

The Martyr

INAUGURAL ISSUE

VIVERE NOS DOCEANT QUI DIDICERE MORI

ST ANDREWS, APRIL MMXXVI

NEW VOICE AULD IDEAS

From the Editor

So, you've picked up *The Martyr*. You're curious.

Why another student paper in St Andrews? Why rock the boat of tranquility? Why an explicitly "conservative" paper in a place where conservatism is often dismissed as offensive, outdated, or worse? Why publish *The Martyr*?

Simply put, we believe that these accusations are rubbish. A conservative outlook is not only relevant to St Andrews but provides the ideal mindset for guiding the community forward.

Let me explain.

St Andrews is beautiful. Its architecture is stunning ... well, most of it.

There are those buildings we can't get enough of. The ancient edifices force us to double-take. We see sights so beautiful, we ask ourselves again and again, "Do I really go here?"

Then there are the other buildings, the buildings graciously tucked away from sight. Antique facades conveniently conceal the Main Library. The maths and science departments sit in their own out of the way valley. Residence halls, like the infamous Andrew Melville Hall, are situated as if the University is embarrassed by their existence.

Yet, many of these were once celebrated for their stylish innovation.

It is no secret that this dismal class of St Andrews buildings has aged like fine milk.



In contrast, when you pass through the gates of The Quad, something remarkable happens. You stop in your tracks. The sight elevates the spirit, inspires the mind, and commands respect generation after generation.

The beauty of St Andrews, The Auld Grey

Toun, exists not in award-winning brutalism but in the magnificence of the aged and antique.

Such, in many ways, is conservatism.

Conservatism reaches beyond trends to take hold of the timeless. Conservatism is the hunt for truths and beauty that will last beyond the trend of days.

For that reason, conservatism is always relevant...by definition. Conservatism chases principles that are forever relevant, namely truth, beauty, goodness, justice, and freedom.

Tradition and principle, like the stones of St Andrews, grow more beautiful with age. They warrant deeper awe as they gather patina.

And there is no place that better illustrates the conservative venture than St Andrews, a town whose charm lies in its irresistible traditions and its beautifully aged stone.

There is something special about this place. Something more than an inherited legacy of 600 years of academic excellence.

Something that prompted Prince William to say that St Andrews is not only "far and away the best university in the world," but it has "that uncanny knack of feeling like home."

It is life here that is special: Life amongst friends from all over the world, life amongst the spirit of history, life amongst the romance of ruins and the sea.

"The unexamined life is not worth living,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE II

Once More Unto the Ring Fight Night in St. Andrews

By WINSTON MARGARITIS

"The beating heart of Rome is not the marble of the Senate; it's the sand of the Coliseum. He'll bring them death, and they will love him for it." – Gracchus, in *Gladiator*

Greg Chang, his hands up, his feet dancing, slips a punch meant for his temple.

Greg weaves, ducks, shuffles, eluding another volley of long-reaching blows from his tall, worn-out opponent. Greg is shorter, but faster, untouchable, his shifty feet a blur of constant motion on the

CONTINUED ON PAGE III

The Saints' Shuffle Walking Left in an International Town

By BOONE SIMMS

You're walking towards them. They're walking towards you. Left or right? You adjust. They adjust. You adjust again.

We all know the dance.

The pavement of St Andrews isn't a pavement, it's a middle school dancefloor. I'm talking sweaty hands and cracking voices. Not a pretty sight.

Only last week, I wriggled away from one of these encounters blushing and aggrieved by my own two left feet.

CONTINUED ON PAGE VII

P.H. Who Was Patrick Hamilton?

By ADYAN SHARDA

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." These were the last reported words of Patrick Hamilton as he was being burnt at the stake on 29 February 1528 outside St. Salvator's Chapel in St Andrews.

Dying at the age of just twenty-four, Hamilton was the first martyr of what was to become the Scottish Reformation. Every day, hundreds of people, mostly students, walk around (or sometimes over) the cross which marks the spot of his execution nearly five centuries ago.

CONTINUED ON PAGE IV

OUR NAME OUR MOTTO

By BOONE SIMMS

We walk amongst the ghosts of Martyrs.

When we swerve around the “PH” as we scurry to class, obeying a campus superstition, it is easy to dodge the weight of that spot. Patrick Hamilton, a real man, was burned there for what he believed.

The town carries the scars of martyrdom. The memorials remain lest we forget their deaths, lest we ignore the lesson of their lives.

These Martyrs died for what they believed in. They smoldered for what was right. They burned for the truth.

On the eve of the Scottish Reformation, their deaths paved the way for a new Scotland.

This paper, in name and motto, takes up their legacy.

This paper gives a voice to the Martyrs’ ghosts, to those silent stone initials and to that quiet monument, as we challenge the status quo, defend truth, and stand for what we believe.

What would you die for?

Answer that, and you find the key to living.

VIVERE NOS DOCEANT QUI DIDICERE MORI

“Let them teach us to live who learned to die.”



INSCRIPTION ON MARTYRS MONUMENT



ANDREW MELVILLE HALL, DESIGNED BY WORLD-RENOWNED JAMES STIRLING

From the Editor

cont. from pg 1

Socrates once said. This paper believes this is true not only for the life of an individual, but for the life of a community, in this case, St Andrews.

The Martyr exists to examine the life, traditions, and institutions of our community. *The Martyr* looks to the fixed stars of tradition and principle to guide that great voyage.

“Know thyself” was Socrates’ greatest key to excellent living. *The Martyr* exists to vigilantly explore the truest nature of our community and thereby aid St Andrews in becoming the best version of itself.

What makes St Andrews beautiful? Is it the community, the friendships, the beaches, the cliffs, the buildings, or that unexplainable breath of history on the wind?

The Martyr believes that a conservative understanding of the world is uniquely suited to explore and appreciate the best that St Andrews has to offer.

Through examination and appreciation, *The Martyr* seeks to understand more deeply who we are at St Andrews. Clarity of purpose, rooted in the past, is the key to moving forward.

BOONE SIMMS

Fight Night

cont. from pg I

canvas.

The crowd impatiently screams for blood. They can sense the weakness, the fragility, the fatigue growing as the round stretches on. "FINISH HIM!" my incensed neighbor yells, nearly shattering my eardrum.

Greg stays patient, waiting for his moment. His opponent, tired and bloody from Greg's energizer-bunny jabs, takes a mighty, but sloppy swing, going for broke. Greg, ever elusive, dodges and sees the opening. This is it. In a flash, he counters, stepping in, thrusting up from his heels, seeming almost to launch off the ground, the pent-up energy rising through his uncoiling legs and torso, as if traveling up a spiral staircase, then releasing outwards through his hooking, compact, muscled arm to fill the open gap with a red-gloved fist.

The devastating blow will be his last, though he doesn't know it yet. His weary opponent watches the incoming devastation of leather, and appears to, in the milliseconds before impact, surrender to it, as though welcoming his own magnificent defeat.

As Greg's fist rushes to crack his opponent's vulnerable nose, the audience is swelling, wailing, jumping, writhing: "YEAHHHHH!"

Greg's fist connects, hitting so hard it dislodges his opponent's headgear a quarter-turn and rebounds his neck to and fro like a bobblehead. Everyone loses it: "COME ON GREG, END IT!" His opponent's hands drop slightly. He looks confused, swaying, blinking, as though just awoken from a long nap. As Greg winds up his piston for the lethal coup de grâce, the ref rushes in, breaking up the combatants, shielding the dazed man from ultimate ruin. It's bedlam. Pandemonium. Drinks are spilling on me. The ref counts, steadies the man's head, and looks deep into his eyes. With one wave of his arms, he signals both victory and defeat. It's over. TKO.

The decibels spike to a deafening volume. Greg dances around the ring, vaults onto the ropes, yelling to the crowd, unleashing months of emotion, pounding his chest, sweat and spit flinging off him as he does, shining stark-white in the fluorescent light. With every pound of his chest, they whoop and scream. They're shoving, pressing in to get a better view, taking pictures. The grizzled, disgruntled bouncers drive them back. Greg has the crowd in his grip. He has trained for this moment, dreamed of it. Now, he is on top of the world. He has brought them a knockout, and they love him for it.

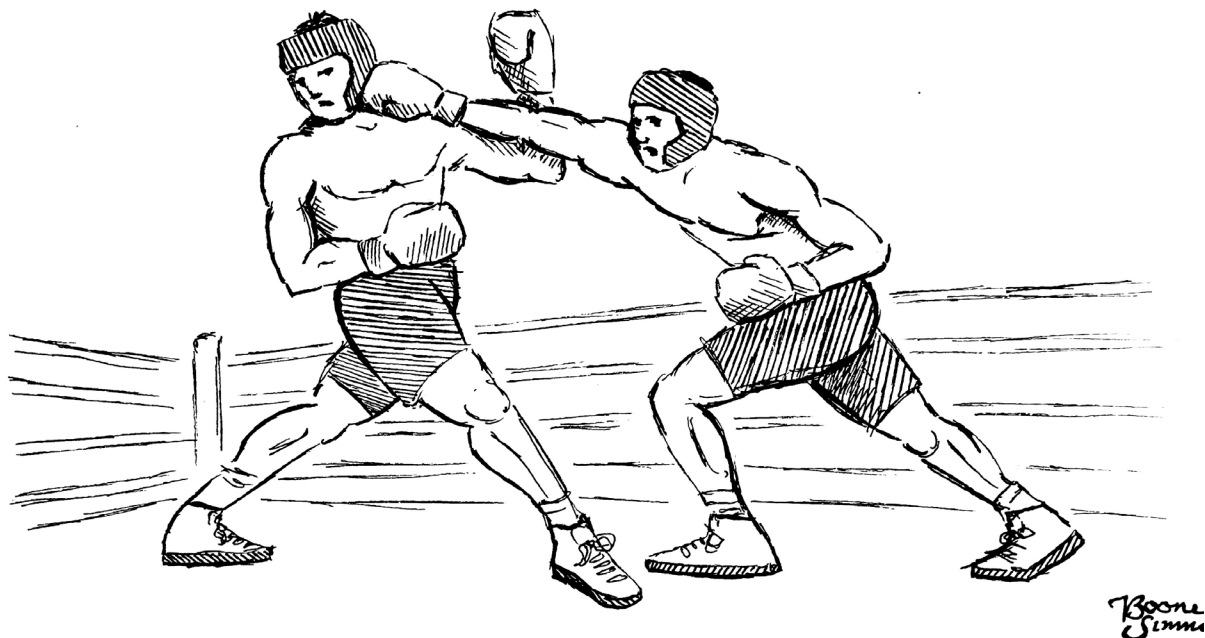
The event is incredibly organized. Ring girls, coaches, security, entourage, walk-out music, two fully manned bars, a live-stream setup, a projector showing active betting odds, and even a band in the corner for intermissions. The card lists 10 fights: 5 men's, 5 women's. This is far from a backyard brawl. It feels like a real Vegas fight with legit production value.

Months of planning and coordination by The St. Andrews Fight Club has culminated into this glorious *Fight Night*.

It's hot as hell in here. Always is at any social event in St. Andrews. Even though it's freezing outside on this March evening, the density of bodies packed together generates enough heat to break a sweat on my forehead. It's not helped by the fact that we are all wearing suits and ties. But I love it. It feels like the roaring '20s.

This is by far the most barbaric event on our social calendar. But it's important. We all paid a non-trivial sum for a ticket to be here. A funny juxtaposition, students all dressed up in their finest clothes to witness the most primitive of events.

We St. Andrews students pride ourselves on being civilized, distinguished, classy, genteel, even Aristocratic. Every day, we are mostly mild-mannered, reserved, deferent, proper. We agree with King Henry, "In peace there's nothing so becomes a man as modest stillness and humility."



But once a year, when the bell dings at *Fight Night*, we discard formalities and go feral:

"When the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect"

We crowd in, like moths to a flame, squeezing towards the ropes, peering over heads on tippy toes to catch a better glimpse of the action. Everyone is angling for a vantage point: we stand on the stairs, on railings, on speakers, on upturned trash cans. We loosen ties and curse freely.

We can't wait to see our peers wage war against one another. We stoke the carnage in all its glory.

What draws us to this pugilistic affair? Is it a base appetite for violence? Or could it be something higher, something more profound? Something like...*virtue*?

Historically, fighting was used to settle disputes. Somewhere along the way, it became a sport. At its best, it might even be an art.

What if boxing is a ground for moral training?

What if it could teach you more about morality, character, and virtue than any philosophy class ever could?

The ring is where your ideas about yourself go to be tested. You can philosophize about virtue all you want in abstraction, but, as Mike Tyson said, "Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face."

Boxing represents various virtues: courage, strength, fortitude. But it's also about restraint and self-discipline. You can't fight recklessly, over-aggressively. You must be poised, embodying Aristotle's golden mean: Nothing in excess, everything in moderation.

There is an inherent urge to fight and defend. As long as humans have lived, we have fought and have watched others fight. It's a tradition, hearkening back to boxing in the Olympics in Ancient Greece and the gladiators of Ancient Rome.

Participating in *Fight Night* is no spur-of-the-moment decision. Fighters train for months and deeply desire victory. It's a way to prove themselves to themselves, and to the whole university at large. There's a lot at stake to those who don the gloves and step into the ring.

Second-year Max "The Tennessee Titan" Kohler (as he was known in last year's bout) reflects, "I was training minimum four times a week and truly felt like an athlete. It was so consuming both mentally and physically. I totally put the pressure on myself, but I felt like I had something to prove."

Kohler goes on, "Walking out was such a surreal experience. People were touching me and yelling in my face, but it sounded completely silent. I couldn't hear anything other than my own thoughts."

The idea of proving oneself immediately makes us uncomfortable. We are all told we are already good enough. Our whole culture has been carefully designed to convince us so. We are all too coddled, afraid, and soft.

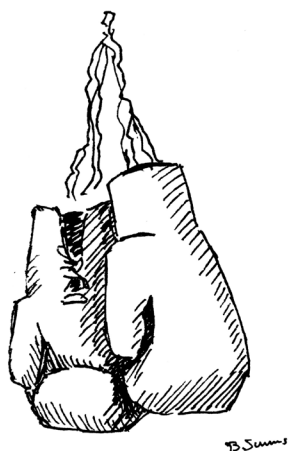
CONTINUED ON PAGE IV

Fight Night

cont. from pg III

We are now at an event, *Fight Night*, where the object of the game is literally to see who the tougher contender is, who can withstand more hurt, who can deliver more vicious blows, who is stronger.

Because of this, boxing is a profound instructor. Second-year Kate “Terror” Thompson explains, “My biggest surprise was seeing how much I could take. I thought I would back away and be scared, but as soon as I got hit, I realized I was much stronger than I thought, and I could throw a punch harder than I thought, too. It was cool seeing the development of getting so much stronger. I found out a lot more about myself.”



Boxing may just be the simplest, purest test of character, nerve, and willpower. It's just two people in a ring, and the one who can marshal better equanimity, strategy, and resolve wins. We love that. It's unambiguous and refreshing in a world full of confusing filters, red-tape, and doublespeak.

It's anathema to the cultural tides of today. And yet, we love it. We love the more muscular worldview boxing offers. We yearn for it, clamor for it, but are deprived of it. We shout and shove and foam at the mouth for it.

We love the risk of boxing. We love how fighters willingly subject themselves to danger. You could get hurt. You *will* get hurt. It's dangerous, strenuous, and real in a world that is often too safe, too convenient, and too simulated.

Boxing at first glance may look barbaric, uncivilized, and chaotic, but it contains embedded order and strategy. There are rules of civility that participants follow, both written and unwritten. The demanding nature of the sport engenders mutual respect among opponents.

During this year's *Fight Night*, I witnessed foes intensely battle, then embrace after the final bell, sweatily congratulating each other on a valiant fight well fought. Even when someone lost, I often heard, “I really respect them for getting out there.”

There's a nobility, an admiration for just entering the arena, for just having the intestinal fortitude, even in defeat.

In a society so empty, timid, and anti-competitive, we desire just a little bit of real danger, ruggedness, and grit. We want a hero to risk it all, to subdue their opponent, to win. Someone who truly answers the charge of *Ever to Excel*. We see in the ring a valorous warrior, what we were meant to be, what we aspire to, what we have lost. For one fleeting night a year, we St. Andrews students revivify an ancient tradition and see a lively glimmer of true virtue.

Fight Night is exactly the type of event that would get cancelled by the risk-management department because of “liability” concerns. But in art, sports, and love, without risk, there can be no intrigue, no story, no hero.

The beating heart of the University of St. Andrews lies in its many wonderful traditions. Some have faded away, others barely hang on, the rare few still thrive. May the tradition of *Fight Night* continue next spring. Once more unto the ring, dear friends, once more...and forevermore.



Patrick Hamilton

cont. from pg I

There is an old legend in St Andrews that if a student steps on the cross, he will fail his exams. There is a way out, however. The penance requires the student to plunge himself into the cold waters of the North Sea at sunup. After he emerges from the waters, he will be cleansed of his sin. A myth, certainly, but one that is based on a real man and his death for what he believed in.

For Christians, it is difficult to think that for centuries, Christians were killing other Christians for reading, preaching, and believing the Bible. Hamilton read his Bible daily. He studied it, cogitated on its words, and, in turn, formulated his own beliefs about its doctrine. Sadly for him, these conclusions were at variance with the Roman Catholic Church, the dominant religious body of the age.

Anyone who believed contrary to the Church's teachings was deemed a heretic. Heretics were offered the opportunity to recant their beliefs and adhere to Rome's. If not, heretics were condemned and burnt.

Just who was Patrick Hamilton? Why did the Church care so much about what a twenty-four-year-old student at a Scottish university think? Why, five centuries after, do people still care about him?

Patrick Hamilton was born in 1504 either at Kincavel or Stanehouse. He was the son of Sir Patrick Hamilton of Kincavel in Linlithgowshire and Stanehouse in Lanarkshire and Katherine Stewart, daughter of Alexander, third duke of Albany, the

second son of James II and brother of James III.

After attending a grammar school in Linlithgow, he attended the University of Paris, where he gained his MA in 1520. The University of Paris was one of the central universities of medieval Europe. It was home to the best scholars and students from around the world. As a major university, it was susceptible to different ideas, some of which were contrary to Church teaching.

One man whose works made its mark at Paris was Martin Luther, the German reformer who challenged the Roman Catholic Church's doctrines. Hamilton came across Luther's works at Paris. It cannot be certain whether he converted to Luther's teachings at this point but it suffices that this exposure influenced him in his eventual conversion shortly after.

Hamilton probably returned to Scotland in 1523. In June that year he was incorporated into the University of St Andrews. On 3 October 1524 he was admitted to its faculty of arts where he became a student of the famous Renaissance humanist John Mair.

The mid-1520s were unstable times in Scotland. Luther's books were smuggled from Europe throughout the British Isles, especially in university towns like Cambridge, Oxford, and St Andrews. In response to the proliferation of Luther's books in Scotland, in 1525 James V pressured parliament to ban the importation and distribution of Luther's works.

Nevertheless, many of Luther's books

continued to be illicitly smuggled into St Andrews and Edinburgh. Also smuggled was William Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament, published in Worms in 1526.

The printing press enabled books to be quickly printed and distributed en masse. The Church feared that people would turn away from their doctrines



and hold to the heterodox ones of Luther. It was around this time that Hamilton began to sympathise with Lutheran teachings.

In Candlemas 1527, St Andrews authorities suspected Hamilton's heterodox views. Rather than face judgement, Hamilton fled to Marburg in the Holy Roman Empire. Marburg was a centre of Lutheranism, being home the new University. While there, Hamilton published a series of theses defending Lutheranism and attacking Roman Catholicism.

Hamilton returned to St Andrews in January

CONTINUED ON PAGE V

Patrick Hamilton

cont. from pg IV

1528.

Bravely, he presented himself for examination by university authorities. The University decided to allow him to teach and preach so long as he spoke without the bounds permitted by the Church. Hamilton took his role seriously, teaching (privately and publicly) Lutheran doctrine; some students and fellow academics were converted.

After a month, he was recalled to answer charges of heresy levelled by fellow academics. What did Hamilton believe that made him so dangerous? The Church claimed that Hamilton's views on free will, original sin, grace, and good works were dangerously close to Luther's. Moreover, Hamilton rejected the concept of Purgatory and the mediation of saints. Hamilton argued for the sole mediation of Christ and held to a sola Scriptura (Scripture alone) view of the Bible. Many Roman Catholics thought that these views undermined the authority of the Church.

After a short trial, sentence was pronounced and Hamilton was condemned to die. Almost immediately after his trial, he was taken to St Salvator's College where authorities set up a stake.

On 29 February 1528, a leap day, Hamilton was burnt alive.

Unfortunately for him, the burning was slow. According to one source, Hamilton "ustulatus magis quam combustus;" that is, he was more roasted than burned.

Hamilton's execution was a turning point in Scotland's history. Up till then, few had dared to challenge the Church's teachings in this way. Hamilton stood his ground. He did not fight them, run away, or cower at the last minute. Instead, he stood defiant yet humble, courageous yet meek.

Thousands of people throughout the nation became inspired by Hamilton's example; this including John Knox, the father of the Reformation in Scotland. Although Hamilton may not have realised it at the time, his martyrdom on that cold leap day in 1528 set the Scottish Reformation on its course and changed this country's history forever.

MORE THAN CRITICISM

William F. Buckley's Lessons For Conservatives

By LUKE HRUSKA

Several weeks ago, amid an academic nightmare—two essays due on the same day—I found an unexpected source of relief in the Main Library. Somewhere around my eleventh water-bottle refill of the day, I noticed it: a white-and-blue blur on the shelf. At first, I assumed it was mild, deadline-induced delirium. Still, I drifted towards it. And there it was: the fiftieth-anniversary edition of William F. Buckley Jr.'s *God and Man at Yale*.

My admiration for this book goes further than that library encounter. Part of it comes from my own frustration with the ideological uniformity at my past schools. But what makes *God and Man at Yale* so striking is that it still feels current. Buckley's charge against Yale—that the university was not neutral, but deeply one-sided in its assumptions—does not read like distant history. It is relevant now. Institutions shape the convictions of the people they produce, and Buckley's writing is a reminder that this process is never neutral.

The book matters for another reason too. It was Buckley's first. And from it came one of the most consequential conservative careers in modern American history. He grew up in Connecticut, served stateside in the U.S. Army during the Second World War, attended Yale, and published *God and Man* shortly after graduating. He could easily have disappeared into a law firm or some similarly respectable corner of post-war America. Mercifully, he did not.

Instead, Buckley used the book to begin a much larger argument about politics and culture. He argued that Yale, backed by alumni who believed

in Christianity and free enterprise, had begun undermining both. More importantly, he identified something enduring: institutions do not stay neutral by default, and the ideas they transmit are never accidental.

That insight shaped everything Buckley did afterwards.

In 1955, he founded *National Review*. It was not just a magazine. It was an attempt to give coherence to an American right that, in the early Cold War years, was fragmented and intellectually untidy. Buckley understood that a movement cannot survive on instinct alone. It needs discipline and institutions of its own. *National Review* became the place where conservative ideas were sharpened, organized, and made respectable.

He applied the same logic to younger conservatives. In 1960, Buckley brought together a group to establish *Young Americans for Freedom* and write the *Sharon Statement*. The former became a serious force in student activism and electoral politics. The latter, a fundamental text for post-war conservatism. Again, the pattern is obvious: Buckley did not just want conservatives to object. He wanted them to build.

That is what makes him relevant now. The most important thread running through Buckley's career is not anti-liberal complaints. It is institutional seriousness. He understood that ideas do not last on sentiment alone. They need publications, organizations, debates, and a generation willing to take them seriously.

Just as distinctive as what Buckley argued was how he argued. His prose could be theatrical, winding, and occasionally maddening, but it was never dull. He wrote with a huge vocabulary, elegance, and a wit that could be exhilarating or brutal. Few people have managed to make intellect look so stylish and so dangerous at the same time.



ST SALVADORE'S CHAPEL, SITE OF PATRICK HAMILTON'S EXECUTION

That quality carried over to *Firing Line*, where Buckley became a public performer of argument. Watching episodes now, one is struck by how unusual it feels. It was adversarial, but not vitriolic. Sharp, but rarely vulgar. Buckley knew that disagreement was not a problem to be managed away, but something worth engaging with properly. He believed opposing views should be confronted, not lampooned.

None of this places Buckley beyond criticism. Some of his early views, especially on civil rights, were plainly wrong. That matters, and it cannot be forgotten. But even here, what stands out is the seriousness with which he treated public argument. He wrote constantly, debated constantly, and, over time, revised some of his views. Not perfectly. But seriously.

Which brings me back to the fourth floor of the Main Library. The distance between 1950s Yale and present-day St Andrews is considerable, but the dynamic Buckley identified remains strikingly familiar. Universities are still places where ideas compete for authority, where some opinions are treated as obviously reasonable and others as

CONTINUED ON PAGE VI

W.F. Buckley

cont. from pg V

embarrassing. Student publications are still testing grounds for arguments that may later matter far beyond campus. And conservatism still faces the same question Buckley confronted at twenty-five: not simply whether it can resist, but whether it can build.

That, ultimately, is why God and Man at Yale still matters. Not because Buckley was flawless, and not because every part of his argument belongs unchanged in the present, but because he understood something essential: if you want to challenge an orthodoxy, indignation is not enough. You need institutions. You need confidence. You need to be willing to write your argument down and defend it.

Buckley did, and the effects were enormous. Whether young conservatives can do the same now is the most pressing question.

But at the very least, he makes refilling a water bottle feel slightly more consequential.



The Heritage

Our Fathers in a wondrous age,
Ere yet the Earth was small,
Ensured to us an heritage,
And doubted not at all
That we, the children of their heart,
Which then did beat so high,
In later time should play like part
For our posterity.

A thousand years they steadfast built,
To 'vantage us and ours,
The Walls that were a world's despair,
The sea-constraining Towers:
Yet in their midmost pride they knew,
And unto Kings made known,
Not all from these their strength they drew,
Their faith from brass or stone.

Youth's passion, manhood's fierce intent,
With age's judgment wise,
They spent, and counted not they spent,
At daily sacrifice.
Not lambs alone nor purchased doves
Or title of trader's gold—

Their lives most dear, their dearer loves,
They offered up of old.

Refraining e'en from lawful things,
They bowed the neck to bear
The unadorned yoke that brings
Stark toil and sternest care.
Wherefore through them is Freedom sure;
Wherefore through them we stand,
From all but sloth and pride secure,
In a delightful land.

Then, fretful, murmur not they gave
So great a charge to keep,
Nor dream that awestruck Time shall save
Their labour while we sleep.
Dear-bought and clear, a thousand year,
Our fathers' title runs.
Make we likewise their sacrifice,
Defrauding not our sons.

Rudyard Kipling
Lord Rector of the University
of St Andrews, 1922-1925



ST ANDREWS CASTLE, DAMAGED IN SIEGE OF EARLY SCOTTISH PROTESTANTS. UPON ITS FALL, CAPTIVES, INCLUDING JOHN KNOX, WERE MADE FRENCH GALLEY SLAVES

Ever To Excel

Aien Aristeuin

By BOONE SIMMS

As I sat at the opening ceremony for the College of the Arts back in September, I felt a little old as a master's student among freshers. But I was not going to miss this, not all the pomp of a St Andrews opening ceremony.

Both the Principal and Dean welcomed us to one of the finest universities in the world. The scene was lighthearted and uplifting, the buzz of

a new semester in the air. In their charge for our forthcoming St Andrews career, both speakers extracted advice from our beloved school motto, "Ever to Excel."

The proposed interpretation was simple and encouraging. Go forth; be good students; have fun; *be you*. That is what it means to excel.

The sentiment is well-meaning but misguided. Correctly understood, the motto in its context demands vastly more from us.

The motto is taken from Book VI of Homer's Iliad. During a reprieve in fighting, rivals Glaucus and Diomedes meet on the battlefield. As the warriors size each other up, Diomedes asks Glaucus,

"Who are you?" Glaucus eloquently responds,

"Hippolocus begat me. I claim to be his son, and he sent me to Troy with strict instructions: Ever to excel, to do better than others, and to bring glory to your forebears, who indeed were very great."

In contrast to the slogan pitched in the addresses at the opening ceremony, the original quote sits uncomfortably in our ears. Some might even take offense to Glaucus' ancestral pride, condemning it as dangerous.

But instead of toss out the original, let's try to understand what our forefather Glaucus has passed down to us.

CONTINUED ON PAGE VIII

Saints' Suffle

cont. from pg I

I zigged, she zagged. That awkward leaning, left then right, neither committing. Closer and closer we stepped. Too close.

We were nose to nose before I bailed to one side, both mumbling awkward apologies.

I hadn't looked so suave since I got my braces off.

It's "chaotic," said Sarah, an American student frustrated by the failed social experiment. Sarah's diagnosis? "People come from so many different places" and bring their own flow of traffic with them.

She's onto something.

Titus, also American, tends to the right side. "I'm just doing what's natural."

Owen, from England, steers left. "It's my instinct."

Tomayto, tomahto.

Owen and Titus walk towards each other on a collision course. Think quick! Too late. The music has already started. They dance "the Saints Shuffle," that social waltz with all the elegance of two intoxicated giraffes.

The clashing instincts go way back, long before cars. When people carried swords, they kept left to keep blades from clanging and to free up the right hand for a handshake or a stab. The Americans rejected the tradition. Napoleon in Europe, too.

Thus, we still feel the cultural fallout. It makes



sophisticated St Andrews more like a bustling ant colony.

American Titus powers through in the right lane, scattering accommodating pedestrians in his wake. "People are too polite," he says. "If they want me to pass on the left, they'll have to make me." Very American.

British Owen is the other partner in the dance. When asked if he's bothered by the internationals tending to the right, he said he's "unfussed."

Translation: he's too polite to fight it. And too British to complain.

To be honest, the Brits have always been too accommodating. After all, they gave away a global empire.

The Scots, however, might have done something worse: they let all the Americans, like me, into St Andrews.

With all this to handle, order never stands a chance on Market Street.

So, before you head out there, better put on your dancing shoes and feel the rhythm.



Staff

Editorial Staff:
Adyan Sharda
Luke Hruska
Winston Margaritis

Founder and Editor-in-Chief:
Boone Simms

Mission

The Martyr is an independent student publication and voice of conservatism at the University of St Andrews.

The Martyr exists to articulate and preserve the Principles of Western Civilization in the St Andrews community.



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Copies are free.

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EVER TO EXCEL

cont. from pg VI

At first blush, when excelling means “be yourself,” it sounds encouraging and comfortable. However, the listener can walk away with a conception of excellence that tends towards complacency, a complacency which undercuts the call towards effort, the predicate of true success.

Allow me to illustrate this as it might play out in one of our classrooms.

You sit in class. An exam fast approaches. The professor distributes a study guide containing only two words: “be yourself.”

You, being the studious type, want to succeed on the exam and will certainly be frustrated. You want to know how to prepare, how to pass, how to excel on the exam. We know that in the classroom

success takes preparation and hard work.

Likewise, imagine your friend refusing to study for an exam, planning his route to success, “I’ll just be myself.” He will most likely fail. If not fail, he most certainly will not excel.

The same holds true in athletics. No athlete is content to be himself as he is.

Training of the mind or body is not an act of forsaking your identity, but is the only way to build a more excellent version of yourself. To excel is a call to action and not passivity, a call to become the best version of you, not merely to be yourself as you are. In order to excel, one must strive, train, and study.

We can discern excellence clearly in sport and academics because there are built-in standards. There is a grading system. There is competition.

But when it comes to everyday life, we

have been habituated to feel discomfort with any standards that determine distinction.

Yet, when it comes down to it, we don’t operate that way.

Every student who was accepted to this selective school knows that choices affect success and failure.

A philosophy of simply “be you” must fail. For this philosophy focuses inwardly, leading to complacency. Complacency breeds stagnation.

On the other hand, the desire to excel, the desire for distinction, is comparative.

The excellence seeker compares himself to his past, hoping for improvement. The excellence seeker compares himself to the unknown, vanquishing the impossible.

The excellence seeker is not satisfied to remain in comfort but aims higher. He looks outwardly to an outside world of real standards. He looks outwardly to his community to serve and lead.

The desire to excel is the stimulant of progress, development, and success.

Glaucus’ father sent his son off to war with a charge to triumph.

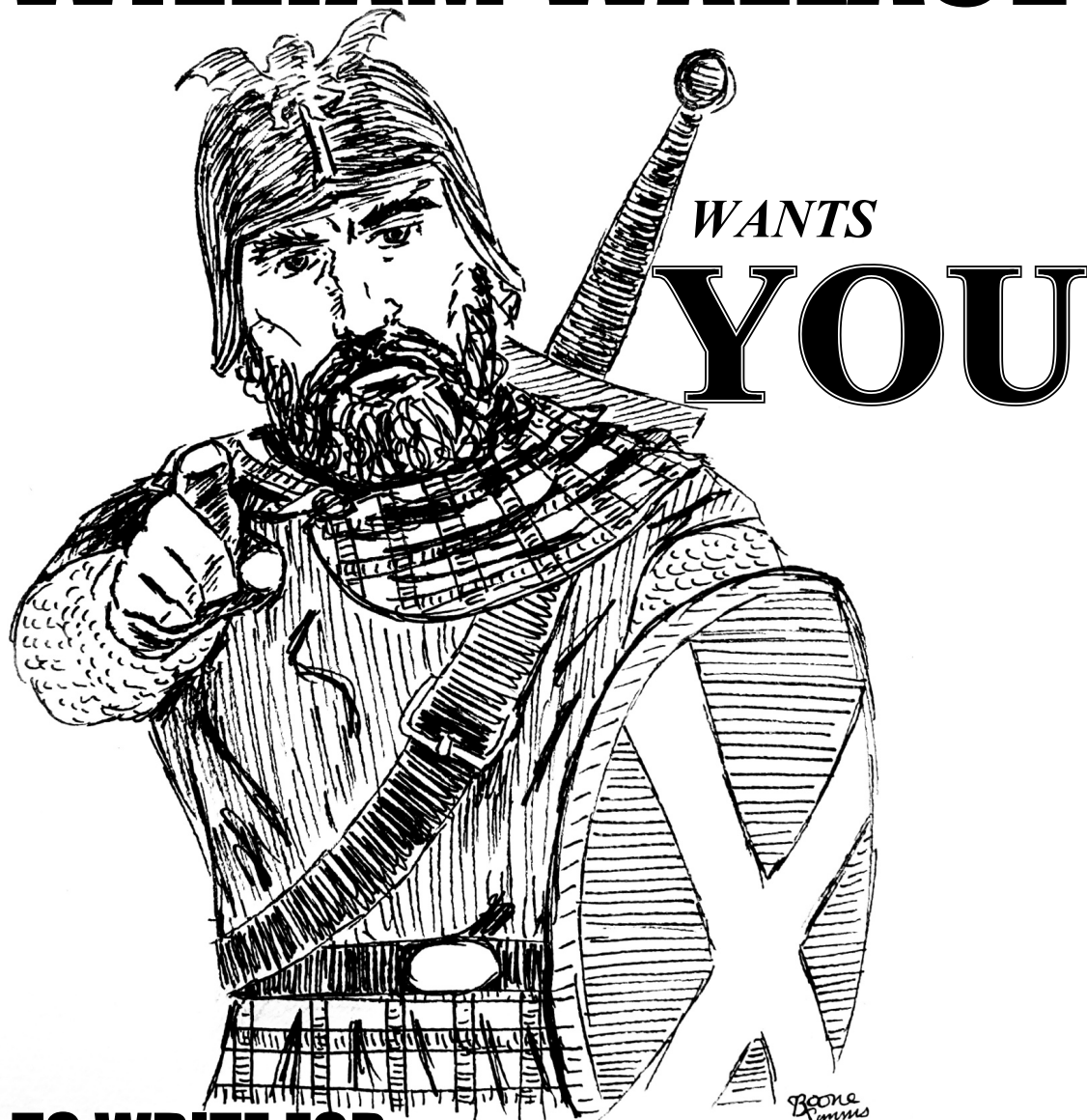
Greatness was his heritage. So, it is ours.

Those who have been adopted into the St Andrews family are heirs of excellence. You stand in a long line of excellence seekers, an ancestry decorated by the highest achievements and distinctions.

If Glaucus were to step out from the mist of myth onto that September ceremony stage, doubtless he would send us out with a different charge:

Live excellently; refuse complacency; make your great university proud.

WILLIAM WALLACE



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