

Salient

An Organ of Student Opinion at Victoria College, Wellington, N.Z.

VOL. 2, No. 1

WELLINGTON, MARCH 8, 1939

Price: Threepence

SAWS FOR THE GEESE

Freshers are notoriously bewildered when they enter Victoria's portals; and it is "Salient's" duty to guide them and assist them in their first few months. We realise, however, that our capabilities are limited—that there are greater men than our staff, whose advice might be welcomed by freshers.

Hearken, ye freshers, to their words of wisdom:

PROFESSOR SHELLEY

If I were bold enough to do it and foolish enough to think it would have any effect, I should say to freshers something like this: Don't be too fresh—that's the shortest cut to a most lamentable staleness. Remember that you do not attend a University—you are the University, and only so far as you identify yourself with it, with its traditions and ideals, its work and play, can the University be of any use to you or you to the University. Bernard Shaw says: "In Heaven . . . you live and work instead of playing and pretending. . . . In Heaven" there is "no other joy but contemplation"; and much the same might be said of a University. A fresher has the chance of finding his Heaven in a University—he has an equal chance of drifting into a veritable hell. But then—that's the sort of thing Shaw said in 1903, and I can hardly expect the fresher of 1939 to think it is worth more than a passing smile, so there is no purpose in my continuing. The fresher must live his own life, and no one can teach him: how to live with any hope of success—all one can do is to warn him that life has a bad habit of escaping when one thinks to grasp it most securely, like a handful of water when one closes one's fist.

All good luck to the freshers, and may they be as alive when they leave the University as they are now they are entering it.

WILL APPLETON

At the outset I would state that the number of hours which can be spared each week for physical and mental recreation is just as important as the hours devoted to study. There is no golden rule but work—steady and intelligent work is the main ingredient for success.

Lack of composure and want of confidence in the examination room are probably responsible for more failures than a deficiency in actual knowledge of the subjects. While concentrated and persistent study are essential, the cultivation of a degree of self-confidence is also necessary.

To pursue any vocation in solitude and isolation is at the best a depressing business, and nothing is better at the beginning of one's University career than to have opportunities of meeting with those who are fired with the same ambitions and aspirations. Success in a profession can best be obtained in the society of those who are engaged or who are likely to be engaged in similar pursuits.

Education which aims only at passing examinations is incomplete. The ethical aspect of professional life—its traditions, its observance of principles of right conduct, its progress in adopting itself to the ever-changing conditions which necessitate new outlooks, all form part of that education which makes a good citizen. The early instincts which are formed by students of steady application, of thoroughness, and of resource, are the attributes which in their observance will tell in the long run rather than the highest places secured in examinations which in themselves do not afterwards always bring that success which such early achievements promised.

While it is a good plan to aim at success in examinations, this should not be the sole and ending purpose of an education, which should never cease, and in which other things enter which hastily acquired knowledge in itself never gives. The foundation of life—in professional and indeed in all occupations—is character, and environment in education has no little influence in its development.

A MESSAGE FROM MR. SAVAGE

"Salient" has pleasure in presenting a message to freshers specially written for this paper by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. M. J. Savage. Study this article carefully. It contains more epigrammatic wisdom, more common-sense subtle advice, than any similar message we have seen.

The staff of "Salient," and, we are sure, the whole University, is deeply grateful to Mr. Savage for his pointed and unforgettable remarks.

I appreciate the opportunity of contributing a message to the student journal "Salient."

Although it is the privilege of age to give advice, it is the prerogative of youth not to heed it, so I shall be content with offering a sincere message of goodwill to those of Victoria University College students who are entering upon a University course. Their youthfulness and opportunity are to be envied, and if they could have my experience they would know the importance of making the most of the splendid chances that have come their way.

The imperfections which mar society to-day will be removed by the development of better institutions and by a clearer social outlook on the part of individuals. University trained men and women have greater opportunities than most of acquiring the knowledge and habits of thought which make for leadership in the broadest sense of the term.

May I say with the best goodwill that, unfortunately, the possession of high academic degrees is not always accompanied by a well-developed social conscience or even breadth of mind. Education sometimes appears to be very narrow. I have known many intelligent people who have had no University training at all, and yet have been worth knowing, and I have met others whose great cleverness and learning

were only equalled by their cocksure ignorance of the things that matter.

I cannot imagine any greater quality in man or woman than that of a broad mind always open to new ideas. With that, of course, must go understanding and exact knowledge. It ought to be reasonable to say that these qualities should be acquired with greater facility by those who have undergone a University training.

The Government's policy in respect of education is simple and clear enough to be understood even by professors who have become politically-minded. We aim at making New Zealand a competent nation in all arts and crafts instead of keeping it in part as a remote farm of the United Kingdom and using the remainder as an emporium of overseas manufactures.

Development means a full use of all the talents of the people.

We are trying to build in this country a better form of society, and we need the help of highly-trained and educated men and women. I would like to close this message, therefore, with the appeal that students should equip themselves to the fullest extent for the great tasks that will be theirs in the years ahead.

M. J. SAVAGE,

Prime Minister.

ENTRANCE OF THE LITTLE PAWNS

Hundreds of freshers, big ones and little ones, male ones and female ones, poured into the gym on last Friday night to be welcomed. And they were welcomed, right royally, by Mr. Edgley, Professor Kirk in a dinner jacket, Messrs. Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and numerous entertainers.

President Edgley, nervously licking his lips, delivered one of the most enjoyable speeches in his career as President. He started and finished in a benign and fatherly manner, as befitted such an important person, but what might vulgarly be called the guts of his speech, was excellent. He made a number of rude remarks about the freshettes and horse-troughs and several improper suggestions re Victoria Hostel. He stated that he had watched the freshettes with great interest since their entry at V.U.C., and was sure everyone was going to have a good time this year.

He recommended freshers to beware of the little Professor with an eye-shade who tapped on a typewriter and called lady students "Mademoiselle"; and recommended law students to study Gaelic before attending Professor Adamson's lectures.

The usual injunctions to take part in College activities and club functions; the usual introductions to the old students, such as Messrs. Scotney, Wild, and Hott; the usual hopes that it would be a long time before the freshers passed their Degrees so that they would be with us for a considerable time; a little blah and a magnificent peroration; and Mr. Edgley bowed, licked his lips, and gracefully retired.

Messrs. Tweedledum and Tweedledee, after selling a number of Glee Club song books, led Extrav. and other songs in their inimitable style, and the freshers responded nobly. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the function, which was advertised "for freshers only," was the fact that non-freshers preponderated.

The old favourites in "Varsity entertainment then took the stage (which lacked a curtain) and gave of their best to the assembled multitude. Paul Taylor, looking pretty as usual, delivered "Treasure Trove," accompanied by the composer, who later sang "Josephine" and other traditional V.U.C. numbers. Ron Meek presented a mystifying programme of magical effects, including a remarkable demonstration of telepathy with a pack of cards. He was lucky in his choice of an assistant—none other than Mr. Guy Biles, who later took part in an excellent humorous sketch.

And then the lower half of the Gym vomited its contents upstairs; the piano was thumped by relays of musicians; the usual large knot of males gathered round the entrances and looked longingly at the blushing wall-flowers; the Lambeth Walk was walked and the Destiny Waltz was waltzed.

As we write, the Lambeth Walk is being danced. A noise-stamping and "ois" is endangering the foundations of the Gym; one despairs for the future of the dance.

Still, everybody's having a good time.

BROOKIE.

"And what do you think of this year's freshers, Mr. Brook?"

"They look a jolly fine lot, I think. We're going to have a really good year."

"And have you any advice for the freshers, Mr. Brook?"

"They will find me ready at any time to help them as long as they don't step on my toes—and if they do, then look out."

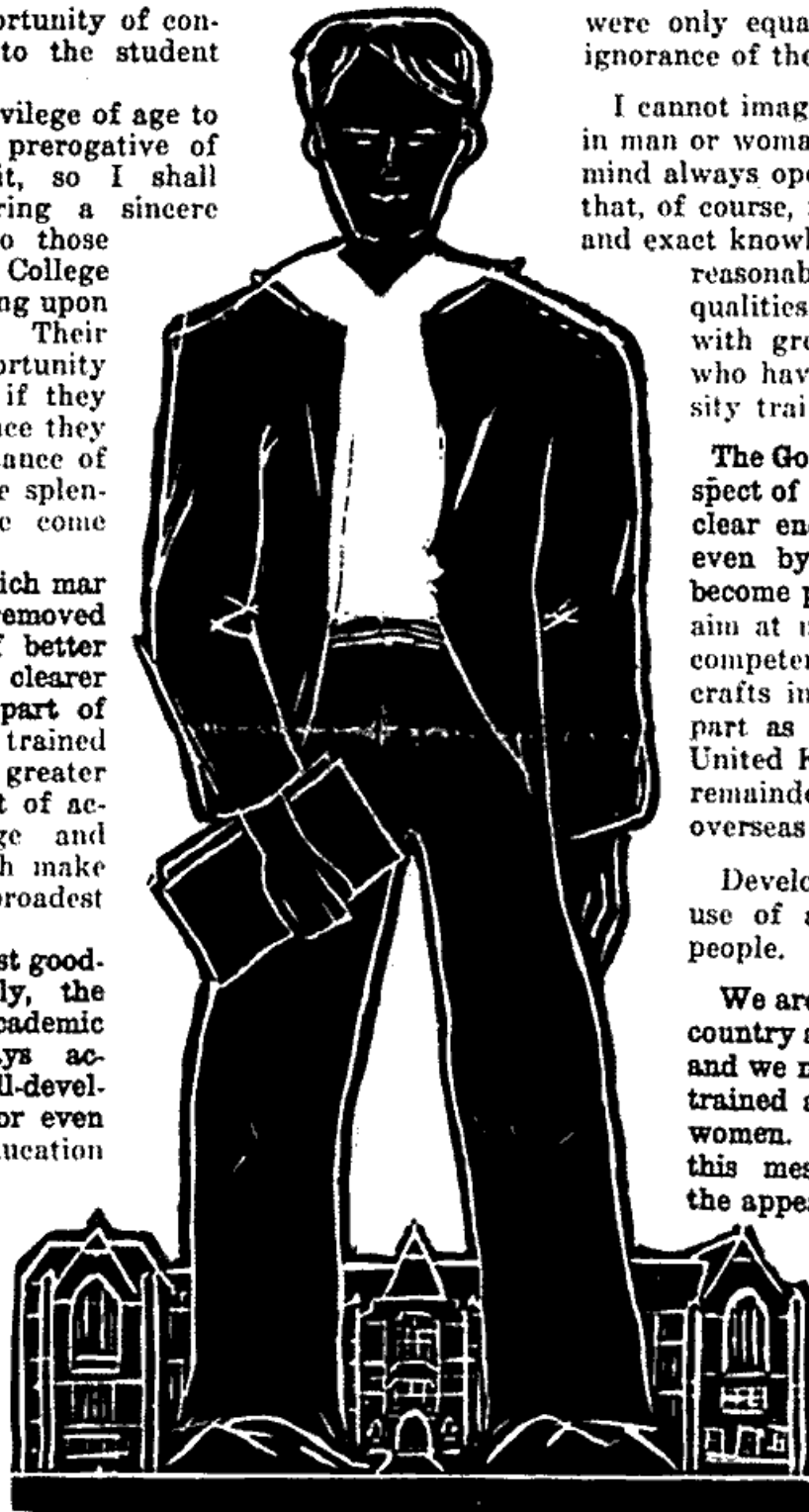
"And the girls—what do you think of them?"

"From the look of them it seems as if we might at last get a few ladies in the place."

"Thank you, Mr. Brook."

"You're welcome."

Any person under the age of thirty, who, having any knowledge of the existing social order, is not a revolutionist, is an inferior.—Bernard Shaw.



"Salient" wandered round last week among the bashful-looking groups of freshers and tried to gather their first impressions of Victoria. Most of them were somewhat shy and hadn't a great deal to say, but with a little probing and a little guessing a few interesting sidelights on our alma mater were collected:—

A volatile female with thick glasses and an academic stoop complained hotly of the lack of signs for freshers.

"Like a lot of lost sheep in a slaughterhouse."

Then a tall, quiet swain: "It looks to me like a place of great learning and all the students look very scholarly."

"Salient" endorsed this, but the oracle went on to say that it was also an unfriendly place and had an air of "grim foreboding."

Next a disillusioned youth: "Not much good. Got a patch on A.U.C."

A young lady: "Well, it's given me a headache. The outside I thought was quite good but the inside is worse."

Another disillusioned one: "It's got no medical faculty and the art students are allowed to mix with the science students. They even go into the science wing. Now, down in Otago—"

Here we stopped.

A Wellington College old boy:

NOW WE KNOW!
"The students are unimpressive and the building is worse than the West School Wellington College, and that's pretty bad."

Innovator: "Why don't you have female professors—young and pretty ones?"

Ditto: "Your main building's all right, but your gym, and other rooms over there are frightful, they're not even clean."

Young Hopeful: "I think it's got a glorious old-fashioned atmosphere of learning about it—it seems steeped in erudition. I think I'm going to have an awfully jolly time up here."

Home Science? "It's dreadfully dusty and has a frightfully stale smell. The students all need a brush up and be made to look smart."
"The building is awful; the climb up the hill is hot and much too long.

and the students are nuts." So there.

Here's something better: "I find it very friendly and interesting. The students are a fine crowd."

"I hate Gothic architecture, so I don't like the line of your building, but it is much more congenial and friendly than I expected."

Terse Comment: "The men's common room is pretty good, but it's not a patch on their lavatory. The lavatory's the best part of the whole show."

Criticism: "I think it is ridiculous that they should close the common room in the afternoon when there are people here to use it."

"That goes for me too."

Turmoil: "I'm all mixed up, don't know where to go or what to do, very hot and bumped everywhere."

"I'm scared stiff. It's like a museum or asylum or something."

"The library's like a morgue."

Supercilious Head Prefect: "Is this the intelligentsia?"

Lastly a completely biased Head Prefect: "Well, I think the physiques of the men are awful. You're a lot of weeds. And the girls are not up to much. All together I think the joint's lousy!"

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AND TOMORROW COMES

In the world of paper and machines that surrounds us, nothing is more obvious than its shabby and wishful thinking. We live in an age in which values and criteria are in a process of rapid and active decay.

On every hand stand the most blatant absurdities and injustices. We live in a world of human devices. A world thick with vested interests, where privilege is backed by power.

To succumb is easy, to accept things as we find them regardless of the end to which the logic of events must lead.

Today opportunism offers a blood-price as never before. The need for clear, untrammelled thinking grows more urgent than ever.

Last year "Salient" adopted a policy of deliberate and active concern with the issues of the world outside the University. And despite its slender circulation did something to make the readers it encountered aware of what these issues were.

During 1939 this policy will be continued.

"Send out, 'Salient,' the swift satiric point

To smart the sluggish mind awake.

While Freedom anywhere in bonds is pent

No compromise with falseness make.

Those freed to-day to-morrow forth must leap

Some further outpost there to take and keep."

It is hoped that this year, even more than last, students will use "Salient" to say what they think. Let it be said once again that the sole qualification of any article, necessary to ensure its publication, is its readableness. Any well-expressed opinion will be printed.

The University, above all else, should be the home of freedom and intellectual honesty. In the past it has failed more than once. Let us determine that while we are responsible it will never fail again.

GOD DEFEND NEW ZEALAND

The preposterous, the fatuous, the bigoted and the absurd are everywhere visible to the "seeing eye." No less, in this Britain of the southern seas.

As every newspaper reader and radio listener knows, some fresh extravagance is met with every day.

It is intended by the staff of "Salient" to collect these lapses week by week (under the heading of "God Defend New Zealand") that others may enjoy them. To pillory and never to please will be our aim, in the hope that too much light will dissipate the thoughts of the egregious. If such a scheme as this is to fulfil its purpose, everyone must make a duty of helping. Everyone who reads this is asked whenever he comes across a suitable imbecility to send it in—without delay.

Strung out below are some examples:

"Lionel Barrymore in his role of the crotchety old crippled surgeon with a tongue like a rapier covering a heart of gold"

—Alec Regan,

Manager, Theatre Majestic.

In an Open Letter to the cinema-goers of Wellington.

"The constable, who was a member of the London Book Club, selected 'The Decameron' at random from the shelves of the library in Auckland on October 14. The book was composed of 100 so-called stories, most of which were of a very filthy nature . . . we claim it could only have a very immoral and mischievous tendency on readers."

—"Evening Post," 25/2/39.

"Tender advertisements will be found on Page 4."

—Columnar insertion in the "Dominion"

"I know a little bit about Victoria College. There were communists at Victoria College when I was there, and there are ten times as many there now," said the National Party Candidate, Mr. Will Appleton, speaking at Roseneath last night. "The spirit of Communism is permeating our scholastic system from the professors down," Mr. Appleton added. "I have had positive knowledge of this. But what do you expect when the head of the Education Department, the Hon. P. Fraser, is an absolute socialist?"

—"Evening Post," 7/10/38.

"Now the symbol for the year 1939 is the materialist or 'Fool,' indicated by a blind man walking on the edge of a precipice straight towards the open jaws of a crocodile, while overhead the Sun is eclipsed."

—"Appro" Year Book, 1939

TRAMPING CLUB

Every now and then when one is spending a quiet Sunday in some secluded valley, one sees peculiar creatures striding along burdened by enormous packs. These people are called Trampers, and they inhabit all sorts of inaccessible places like muddy streams, bush-clad ranges, cold rivers and snowy mountains. Men Trampers perspire and women Trampers glow; and all members of the species invariably look hot and uncomfortable.

And yet they always seem to enjoy it.

The best way to become a trumper, and to enjoy tramping, is to come out regularly with the Victoria College Tramping Club. And if you haven't already done any tramping, you should come out on the Sunday trips, which are usually very easy.

And all those really interested—and those who are merely vaguely interested—should attend the Annual General Meeting, which will take place in a week or so. The formal business will take only a few minutes, and then Mr. A. G. Bagnall, one of the most prominent members of the Club, is giving an illustrated lantern lecture on tramping in the Orongorongo and Tararua—the chief habitat of Wellington trampers. You will thus see pictures of places which will be visited by the Club during the winter tramping season.

And if you like skiing, or want to learn to ski, the Club will cater for you. At least two skiing trips are held during the year—all gear provided.

So, if you want to take part in the most healthy sport of all, and do something really valuable in the weekends—Join the V.U.C. Tramping Club!

"Anticipating a great demand for fancy dresses, the London office of the New Zealand Meat Producers' Board circularised the whole of the retail meat trade in Britain offering to supply red, white and blue crepe paper on which was printed in gold the phrase, 'New Zealand Lamb.'"

—"Evening Post"

We can only examine in respect of the more superficial qualities on acquisitions. We cannot examine for temper, patience, sagacity, daring or any of the more vital and deeper characteristics. And so with professorships—fancy a professorship in any one of these things! If one wanted to encourage vice one should found a professorship of virtue.

—Samuel Butler.

Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and conueth therein, he not being a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

—Epistle of James.

AMENDE HONORABLE

To freshers, we offer our apologies. Our apologies for the rebuff of the first two or three days—the inhuman emptiness of the halls.

In other years they were bustling with students, old and new, and there right in the doorway, where it should be, was a table loaded with handbooks and helpfulness.

If common-sense and kindness return what you went through this year will remain peculiar to 1939.

Let us hope that Friday night in the Gym, was something like a compensation.

"Salient" Points

The attention of all students is drawn to the following points:—

1. The staff will be available on Thursday evening of each week from 7 p.m. onwards.
2. Articles and other contributions must be in the hands of the Editor by 7.30 p.m. on Thursday prior to issue.
(Boxes for the receiving of contributions are being placed in the men's and women's common rooms.)
3. All letters written to "Salient" must be limited to 300 words and must be in the hands of the Editor by 7.30 p.m. on the Friday prior to issue.
4. Contributors are asked to write on reporters' pads if possible, and to use one side of the paper only.
5. All articles, letters, etc., must bear the signature or initials of the writer. Pseudonyms are permissible on the literary page.

MUSIC

Amongst those newly arrived at the University there must be many who have "a reasonable good ear" in music and would want to keep it. For them the \$2,500 Carnegie Gramophone and its 1,000 records will be an undeniable attraction. In its files they will find sonatas, fugues, symphonies, suites—a selection, protean and catholic, from Palestrina to Stravinsky.

Later in the year, when the Biology Block is completed, a special music room is to be set up.

Then then we must make the most of the inconvenience of lecture room recitals. To this end a meeting of all those "sentimentally disposed to harmony" will be held on Thursday, March 9th, at 8 p.m. in Room A.2.

Please make this a matter of personal concern. Unless an enthusiastic and energetic roster of students is gathered the gramophone and the opportunities it offers will never be realized to their fullest extent.

WEATHERCOCK

MOTIONS PRESENTED FOR DISCUSSION AT THE UNIVERSITY DEBATES LAST YEAR.

That the British Government's Foreign Policy is Pro-Fascist.—Carried.

That the Professorial Board should allow discussions on Sex and Religion.—Carried.

That Medical Services should be Socialised.—Carried.

That New Zealand should institute a System of Compulsory Military Training.—Lost.

That the cause of General Franco Deserves the Support of this House.—Lost.

That Socialism provides genuine hope for the future of Civilisation.—Carried.

High Noon

Silence is fear
fear that lies trembling in the air
while silence stands alone
and is afraid.

Silence fills the sky
blue depths that fade
into far space beyond all thought
and yet, and yet—
trivial sounds of life are here
eternal
unafraid:

tea-spoons tinkling on a copper tray
and water dripping
rhythmic, cool;
a girl's slow laugh
that falls upon the day
unasked, unthought
and cracks a thousand memories
that lie
within the shivering pool
of days long past
glimpses of days of tawny jade
and jet
all shadow-tit,
a fragrant tom
that falls in silence through the
lingering trees . . .
Silence is fear
and silence is afraid.

