

# ON DIT

Official Organ of the Adelaide University  
Students' Union

"Doth sometimes counsel take  
And sometimes tea"

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## EDITORIAL.

"The solid mass of us are very patient," writes Basil plaintively, and adds, "But sometimes we do wish that the Lawn were a swimming pool." What has provoked this rage of destructive fury about one of our best institutions we cannot guess, but we are sure that Basil is the enemy.

It is precisely of this solid sensible mass that those who are concerned for the standards of University life complain. It is so sensible. It is so surely a dull, stodgy mass, unenlivened by wit, irresponsibility, or a perception of values. Worse, it is parochial, and despises what it has not learned to understand, the cultural life of other and more advanced peoples.

It would really be saddening, were it not so funny, to think of the solid, sensible Basil still clinging to his nineteenth century prejudices in this vastly exciting twentieth century world. There is a stir and life in the world of to-day which is well-nigh intoxicating to an alert and perceptive mind. New movements in Art, Politics, Religion, and Thought, stirring the dust of old prejudices and beliefs, revealing unsuspected beauty in the realm of Mind. All this to Basil is the cant of Culture!

His politics, too, simply reeking with the cant of the "toiling masses." Basil talks to navvies in trains precisely like a nineteenth century Liberal; he does not join the Labour Club to grapple strenuously with the knobby facts of real social advance.

He can afford to be sympathetic, precisely because he does not intend to do anything at all, merely to be sympathetic. Well, well. At any rate Basil has shown quite clearly that the real division of opinion is not between the Cultured and the Christians, but between the solid sensible mass and the intelligent minority, who accept standards and ideas unsuspected by that dull and somewhat unintelligent mass.

### Note to Contributors.

The Editors would like to receive contributions for "On Dit" on Mondays.

Please write your notes over the week end, on one side of the paper, as legibly as possible, and put them in Box "B".

Poems and Plays are not excluded.

Eds.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Imagine my embarrassment, after pluming myself on your exquisite editorial endorsement of my blunt remarks, to find myself offered, by one, a pot of beer and an anti-religious society, and by another, reproofs so various that I can hardly get them clear enough to answer.

(1) God forbid that any University man should enjoy A. A. Milne.

(2) I find no mystery in such a realist as Van Gogh. Mystery recedes before knowledge. I hate omelettes, but have seen real sunsets that looked a damn sight worse.

(3) "Snob," "highbrow," "cant of culture" are words I hoped never to hear used in a University. The first two terms are subjective in meaning. Leave the phrase to Bolsheviks and the panderpress.

(4) The world cannot be bettered save by the educated. I never listen to the political pronouncements of navvies, and I would, without compunction, stick a pin in the working-woman's baby.

Now, I am but a weak woman with a taste for light wine and sound scholarship. I will join no anti-religious society, because I don't see things in those proportions. I would found a society where no one would speak if they had nothing to say. Even a mute communion round the punch-bowl would be preferable to bright chatter. After all, how few of us are competent to criticize works of art. Still, it is not impossible to acquire taste by study.

By the way, why are we necessarily bridge players and social lights? I only went to one party in my life, and then, like the small boy, I said, "I wish I was to home, and this party was to hell." However, I believe in everything that gives grace and beauty to life.

Really, Basil seems such a sad, serious lad that I mean to watch out, and when I see him going about solidly and sensibly in a mass, I shall lure him to the Richmond, offer him a Martini, and read him Ronald Firbank and Edith Sitwell. Can't you see us discussing the phrase: "Turns the milk's weak mind"? You will record his embarrassment in the next issue. Yours for viti-culture, N. B. SAINT.

Dear Sir,—In the course of an otherwise sound letter, B.S. makes slighting references to free thinkers, "Bolshies," and Atheists. I am aware that Shelley got into trouble in the bad old days for an independent essay on Atheism, but when I hear Atheism referred to as a disadvantage, I must enter a hearty protest. Leaving Bolsheviks to act, and Freethinkers to think for themselves, I think it is up to you to show your impartiality and give Atheism a show. It is an ancient and most honourable creed; ancient, because it dates back to the days of Democritus and Socrates; honourable, because your Atheist, disregarding the mugitations of the common herd, and throwing off the hypocrisy of convention, sails boldly over the seas of Metaphysics, and thinks for himself. Moreover, before Christianity was even heard of, freethinkers had denied the existence of what we contemptuously term "pagan gods." All through the centuries ever since, the creed has had the most eminent supporters. Paine, Holyoake,

Bradlaugh, and Ingersoll are among those who suffered, from cant and hypocrisy, for the right of free thought. In more modern times, too, the creed has lacked not most sincere disciples. Thinkers as famous as Feuerbach, La Mettrie, Van Holbach, and Flourens have set out the doctrine with almost irresistible logic. According to Feuerbach "it is as clear as day that there is no God." Says Flourens, "Hatred of God is the beginning of wisdom, and if mankind would make true progress, it must be on the basis of Atheism; our enemy is God." Reference to their works will furnish all support necessary, and in Russia the doctrine is being put to the test along with other fundamentals.

It is ridiculous to say that Atheism is a disadvantage. Centuries of accumulated cant and mental oppression are swept away, and a new vision of life for its own sake is unfolded. For Atheism does not imply the destruction of the difference between right and wrong. In most cases the goodness of the present system is recognized, while the defiling and corrupting effects of superstition are quietly removed.

Atheism is argued in three ways. First by the dogmatic method, rightly discredited because to prove a negative in such a case implies searching the furthest corner of space. The sceptical, or agnostic view is that the finite mind of man is incapable of ascertaining whether there is a God or no. Finally, it is argued that the evidence for Theism commonly advanced is inadequate to prove a case.

After nearly 20 centuries of conventional Christianity, what have we to show for it? The greatest war of history still holds the nations firmly in its steel talons. A wave of unprecedented despair and pessimism has spread everywhere, public morality is at its lowest ebb. A great point in Christianity, the Prohibition policy, is in the ludicrous position of being sustained by the racketeers, the very men whose activities it was to curb! Worse, International selfishness and distrust, expressed by tariff barriers, and refusal to disarm, still continue to grow, while the Ottawa Conference, in defiance of the "all men are brothers" dogma, threatens to intensify the trouble, and is supported by the great majority of Christians. In what way is our lot better than that of the real natives of this country, the human beings whom it pleases us to dub "Abos," inaccurately, too? The standard of morality of many Australian tribes is enough to make us ashamed of the West. Such perfect happiness and content is achieved without any of the "benefits" of the white race. Strangely enough, these true Australians are practical Atheists!

Modern Atheism is a challenge to Christianity to prove its right to pride of place, and, just as Galileo was tortured by the theologians when he dared to prove the rotundity of the earth, so now Atheists are scorned by those who are incapable of doing the most essential thing—thinking for themselves. Yours, etc.,

ATHEIST.

The Editor, "On Dit."

Dear Sir,—I feel I must support the views put forward by your correspondent, "Basil Jackson," in your last issue. He has certainly spoken the truth in the last part of his letter. Why is it that certain persons, apparently affluent, should be able to "take" an odd subject here and there;

do no work, and parade themselves as true representatives of the University? Have they a certain sneaking desire for knowledge? Or do they hope to obtain a niche in society so-called by their connexion, however distant, with this noble seat of learning? Their money, I suppose, is as good as anybody else's to the authorities. And, after all, that is the chief consideration amongst the financial aristocracy of our city of culture.

Surely, it is not to be wondered that the world to-day is in chaos when there are people wasting good money, and which is more important, good time; and all because they have not the courage to face facts and do something. Galsworthy's white monkey sucked the juice out of the orange and then threw away the rind. Perhaps these aimless nobodies may someday find they are the rind of life.

Sir, you will pardon this outburst, but there seems a great need to-day for a truer valuation of life and all that it implies. That truer valuation, I respectfully submit, can be gained, not by strife and self-betterment to the detriment of others, but by fellowship and service. Yours faithfully,  
SILENUS.

The Editor "On Dit."

Your bright and amusing little paper has already assisted the cause of literature by having the Library opened at night, and the cause of art by bringing the S.C.M. down to earth; now is the time to assist arts students in distress. The Prince of Wales theatre is regularly selected for a parade of noxious vapours. Surgical effluvia, ranging from chloroform to the aroma of pre-war eggs, have to be struggled against before one can enter the room, and if the hardness of the forms did not offset the result of languorous lectures PLUS this new form of torture, it is probable that all would glide off into the realms of bliss. The lecturers, being behind the firing-line, remain unaffected, although surrounded by fuming retorts, beakers, and an array of apparatus which surpasses even the Mighty Atom Smasher!

Surely, in a University as fine as this, better quarters could be found, even for Arts students. Some of the fumes lately were positively poisonous; the seats are most uncomfortable, and books display an annoying tendency to slide off on to the floor. The old library was much more suitable. Students must be careful how they write to "On Dit" about this. A section of the press is itching to avenge the Atom Smashing hoax by glaring headlines such as: "UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SAY LECTURE-ROOMS SMELL FOUL." A journalist's motto, as I know from experience, is "Sensation first, truth if possible." Yours, etc.,

PER EFFLUVIUM DISCO.

[The editors modestly disclaim that they caused the Library to be opened.—Ed.]

POOR STUFF!

The Editor, "On Dit."

Sir, "On Dit" continues to keep its caudal appendage well and truly elevated. Excelsior.

I sympathize with Anita Loos in her puzzlement. And I agree with her that Mr. Cultured's letter was rather cryptic in spots. Anita may rest assured he isn't a

lawyer, an engineer, or a med. He wouldn't talk such rot if he were. Don't worry, Anita. No one really minds your basking in the sunshine, as long as you don't pinch the men's cane chairs. And don't bother about Cultured. Like Pooh-hah, he doesn't mean it. If he does, well, still don't worry.

B.S.'s silly letter indicates either abysmal ignorance or dashed bad taste. If he's trying to be clever, he's making a hash of it and displaying a very poor sense of humour, and a very irreverent one. If he's serious, he shows that he is about fifty years behind the times. To-day it is neither fashionable, clever, nor scientific to be a scoffer at religion. B.S. lets the cat out when he says he wants to rally, presumably on himself, the forces of the un-Christian oddities about the place. He's described himself to a dot. I wonder if he really knows any of the S.C.M. people? He'll find them genial enough. Koko describes the few decent people whose horizon is not limited by Adelaide, and who look for comfort somewhere else when he puts on his little list the idiot who praises with enthusiastic tone . . . every country but his own. Pity the tone of the "Varsity isn't set by the S.C.M. Better for the whole place if it were. Solomon describes B.S. when he talks of the person who says there is no God. And I'd be inclined to add to Solomon's noun a well-known adjective.

Terpsichore has my wholehearted support. I'm one of the everybodies. Blow what I look like. If Halisteresis doesn't like it, he can shut his eyes. And why should we follow shopgirls? It's a free country! Far be it from me to deery doing anything well, but we go to the refec. to enjoy ourselves, and that's what we do well.

Adolphus has my congratulations, and I advise him to stick to his shattering blonde. He's got a lot to be thankful to Herbert about for saving him from a vamp who can't even spell "callous" wrongly when she tries.

I'm sorry we are to lose Julian. His last letter is good. I have only two faults to find. He ought to have described the duel as being between the Uncultured and the Christians. And why must he, like so many of our letter writers, try to hold up as an example the raison d'etre of the women police, Shelley? Let's have no more of the blighter. But I'm pleased to see that he feels like I do about Cultured. I second him without hesitation on that score.

Now for your Editorial, Mr. Editor. Quite, quite. I too have suffered from dictators from little black books. I wonder, Mr. Editor, which of the three of you, you are? And have you in mind the same dictator as irks me? If so, put it here, Mr. Editor.

"On Dit" is well worth your trouble, Sir. It gives us an interesting and informative summary of what it doing at the 'Varsity, and it furnishes, also, much food for thought and opportunity for cheerful bickering. I hope that the present level of amusing recrimination will continue. Julian and the S.C.M. have at last waked the 'Varsity from slumber. May it never drowse again. On with the dance, let joy be unrefined, in letters to "On Dit," at any rate. Yours faithfully,  
BASIL JACKSON.

[The Editors regret their inability to censor this!—Eds.]

To the Editor, "On Dit."

Dear Sir,—May I use the medium of your correspondence column to enter into the lists against one who hides behind the doubtful security of a non-de-plume, viz., "N. Grouch."

"N. Grouch" does not wish to slang the Men's Union, but there are one or two matters he writes want "stirring up."

Before enumerating and replying to his "wants" in detail, allow me, please, as Hon. Sec. of the Men's Union, to explain the Men's Union, as I am afraid that "N. Grouch" is a type and not an individual, who are too apathetic to find out things of themselves.

The Committee is elected by members of the Union from faculty representatives each year; it meets on an average twice a month to consider matters ranging from delegates to attend Committees outside the 'Varsity, to advocacy of a clean towel each day in the washing room; it deals with inter-'Varsity debates and similar matters.

An instance of the general apathy is the very meagre support received when the Committee arranges an evening meeting. There are faculty meetings of course to come first, but it is not much to ask of the average student his presence for one evening term. Last year—as all and sundry, even "N. Grouch," may see by a glance at the minute book in the Union Secretary's room—there was a good beginning; an attendance of 60 out of at least 600 eligible. Forty came along to the next meeting. Several meetings were informal owing to lack of a quorum, and the final one saw the Committee and two others. *Ros ipsa loquitur.*

"N. Grouch" writes: "It would appear that their (the Committee's) difficulties (usually to be traced to student apathy) should be easier."

The facts in the minute-book speak for themselves. Interesting evenings were arranged. Surely even "N. Grouch" must admit that to invite public men, men prominent in the business life of the city, to give up an evening of their valuable time nominally to address the Union in toto, but in reality an audience of twenty, and often less, is an insult. The remedy is in the hands of the students; if they were interested, then a faculty representative was elected, if not, they should not grumble.

A debate was arranged against Teachers' Training College: a notice to that effect appeared on the Refectory notice board. Result! Two supporters of the Union; was "N. Grouch" there? Of course not.

He writes: (1) The Men's Union does practically nothing in the way of arranging lunch hour addresses.—The Committee, he will be glad to know, has considered and discussed proposals with regard to addresses, and has indeed invited several speakers. There are cases, however, in which those invited have been unable to attend. The Committee has only a limited view, and there again the remedy is in the students' hands. He can easily approach his representative and suggest some speaker.

(2) "The public speakers are restless." The Committee has so far failed to see these restless beings disturbing the somnolence and apathy of the average under-

graduate. Most "public speakers" prefer to speak in private, it seems, when a team is wanted for debates they are simply non-existent. I, as Secretary, have had to fall back on the same speakers in different debates; no matter how many were approached, I was referred back to the students of Arts and Law.

(3) "N. Grouch" desires the Committee to provide "a little more in the way of intellectual provender for the 'Varsity."

"N. Grouch," no doubt, would like the "intellectual provender" which is most suitable for his digestion, and if it is included neither in the reading room nor in the refectory menu, he should state so in his complaint.

If "N. Grouch" is not afraid of coming out in the open he would be invaluable to the Committee, who sorely need his strength. If his criticism were only constructive instead of destructive, then we could say with reverence, "Union is strength." He must be one of those "public speakers" who are getting restless. We may even see him on a stump one of these days if he is "politically minded" enough.

But seriously, Sir, whatever "N. Grouch" may have written, however much the Committee may have annoyed him, he has incidentally done the right thing in airing his dissatisfaction.

The voicing of his complaint has given me this opportunity of pointing out to undergraduates that the Men's Union is of them and for their benefit, and I stress the fact again, without their wholehearted support the Union will not prosper. There is an excellent organization at hand, let them make more use of it. I conclude by reminding one and all that the duty of each member does not cease with the election each year, but they should continue to show interest in future meetings, and to represent to the Committee any suggestion with regard to such meetings. I am, Sir, yours faithfully, W. D. PADMAN, Hon. Sec. Men's Union.

"THE WASTE LAND."

To the Editor, "On Dit."

Dear Sir,—If there is any room in your columns this week, after the Christians and anti-Christians have had their say, I should like to express a few doubts and fears about literature. For the past few weeks, at lunch time, I have been sitting on the lawn with the little group of moderns to which I belong, flinging cigarette ends about and reading "The Waste Land." Our opinion of this poem—which we now understand to be just about the greatest thing in modern literature—was—as we realize since last Friday—sincere, crude, and Philistine; our comments, ribald, indelicate, and in thoroughly bad taste. When my friends returned from a lecture delivered under the auspices of the English Association on "The Waste Land," I learned, somewhat to my amazement, that there is no strain of insanity in T. S. Eliot's family—or at least, this was not mentioned by the lecturer—nor was he drunk when he wrote it. It was not composed as a joke, nor for a bet. T. S. Eliot is, in fact, a very serious and well-informed man, and has read practically everything,

from Shakespeare's "Hamlet," which most of have at any rate need through, to "The Golden Bough," which comparatively few of us have studied beyond the first five or six volumes.

Another very important thing to notice in "The Waste Land," is its symbolism, to which Eliot attaches considerable significance. The symbolism in this poem is of three kinds, Freudian, Biblical, and vegetable; and I asked my friends what the false teeth in Part II of "A Game of Chess," were symbols of; but they said that the lecturer did not discuss this symbol, and that they supposed it was one of the Freudian ones.

They also told me—and by now you will not be at all astonished at this—that "The Waste Land" means something; and so I asked them what it did mean; but they said it was such a pity, they had meant to ask the lecturer this at the end, only the president said it would spoil the effect of the lecture to have anything afterwards, and besides it was getting late—nearly half-past nine. So they just came home, and told me all about it. Yours faithfully, STILL SEEKING.

The Editor, "On Dit."

Sir,—We wonder whether it is not possible to keep "On Dit" out of the public press? It is a little annoying to find that each pronouncement of student opinion is repeated in the Press, with suitable omissions and embellishments.

Much of this repetition conveys a quite false impression, as the spirit of these utterances, while perfectly well understood at the University, is of course not in the least understood outside. We have in mind a particular utterance of yours which created unfortunate reactions. Would it be possible to copyright "On Dit"? We fail to understand yet how it manages to find its way to the Editorial table since it is by right only available to members of the Students' Union; but evidently some stronger action is required.

Personally, we believe in the censorship of the Press, we certainly object to the republication of student opinions without leave asked or granted. Yours, etc., FASCISMO.

Sir, As a student of the Conservatorium I wish to protest against the remarks of Halisterosis regarding the dancing of the average University student. Especially when he says that a woman who has been learning music for years cannot keep time better than a negro. Does Halisterosis suggest that we should try to emulate the shop girl in every detail? especially the graceful way in which she carries herself, or does he suggest that we copy the hula hula girl with swaying hips and so forth? More especially do his remarks seem absurd as there are only four or five musical students who attend the dance club. Yours, indignantly, RHYTHM.

### Answers to Correspondents.

The Editors regret their inability, on several grounds, to print all the correspondence which they receive.

Wisecrack. Oh, Tosh. The subject is exhausted.

L. Helpus. Repent yo!

## REPORTS OF SOCIETIES.

### Law Society.

A meeting of A.U.L.S.S. was held on 26th July to consider a question set by Mr. J. R. Kearnan, who occupied the chair. The question was one of hire purchase. Mr. Clarke (with him Mr. Kinnane) appeared for the plaintiff; Mr. MacDonald (with him Mr. Davoren) for the defendant. The question was ably debated on both sides, and was after discussion by some members of the audience. The Court decided in favour of the defendant, and in the course of an interesting judgment, the principles at issue were cogently expounded and explained.

On the motion of Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Mr. Clarke, a very hearty vote of thanks was extended to Mr. Kearnan.

### Law v. Education.

The Men's Union, represented by Messrs. Young, Davis, and Sergeant, met a team from Teachers' College (Messrs. Oats, Gare, and Barter) in a debate held in Teachers' College Hall on Wednesday, July 27th. Both teams came prepared to debate on the subject "That all pre-University Education should be free and compulsory." According to Mr. Young, the leader of the Con side, pre-University Education did not mean what Mr. Oats said it meant. Mr. Davis again confirmed this statement by pointing out that it was obviously impossible to compel bricklayers to lay bricks, and Mr. Sergeant even showed signs of losing his somewhat imperturbable self-control when he attempted still further to support his colleagues, and complained that the Pro side had grossly misinterpreted the term "Pre-University Education." The saddest feature of the debate was that Mr. Young, even after supper, was still unconvinced. Mr. A. L. Pickering adjudicated and awarded the victory to the Teachers' College team. At some future date we hope to be able to conclude this debate by considering the rest of the subject, "That . . . should be free and compulsory."

### Literary and Debating Society Dinner.

This function passed off with considerably more liveliness than is usual this year. The attendance was not good, but the intellectual cream of the society was well represented. By the time speeches were called for a number of those present were in the vulgar "well oiled," and the speakers, as they arose were forced to stand up to a heavy fire of comment and a steady hail of murmurs.

Mr. Jury received the full impact of the fire and quickly retired to cover, delivering one or two valiant blows. Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Gray both essayed the field but retired with their forces considerably battered.

Prof. Hancock made some headway at first by convulsing the enemy with an elegant spoonerism, but in the end he too

retired with the head of his attacking column badly damaged. Mr. Badger held the field by means of his complete insensibility to the attack. He, however, had a book from which to draw inspiration.

After the speeches as set out in the toast list various people got up and insisted on paying off old scores by toasting their enemies and friends.

Those who were sober enough stayed to dance; those who were not took other people's coats and went home.

## SPORTS NOTES.

The Adelaide University football and lacrosse clubs will entertain the visiting football and lacrosse teams from the Melbourne University, at a ball on Thursday night.

Being in the vac., students should avail themselves of a good night out. There will be plenty to do and see.

Artists from the Theatre Royal will perform, as well as specialty dancing by Mrs. Leslie Bowman (the A.U. Footlights' Club dancing teacher), and Mr. Phil Peake, who is known to most students.

Dr. and Mrs. L. O. Betts, also Dr. and Mrs. F. N. LeMossurier, will receive the guests.

Tickets are obtainable from Misses Shirley Burns Cuming (convenor of the decorations), Roxy Sims (convenor of the supper), or the secretaries, K. A. MacDonald and R. D. McKay,

### Men's Hockey Club.

The inter-'Varsity will be held in Melbourne this year, and fortunately, the whole A team can make the trip. The team will leave on Saturday, the 13th inst., and will be away for about ten days. Matches will be played against other Universities on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the combined Universities play Victoria on the 20th, while the match against New Zealand will be on the 22nd. The Adelaide team will be: Goalie, A. T. Mackay; backs, Bill Dorsch and Harrison; halves, Turner, Doug. Allen, and Ted Dorsch; forwards, Fletcher, Jim Allon, Bills, Jack O'Connor, and Frayne. Fred. Gray and Motteram will be emergencies, while Alf. Puddy will be manager (whom not smoking his pipe or playing a trumpet).

Results of the matches on the 6th were: A's drew with Centaurs A, B's drew with Centaurs B's (Dave Hogarth incidentally was the best man on the ground), while the C's forfeited to Forestville II.

On Saturday next the A's play Forestville before they leave for Melbourne, the B's play Parkside, and the C's will play Westbourne Park, which has been defeated only once this year. The A's should win, but the B's will have a hard time to win, as three of their number are up in the A's in consequence of Dorsch Bros. and Bills being in Sydney with the inter-State team. The C's may do anything, probably they will lose, as three of their players will be in the B's, and the centre half will be going away with the A's. However, the C's are a worthy team, and at least give their opponents a hard time to win.

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