their chances. At halt, Roberts was very sound, and was in his usual form, helping him off the mark. Paki tended to hang on a bit too long, but was in fine form this time.

It was a pity the team drew the bye in the next round, as it is getting to settle down now, and in spite of changing personnel, is playing good football.

Tramming Club

Three weeks ago we held our second Saturday race for the year ostensibly to the Lower Whakatiki River, but as the “best laid plans”—we went a little awry; this perhaps can be accounted for by the fact that not even the leader knew quite how to reach “those pleasant surroundings.” However the sun shone through and we had an excellent tramp from Moonshine over the hills to Parema. We really are rather proud of our day’s “winter crossing.”

The following week a party of ten got a taste of real Taranta tramping on the Hutt Forks-Quoin-Alpa round trip. After sweltering over the Hutt Forks and freezing in the intense cold on the tops, the party was quite ready for enormous meals in Alpha Hut, to the accompaniment of “The Virgin Sturgeon” and similar choice items in tramping tradition. No one will forget sleeping out in the snow at 3,600 feet, or searching in the mist for the way off the summit of Alpha—any more than the sight of Ruth Fletcher and Mary Mackery jammed into one sleeping bag, or Douglas Yen’s critique on women students, or the little poker school in the Upper Hutt last week. A day’s day in returning caused more consternation among ill-informed parents than discomfit to the trampers.

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