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OPEN FORUM

Dear Editor:

Last year, and to no avail, I wrote rather fervently for an uncut production of "Stage Door"; this year, I'm pleading for "The Women." It would seem, perhaps, that I am making a brief for "oscenity" in my repeated outbursts . . . that is, it would seem so to the superficial reader. I choose to make my pleas openly in these columns, not because I want us to be educated in the lowly ways of life, but because I want a concession to our integrity. Somehow it has occurred to me that the students are just about old enough to begin doing their own censoring; or at least old enough to begin learning how to weed the worthy from the worthless.

"The Women," I am told, is "a bit too much for Salem." I have just finished reading it, and I find myself no more base than I was before . . . though in a considerably better frame of mind. It is light, blase, quite cosmopolitan. But I cannot, for the life of me, find it demoralizing. Clare Boothe has so cleverly satirized this ultra modern era of frequent Reno trips that we all might laugh with her at the shallowness of sophistication. We might even draw a moral lesson thereof while brushing up on our beauty salon jargon. We would all laugh, of that I'm sure, and I think even the least of us could do well with an extra laugh amid all that is of necessity sad, sombre, frightening, and serious. From a practical standpoint, "The Women" is one of the few plays that Pierretts can produce, since all available men have gone to Uncle Sam. The characters are such that might easily be drawn from our actresses. And the plot, quite a nice variation from "Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates," which the club has been asked to present for the children's schools.

Seriously, if there are objections to such a production more constructive and meaningful than "it just isn't done," I think we are all entitled to them. We are not trying to be wild-eyed anarchists showing our contempt for the well-ordered and the decent, but we are rebels against boarding school hangovers. Show us reason, and we'll heel quietly.

—An Inquisitive Playgoer.

Le Coin Francais

L'ALBATROS

Souvent, pour s'amuser, les hommes de'equipage
Prennent des albatros, vastes oiseaux des mers,
Qui suivent, indolents compagnons de voyage,
Le navire glissant sur les gouffres amers.

A peine les ont-ils deposees sur les planches,
Que ces rois de l'azur, maladroits et honteux,
Laissent piteusement leurs grandes ailes blanches
Comme des avirons trainer a cote d'eux.

Ce voyageur aile, comme il est gauche et veule!
Lui, naguere si b eau, qu'il est comique et laid!
L'un agace son bec avec un brule-gueule,
L'autre mime, en boitant, l'infirme qui volait!

Le Poete est semblable au prince des nees
Qui hante la tempete et se rit de l'archer;
Exile sur le sol au milieu des huees,
Ses ailes de geant l'empechent de marcher.

Baudelaire

I Heard It This Way...

Before we go one bit further, we want to say that Mr. Holder was absolutely precious in Chapel Tuesday . . . he practically had us relapsing into the old state of adoration that was habitual with us before he hiked off and got all married. Really, we hadn't realized quite how glad we were to have him home again until we caught ourselves unable to sleep through chapel.

And while we are in the compliment department, there's another one we'd like to make . . . Katherine Manning did a grand research job on the history of Salem; which, incidentally, is running these days in your college newspaper. She has managed to unearth all the interesting tid-bits of Salem's past that few of us have ever bothered to wonder about. A gold star for you, Ivy . . . even with all the handicaps of having the history not fit and being consequently ended right in the middle of a sentence, you did really entertain at least us proof-readers.

Since one thing seems to lead to another, we may as well unburden further. During a French hour this week, the editorials of last week's SALEMITE busted into the open for airing . . . but, from a class of some twenty young women, there was only one who could keep in there pitching. The Reason? . . . there was only the one who had so much as scanned the editorial page!

And now for the gayer side of things, we turn again to Doris Nebel . . . I tell you what's the truth, she has worn her trousseau plumb to shreds parading up and down the alleys of L. W. B. Building. Furthermore, if there has been any constructive work going on up on the eave, it has been done absolutely on the sly. Grand business!

For the best joke of the week, we glance at Wooten the elder. Maybe you ain't had the pleasure yet, but there's a freshman about who knows EVERY-BO-DY at V. P. I. So it was that Wooten manufactured a glamorous name; and, sure enough, the freshmen in question knew him too. It's a small world!

Founders' Day was a gay thing, but we've been baffling about ever since trying to figure out just how they found a cornerstone big enough to hold all that extraneous material . . . and why they didn't just go on an embalm a body to make the job complete.

To Miss Reid go honors for the first announced quiz of the season . . . for the unannounced variety, ask the Bible classes how many Books they have in THEIR Bibles. The newest version of the New Testament runs something like this: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Timothy, and Revelations. Ain't pops fine?

Did you all know that the Honorable (alias Frank Jones) has been taken himself off to the wars? It's going to be a mighty piddling fun to have photographers doing things efficiently this year. And do you know what happened to his little yellow limousine? . . . Rebie Randolph's got it for the duration! Them's the things that hurt.

And another question . . . golly, we're hot tonight! . . . remember the blondish music co-ed with the satchel and an appellation of Irwin Cook? He's uniforming too, please.

Much as it distresses the soul, the body can't stay at this one single other minute, without a piece of meat. Hence, in view of the old circulation, we take our fondest leave until next week . . . Hmmm.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE:

That is the question which has reared its ugly head in the minds of us who strive to make the Salemite (from cover to cover) a cross section of the thought and action of Salem College students. Is it worth while to spend valuable time, effort, and money to publish every week a four page paper whose third page (containing the gossip column) is the only page read? This is not a sermon against you readers of gossip columns. In a round about way we are writing this editorial in your defense. You few who are not addicts of "I Heard It This Way" will be interested in what we have to say also.

First of all, the avid interest in what the gossip column contains shows that you want to know what other people are doing; what they plan to do. These people are girls you probably do not associate with every day. They may not even live in your dormitory. The gossip column contains something which is really new to you. Certainly the front page contains nothing new — its been rehash of talks given in Tuesday and Thursday's chapel: a story of a student recital which has already been announced by the time the Salemite goes to press; articles about nominees or winners of campus elections whose names have previously been posted by the Student Government; a story about Myoptic Mary who has been elected to Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. You know the type of thing we mean only too well. You are perfectly justified in turning to the gossip column since we offers nothing better on the front page. No doubt you will CONTINUE to read the gossip column if we do not put "honest to goodness" news stories on page one.

It is possible that this could be done. The Salemite has been known (in our generation at Salem) to scoop an election, a coming speaker, a civic music attraction). Before we leave Salem we would like to see the scooping of important news about campus personalities, faculty, students, and guests, become the accepted thing. We believe that, with a bit of cooperation from the faculty and students, we can make the Salemite a paper which is read from cover to cover — a publication which is, in the true sense of the word, a newspaper and not a record of past events.

We are welcoming comments through letters to the editors on our most cherished ambition of the year. We shall attempt to answer any objections which may be given to allowing The Salemite to scoop. One objection already voiced is that nobody reads the Salemite and therefore important occasions would pass unnoticed. We ask you — if you had no other way of finding out what was happening on the campus except to read the paper wouldn't you read it? We think so — everybody likes to be "in the know." Most news now travels by the grapevine system which reaches the majority of people when the news is stale. Some one makes an announcement in chapel or the dining room or on the bulletin board or thru the city papers. None of these facilities contacts EVERYONE. All students and faculty receive the Salemite. What better facility could there be for furnishing the news?

This editorial started out with that soliloquy of Hamlet's which begins:

To be or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

We've chosen the latter course — of action! Will you help?

—B. W.