

Dabblings

by J.A.M.

The Midway:

Quo Vadis: Some poet par excellence one wrote a literary gem whose wisdom is self explanatory. It ran thusly: Cecil B. DeMille, much against his will, was forced to keep Moses, out of the Wars of the Roses. Now the only relation this has to Quo Vadis is in innuendo. Looking remarkably like DeMille's old Sign of the Cross and parading spectacle after spectacle on the screen, Q.V. ran the gauntlet of death at the stake, death by lions, death by arson while Nero fondled a harp, a harem, and everything else within reach, while Rome's royal standards stroked the sky. Tyrone Power was the indifferent Commander and Deborah Kerr the lifeless Christian maiden. What acting there was done by Nero and his favorite Senator Popleus. What human emotion there was bestowed on Popleus' slave girl. Hardly worth the elevated prices, the picture apparently got lost in the cobwebs of its own extravagance and the magnitude of its mob scenes. However, the colour of Rome in flames was beautiful though unrealistic and the wrestling scene with the unmannerly bull in the arena was well done. After all the blood had been spilled, cruel Nero, of course by divine retribution, died by his own aided hand, corrupt Rome headed for less corrupt times (at least for a while) and Taylor and his Kerr rode by chariot up the Appian Way and out of the picture—and the audience's minds.

The Tiger Smiles:

Buzzing the Campi with ever-increasing rapidity and accuracy, is president-elect George (Buzz) Kerr, who is a tower of blonde strength for Law. Running beside him in breathless haste is seer Ned Cyr. And in the background, prodding, encouraging and scheming in evaporonlike fashion, is Kerr's goldspun wife, Mim. While in this corner, wearing Engineering pants and weighing no mean tonnage of student popularity, is Bill Haley managed by Sally Roper. The votes, in short, in the battle of the polls, are due to rain down today.

And so, dressed in a weird array and baring toothless gums and shaking straw-impregnated hair, they dragged their reluctant males to the belated Sadie Hawkins dance.

Creeping up the sidewalk of Coburg Rd. the new Dalhousie Snowblower was causing much interest both idle and pugnacious as it sent a white arc of snow showering down on the centre of the road. Passing cars with bewildered headlights looked askance and in vain for the source of the strange and frigid rainbow. After several pedestrians had taken an ice cold shower (fully dressed) and several trolley passengers recovered their initial fright, the big blow stopped for breath. A car came by dangerously close just as the engine pounded into action. White went the car, pale, the driver, as, amid curses from the obvious place, the car filled with a few bushels of powdered snow. The unfortunate victim resolved to keep windows closed henceforth!

The Muse:

In a lost century, this sad impression about a sadder girl:

LOVE FOR SALE

I saw her on the street tonight
Standing by the single light
Where she waits.
With hair of gold and soul of stone
With crimson lips yet unatoned
By God, she waits.
With pity I went to her side
And said: "Why here do you abide
Each night?"
Her face shattered in a smile
"I can be purchased for awhile—
For that, I wait."
I left her standing in the rain
With lonely shoulders stooped in shame
Where, with tears, she waits.

Wax Tracks:

To report, only that tracks are still being made. New and listenable: Blacksmith Blues; Mother Nature; Blue Tango; life expectancy: three weeks due to the play-to-death policy of local disc jockeys. Old, deathless and beautiful, Wagner's Tristen and Isoide, now on 33 rpm.

Miscellany:

Bored at last, of the last trace of scaffolding, the Tower of Studley, raising its undressed anatomy to the sky and on its lofty summit displaying with pride a great blue-faced, gold figured clock so that the eagle above it will know just when to close its eyes.

Seen acting, in a most strange fashion, and looking, with a stranger look in her eye, as preoccupied with some remote and profound cult, one Sandra Fraser, who has been quite obviously struck by some mystic power. Some go so far as to say she takes photographs.

Projected, from the stage into real life, the love element in the recent Kings drama Male Animal, which in both arenas involves actor Eric Potter and his leading lady.

For eloquence unsurpassed in the field of oratory advocated supreme, Bruce Lockwood (whose voice purrs the news over CHNS) and dignified Ron Macdonald, received modestly the Smith Shield at a recent lawyers' moon court, emblematic of supremacy in their field.

While in the field of elocation, debating representatives veteran Ron Robertson and rookie Murray Higgins, whose argumentative talents are well known to the writer, bowed graciously to St. Mary's last week, on a question that has been used by more established orators recently, concerning the St. Lawrence and its way to the sea.

All Our Yesterdays:

These things we will all remember as pertinent to this faded year alone: the rain soaked day the Tigers were crowned in Football; the Princess who became a Queen who bore more rain with royal indifference; the pep rally that awakened a sleeping city and got several officials somewhat excited; the film Bitter Rice and A Place In The Sun; the NFCUS neurosis over Russian student exchange; the production about Hearts (that were young and gay); the death of England's King; and the thousand personal incidents we all incur by just living.

IN CONCLUSION:

With a swan song that never before was heard so loudly, this column sinks to the quiet oblivion from which it came and the heavy joke that is called a deadline, makes its gladdening exit with it. With its last appearance, some twenty weeks after its undivine conception, and after many irritations and threats of mayhem, and other violence, an enlightenment as to why that army of words was made to march so persistently. The column purportedly consolidated in one place movie reviews, talk of the college, the march of grime (some call it gossip); the world of popular, or unpopular, as the case may be, music, and anything else of current interest to write about. This consolidation was to preserve space in an otherwise space-needy paper. Whether it succeeded in its purpose or not is not only insignificant but of no possible interest. Just this is certain—it was read. With no excuses or apologies, with a de-commissioning of our elaborate intelligence network, with a gentle push by some and a sigh of glad relief from all, we fold our tents like a circus and like thunder, roll away.

The Warrior

There lived within that breast a soul;
A fine immortal spirit in that fragile frame,
But there it lives no more.

Here lies flesh and blood
Soon to congeal and rot upon the field.
He toiled, he loved as you or I—
And laughed and cried.
To this field he came without desire;
What mad incensate power compelled us here,
That we should meet—that he or I should die?
The chance of birth, for this soul I struggle,
And he, child of another land, opposes me;
And thus he dies—the payment of his masters.
I have shot him,
And on this field remain
To suffer some unknown hell.
Short moments past he was alive, and I no killer then.
I have taken one half the godly mantle:
I have destroyed a life but cannot recreate.
—The paradox that is our essence:
We kill to survive—only to be killed.
I have taken life and must take more
Or join that pitious heap of flesh.
One last flavour shall I do him;
Close those eyes that stare at this insane world.
He had a painless death.

A Defence Of Standardization

Along with the rise in the standard of Canadian living, has come a rise in the standardization of Canadian life. Social castes and restrictions are being swept away by the democratic efforts of the intellectual classes to descend to the cultural level of the labourer. Instances of this great manifestation of sympathy for the masses, may be found on any University campus. If one were to listen to recordings made by an average University graduate, and a garbage collector, of their everyday modes of speaking, one would be at a complete loss as to which was which.

Nowadays, most Canadians are fairly indistinguishable from one another, and one rarely finds in our society one of those odious beings, an Individualist. This is probably the result of training of our Public School system (The best of all possible Public Schools systems). The main thing a schoolchild must learn, nowadays, is to conform to "Group Standard". Any child who dares to deviate from the set pattern of the group is effectually snubbed. I was very happy to read in a recent survey, that school children are being taught, more and more, to look, act, think, and talk in the same way as their playmates, and that no "characters" are tolerated under this scheme of things.

The best example of this re-awakening of the herd instinct, (one of the greatest developments of modern times) may be found in the High Schools. By the time the average child reaches High School, he has become so fully oriented into the group that he is quite easily recognized wherever he goes, and is usually dubbed "typical".

It is in High School students, that the greatest advocates for democracy may be found, for they do not hesitate to break down all cultural barriers, speak in the common "slanguage," and dress as much like hoboes as possible. They descend to the lowest possible level in their tastes in music and literature. Both the garbage collector and the High School student, (who eventually comes out of college as the University graduate previously mentioned) can equally enjoy "My Heart's Jes' Breakin' Fer You Baby", or some 35c paper covered drugstore classic.

Of course, the average University student usually comes through his college career as untouched as possible by the corrupting influences all around him. He manfully resists any efforts by his professors to make him think for himself, by industriously copying down every word of wisdom that his professor utters. Thus he preserves his average standing and his capacity for conforming to custom. In closing I would like to say that this state of affairs seems to be on the increase, and that in a few years' time nobody will be able to make any distinction, try as he might, between the University graduate and the garbage collector.

Law Notes

During his lecture tour here Professor Harold Berman of Harvard University mentioned a trend in Soviet law towards adoption of a "paternal" attitude towards parties involved in a court action. Russian courts, he said, do not feel themselves bound by strict rules of evidence to exclude all matters regarded not directly relevant to the issue, but also delve into the background of the accused to find out why he did what he did.

This shows the wide divergence between the fundamental purposes of courts as believed by the two systems. Our courts, geared to protect property and vested rights, consider an individual a mature legal person, prepared to defend his rights. The Russians, on the other hand, consider that the courts have a protective function and should guide the citizens back into the right road. This, incidentally, gives them a strong hold over the individual and aids state control.

Would not some middle course between these two extremes be the best for modern society, with all its complexities? Some courts here, especially in the lower branches of the judiciary have made a great step forward along this path. It is up to us to see that the more Christian approach is given consideration at least.

Introducing LAMBERTUS VERBERK



Probably the only Dutch student at Dalhousie this year is Lambertus Verberk of Nijmegen, Holland, better known as "Bepp."

"Bepp" came to Canada only two years ago, and attended high school in Yarmouth. He applied for a scholarship to Dalhousie and obtained it. Now studying first-year science, he plans to major in Physics and perhaps teach that subject.

Prior to coming to this country, thus student served for several years in the Dutch Navy. He spent two years on a submarine and one and a half years on a minesweeper. After leaving the service in 1947, Bepp worked in the post office until 1949.

Well travelled, Bepp has been in England, France, Belgium, Spain. His visits to these lands were mostly connected with the Navy.

Blond and blue-eyed, Bepp's pet hobby is stamp collecting. He enjoys soccer and boxing, but his favorite sport is bicycle racing which he regrets is rare in North America.

Describing the Canadian people as basically more friendly than the Dutch, Bepp says that he likes Canada very much and plans to make it his home. He is also fond of Dal, although he does not care overmuch for Chemistry.

He says he is too busy for much homesickness, but would like to make a visit to Holland in the not too distant future.

Bepp's sense of humour and friendly personality will carry him through whatever the future holds for him.

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