

## A Clean Slate

Although the New Year is now fourteen days old, this is our first chance to wish the student body and faculty a happy and prosperous New Year.

It's also a good chance for us all to turn over a new leaf. Although we think of a new year at Salem as beginning in September, we have a good chance now to begin a new-half year, for many of us the last half-year at Salem. Remember back in September in the first issue of the *Salemite* there appeared an editorial asking us to make 1948-49 "The very best year in Salem's history". Our chance at '48 is over and only a few months of 1949 remain in this college year.

Let's look over our accomplishments of the past four months—there have been many. In the opinion of most, this year has been one of the best. If there are some things that are not listed under accomplishments, we have a chance now at a clean slate. Let's determine to do our best in this year of 1949 in everything at Salem.

We have much to improve but we're on the way up. Let's keep it that way. To each of you from all of us of the *Salemite*, the very best of everything in 1949.

### Dear Editor:

A number of students have been heard to say recently that if Salem offered typing, a great deal of trouble and worry would be lifted from many of the students.

Typing was once offered here, the last year was 1944-45. In the opinion of many it was a mistake to take this subject away as a great many students did not have the opportunity to take typing in high school and have been at a disadvantage because of this. It helps the student in every subject to be able to type and those of us who use the self-taught system and those who hire other students to do our typing for us, would like to put in a strong appeal for the return of this subject. We don't ask for the complete secretarial course as it used to be . . . all we want is typing.

How this would be done as to credits and hours, we don't care. Many of us would be willing to take it even if there was no credit offered. We sincerely ask for some attention to be brought to this matter so that future students will not have to be subjected to a decided lack of, in the general sense, subject matter.

T. P.

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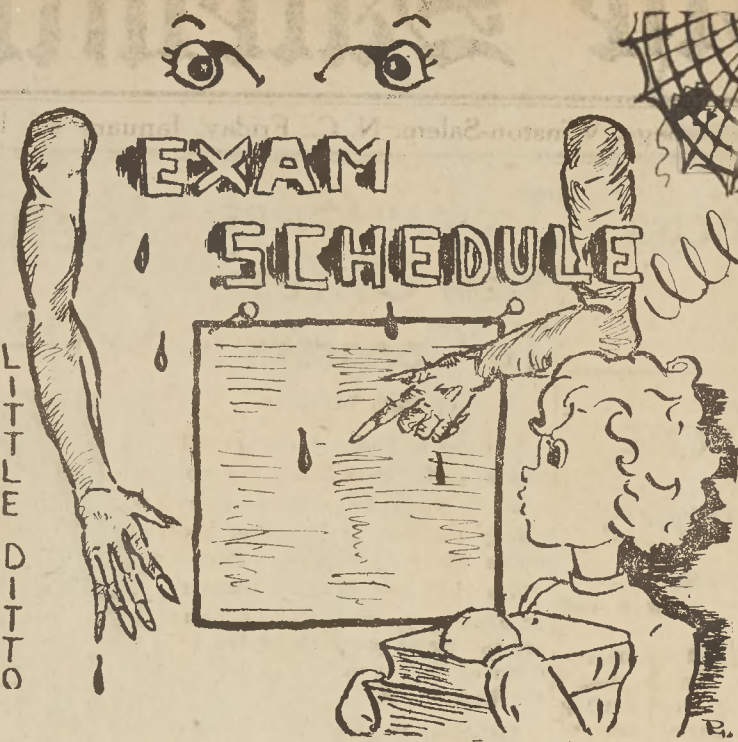
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If I could have a cherubim to follow me about  
And plug my ears with cotton to keep temptation out,  
To take from me my thirteen cards when I sit down to play  
And drive me till I put my inks and drawing pads away;  
To stomp upon my radio till all the wires are free  
To empty out my coffee pot and hide my bags of tea;  
To guide me from the drug store, the concerts and the show  
And lead me to the library, the place I oughta go;  
If I could have a cherubim to do these things for me,  
Then maybe—there's a slight chance—I might make a C!  
P. H.

## Folderol Has It Bad Eight Exams; Ain't It Sad

by Tootsie Gillespie

Folderol bit off her tongue and spat out the bloody pieces. She skinned the cat over the shower bar, screamed a chant out the window and fell in utter exhaustion on the floor, for it was the time of examinations. No more the happy-go-lucky child of nature, free to pick daisies on the hockey field, free to climb trees and look for robin's eggs, no longer was she in tune with nature, for benzedrine was taking it's toll. One eye askew, Folderol picked herself up off the floor, went through her history dates from Agememnon to Wallace (one eye turned red) and threw cold water in her cadaverous face. Outside her room door, six loosely hung students were blubbing in the water fountain making fish noises. One had a gun in her hand and was making ugly threats. An ambulance drove up and three more students were carried out horizontally.

Armed with blue jeans, four cans of instant coffee, a carton of Ramesses, two blankets, No-Doz, twelve text books and six pads of Blue Horse fine quality crimp-edged, lined paper, Folderol pushed her way through the bodies strewn about and made for the Inner Sanctum in the catacombs of appropriately named, Pain Hall. Once safely inside, she found a fellow-sufferer lying on the window ledge panting and breathing with difficulty.

"All I wanted to do was pass!" screamed the figure, sticking her finger in the electric light socket. The shadow from a deformed tree outside cast an erry F on the opposite wall.

The hours dragged by on little elephant feet and finally, spent and weak, Folderol dragged herself along the base-boarding until she came to her second exam room. She was babbling and there were ugly bruises about her head and shoulders. The exam was in Comparative Kitchen Utensils of Early Bankok and the professor had distinctly said, mused Folderol, that we would have no questions on background history, definition of terms or names to remember. Running true to form, the first question was "Write for two and a half hours on the background of Bankok." Following that, there to define along with a matching list was a list of three hundred terms of names. At the bottom of the

page was an attractive skull and cross bones. Everything went black and Folderol woke up with delirium tremens. Springing from her seat, Young Intellect grabbed the teacher by the throat, made jiblets out of her eyeballs and ran wildly out the door, spitting perpendicularly.

But that was a good beginning. Folderol boozed up on her benzedrine that night, jabbed Keepstream in the ribs every fifteen minutes to keep her awake and began the long hard road to review. Her next exam was a pushover—Nostradamus and Why. She learned from her notes that Nostradamus was in reality a thwarted nasturium grower who had been jilted by a faker's daughter for one of the King's men. He wasn't keen in the least about the whole thing and told her in a fury of white-hot anger "Pox on yel May ye meet with the most ill of fortunes!" And sure enough, a giant ogre met her one day in the woods, took her home with him and moulded her in clay and lacquer to replace the missing queen in his chess set. This built up Nostradamus ego so that he went into the business and became so famous that a whole stock of parchments were written about him and he sold the story of his life to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Pete Smith.

During the days that passed, Folderol got thinner and thinner and finally one professor wanted the use of her leg as a straight-edge (his Schick went bad on him). She struggled through one exam after another and in final desperation, set up an altar in her room, burnt candles at both ends and threw another log on the fire, with a prayer that the entire faculty would drop dead at dawn. Her final exam, Religion, came on Sunday morning (just to keep in the spirit of things, ha, ha, ha! the teacher had said, trying to be funny). A mere shadow of a thing, Folderol slithered into the exam room, neglected to look at the questions and wrote three blue books on why Nostradamus, a tax collector in Bankok, was no good in the kitchen.

With blurred eyes, a withered right hand and the sense God gave a billy-goat, Folderol went to a pawn shop, bought a second hand musket, shot each of the faculty in turn, and sent bereavement cards to the administration and trustees.



by Peirano Aiken

A great many high-flung phrases have been used to describe what college means to people. The intellectual and social advantages, especially, are endlessly painted in rosy platitudes. It's true, to be sure, that even the most air-tight mind is cracked ajar by Broadening Curriculum, and Group Experiences come neatly packaged for every ill known to Freud.

Yet there is a different type of experience which everyone undergoes, and we seldom hear a word about it. The Scotch would call it the benmost life, benmost meaning what is secret or innermost to the individual—not because it is very profound or personal, but because it is comprised of moments of wonder, sympathy or vivid sensation. Subtle and often unmentioned, they rise to the conscious mind long after classes are forgotten. They fall under the almost lost art of being impressed.

I have succumbed to that, when, going down South Main Street, on a December night, I've seen fog pick the colors from red and green vases and brass jardinières in the windows of Arden-Salem Store and reflect them in moist, shimmering ribbons on the pavement. Too, I have looked with half-closed eyes from Main Hall toward the May Dell and seen those silly stone urns and the fountain that doesn't run turn into marble grandeur, and the whole became my private corner of Versailles . . . Not all scenes are as pleasant as these. Stumbling through a Clewell hall at two o'clock in the morning with no light except a glimmer coming through the transom of the john door recalls a child's association of the dark with loneliness. Palm to the wall like a blind man: plaster wall, wooden door, plaster wall—to the fifth door where I lived. Then there was the unspeakable tiredness of the next morning, when I was all beating heart and aching eyes set in a giddy balloon. This is the familiar feel of no sleep. (Though now in my senior year I've taken to going to bed at eleven-thirty, and find the feel of rest more comfortable, if less poetic.)

The benmost times that are innermost of all, however, deal with things not physical. The following are a few of mine, but for each you will have one of your own equally vivid. Once I attempted to save a young bird that fell from a nest in the ivy and choked it, instead, on canned milk. It squawked; the white stuff bubbled from its mouth and nostrils; it jerked convulsively and lay still. I watched, appalled alike at my stupidity and the abruptness with which life can end. To have killed is a terrible knowledge.—Then there is the impact of people. What can surpass the delicious first appeal of sophistication to an adolescent sophomore sitting on the edge of a world of juniors? Admiration for their yellow satin-striped pajamas, original cartoons of the Bible, art prints on the wall, Thomas Mann in German and Proust in French, illicit beer (It tasted awful, but didn't I have to be in with the In-Group?). Laughable now, though splendid in its heyday, was Salem a la Boheme. Once, after I had spent a Thursday evening in this world, I returned home to find my roommate holding Y-Watch in the room . . . kerplunk. Yet I couldn't resist her orthodoxy either. She had a river-like quality that suggested peace and a confidence that, come what may, everything could be borne. It was then that I realized that whatever theology I adopted or constructed for myself would have to be tolerant to both of these worlds, for I could reject neither of them totally.

Of course this sort of benmost living goes on throughout life. However, I suspect that it has a special meaning for college-age people because we are, so to speak, fledgling individuals. Free from the thought patterns of the old home and not yet in a new one, each of us forms his own. He discovers his benmost spirit, as well as his mind, and lets it go free, feeling and sensing whatever it will. Perhaps such emotionalism precedes reasoning, and the experiences of this sort to which we are susceptible form the real foundations for our philosophies and religious ideas. At least they are very important, if, as Santayana says, religion is poetry intervening in life.