

Vision

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Good Government

In a series of lectures delivered some years ago, Leon MacLaren, founder of the international body of Schools, spoke about government.

"When people think of government", he said, "they think of a sovereign authority having power over all, and so it is good to test that and ask ourselves if there is indeed a sovereign authority, with power over all". He added that the answer was Yes: "It is the Will of the Absolute, that is totally sovereign and it knows no breach whatsoever, anywhere."

It is good to be reminded of this at the present time when considering questions such as "what is good government in the temporal sense?" ... "What would be needed to bring it about?"

The word "govern" has its origins in the Latin word "gubernare", meaning to steer, direct, rule, and a Greek word also meaning "to steer". The direction in which a government will steer the affairs of the nation very much depends on the wisdom or otherwise of its members.

The requirement that good government be wise government has been universally recognised from the earliest times. The great

councils in England, for example, were frequently called "wittena-gemote", or "the meeting of wise men". Gradually over time the word "parliament" came into being, derived from the French, and signified the place where its members met and conferred together.

The best way to govern is with a light, not oppressive, hand. "In the highest antiquity", said the ancient Chinese sage Lao Tzu, "the people did not know that they had rulers. In the next age they loved and praised them. In the next, they feared them. In the next, they despised them."

"Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish" (don't overdo it)

(Lao Tzu)

This reminds us of the types of government described in Plato's Republic: oligarchy (rule by the few), timocracy (rule by the wealthy), aristocracy (rule by the best), democracy (rule by the people) and tyranny (rule by a tyrant).

Plato believed that the best form of government was rule by the aristocracy, but this word did not then mean rule by the rich and powerful: the Greek word for "best" being "aristos", it referred to the most temperate, mature, reflective and educated of men. A high standard of governance indeed.

The major Greek philosophers did not hold democracy in high regard because they thought it allowed people to pursue their desires in an uncontrolled fashion. As Plato said, in a democracy "a man may say and do as he likes".

Government by tyranny is even worse because, as Sir William Blackstone noted in his "Commentaries on the Laws of England", the supreme magistracy, or the right both of making and of enforcing the laws, is vested in one and the same man, or one and the same body of men; and wherever these two powers are united together, there can be no public liberty".

In a speech delivered in 1958 (but it is as though he had spoken only yesterday), Lord Cobham, then Governor-General of New Zealand, said, "We are at present going through a bad patch in the history of the world. We are paying too much attention to a material thing known as a standard of living and too little to a spiritual one known as a way of life." He noted that it was just this that caused the great empires of the world to rot and perish. There was arrogance, torpor and a lowering of spiritual and ethical standards. "Rome fell, not through military

conquest from without, but through the decline in her own virtue." he said.

How could this be remedied?

"Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils, - no, nor the human race, as I believe, - and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day." (Plato's Republic)

An impossible Utopia you may say, which will never be realised, but if such were the case there would be little point in studying philosophy or any of the great teachings and attempting to put them into practice in our daily lives, not only for our own benefit but for the welfare of all.

Such Utopias have featured in the great epics of mankind and a description of the "golden age" can be found in the article "Reflections on the Supreme Yoga" on pages 6 and 7 of the newsletter.

Some wise maxims on Government

"To govern means to rectify"
(Confucius, "Analects, XII")

"A good government produces citizens distinguished for courage, love of justice, and every other good quality; a bad government makes them cowardly, rapacious, and the slaves of every foul desire."

(Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 20 B.C.)

"If men be good, government cannot be bad."
(William Penn: Fruits of Solitude, 1693).

"I will govern according to the common weal, but not according to the common will."

(James I of England:
Reply to the House of Commons, 1621)

"Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice without constraint."

(Alexander Hamilton:
The Federalist, Feb. 8, 1788)

This School, or at least the parent School in London, was started because its founder, Mr Leon MacLaren, was interested in economics and began by running economics classes.

Eventually there came a point where there were questions which could not be answered, so he turned to Philosophy, but economics still remains an aspect of the work of the School, though less obvious than formerly.

In the Taittiriya Upanishad, Bhriгу asked his father Varuna "Teach me about God". Varuna said, "First find out about food, life, seeing, hearing, speaking, and thinking", for these are an aid to the knowledge of Brahman. Knowledge about the world and the way things are organised is not a distraction from the things a philosopher seeks, but is a fundamental part of the laws of nature.

The study of food, etc. what it is, how it is collected and which forces cause men to work one with another is the realm of economics. It is about how men are organised in society and how they can find justice in their relationships with each other.

There are many laws that economists formulate, and many are identical to those philosophers consider. For instance, everyone

must work and the wages for that work often bear little relationship either to the effort or to the immediate results, much as with work in the spiritual realm, where the fruits are often unseen.

The law of wages is that people offer their labour, goodwill and natural intelligence and are paid just sufficient to live at the level to which they have become accustomed. In reality, the value of production added as a result of the input of those workers in money terms often far exceeds the wages paid. Some think this is rather unfair, but then if God were to withdraw His contribution we would all be a lot worse off:

"We plough the fields, and scatter
The good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered
By God's almighty hand:
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine,
And soft refreshing rain."

(Johann Schulz)

Sometimes we think this is only true for those who work the land, but it is true in

To A Butterfly

by William Wordsworth

I've watched you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And, little Butterfly! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless! – not frozen seas
More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we were young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

Visit of Paul Moss to Ficino School

by Nicolette Farrelly

Earlier this year the Ficino School was fortunate to be visited by Mr Paul Moss, headmaster of the St. James Junior School in London, and his wife Penelope. The Deputy Principal, Mr Andrew Bedford, also accompanied them on a tour sponsored by the Educational Renaissance Trust in England.

The primary object of the visit was to observe the implementation of the education philosophy on which St James Schools, London and others in New York, Sydney, Melbourne, Johannesburg, Dublin, etc. were founded. The St James Schools were the first to be established, nearly thirty years ago.

On the evening of 31 July, Mr. Moss addressed Ficino School parents and students of the School of Philosophy with an entertaining but thought-provoking talk in the school hall at 27 Esplanade Road. He began with a little insight into his own background and moved to an overview of the aims of these schools. He outlined their real necessity, given the current alarming statistics of teenage pregnancy, abortion and suicide and the breakdown of the family unit. Although these statistics were UK-based, they are prevalent in much of the Western world. Mr Moss said this trend suggests that something is missing in education and that that "something" needs to be addressed.

He spoke of Governmental policies which have debilitated the education system, and caused the woeful position teachers now find themselves in. In another age, the teacher held a highly respected position in society, preceded only by priests.

Mr Moss also spoke about the founding sound of a school - the yardstick against which teachers and students will measure themselves and their standards. For some schools that sound reflects a focus on purely



Paul Moss with Ficino School Headmaster, Mark Broadwith

material or academic achievements. The founding sound for Ficino, St. James and the other schools mentioned is Truth, being the only place where commonality can be found in all people.

Mr Moss quoted from the Bible: "Ye are the light of the world..." (Matt. 5:14) – pure perfect and complete. Although this is a true description of everyone, it is the reality upon which the curriculum of Ficino is based. Each child and adult is that light, he said, and one of the major aims of these schools is to help the students to find it – not "somewhere over the rainbow...", or "out there", but in themselves. The children are reminded of that light through the example of their teachers, and ready access to the sublime works of Shakespeare, Mozart, Michelangelo and others.

The reason for all this fine input is to expose the children to as much goodness as possible to protect, guide and arm them for life. Children at a young age take up and absorb whatever is presented, so rather than teaching them "Betty Botter Bought a Bit a' Butter...", give them something like Shakespeare's "Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit

impediment..." Mr Moss said that they might not understand these words now, but this may come later in life, when it is needed.

He spoke of the softness of young children, which is evident inside and out. He personally greets all the students at St. James Junior School every morning with a handshake and a greeting. That much, if nothing else, is a reminder to the children and himself of who they truly are. It is a simple conduit for Truth, upon which the rest of the day is built.

A comparison was made with the morning assembly at Ficino, where Mr. Mark Broadwith, the headmaster, addresses the whole school and sets the sound for the day. Mr. Moss went on to say that if the children are given this much and then allowed a forum in which to ask "real questions", it is astounding what will come forth.

The need for love and discipline in balance was also pointed out. Though discipline in schools is unpopular, it is necessary for the proper development of a child's self-discipline, which leads to strength of character and true self-confidence. He joked that the Beatles wouldn't have got very far if they'd written "All you need is discipline...."!

In question and answer time, when asked about the qualities of New Zealand children he had seen, he described them as devoted, innocent and interested in learning.

When asked whether children leaving Ficino will be able to handle the "hardness" of the world, he said he was convinced that they



A visit to the Senior Boys Art Class

would and that there was no benefit in giving them detailed preparation for that "hardness".

He spoke of the difference a teacher can make by looking past the projected personality to the real talents and qualities of a student and how that insight spoken simply, directly and truthfully can change the direction of a life.

He spoke of his own years at secondary school, where he was not a willing student. He was about 14 and an experienced smoker, when one of his teachers came up to him and said, "Hey Moss, you've got long legs, you'd make a good runner." That was enough to wake him up to an unknown talent. He gave up smoking and started some serious training. The other example came from his history teacher, who invited him away for a weekend to hunt for historical artefacts. He went along and has loved history ever since.

The talk was very impressive and I'm sure I wasn't alone when I say that by the end of it I was ready to "sign up" and help shape a valuable future for our young. As future parents of Ficino, my husband and I are relieved and thankful that such schools exist around the world....and counting!

Reflections on The Supreme Yoga

by Graham Soughtton

“In the beginning was the Word....and the Word was God...”

(John Ch. 1:1-5).

should be, directly tested in personal experience. What may be discovered by the sincere seeker is that Vasishtha is the philosophic mother lode.

The passages of dialogue in the Supreme Yoga are so rich, so deep that we are counselled to take readings in small chunks, a day at a time. It takes a year to work through The Supreme Yoga in this way; and if at the end of a year one starts again, there are fresh depths to discover. Here is the story that never ends.

Here is drama, theatre, poetry, philosophy, and layer upon layer of stories that simultaneously tell us of our own condition, and yet also remain vivid encounters with another age: a strange age, yet strangely familiar. Speaking to us from the mists of antiquity, Vasishtha is yet as near as the next breath. His wisdom is monumental and divine; but friendly as a good neighbour.

For as long as there have been philosophers there has been a debate about the reality of the World we understand to exist through our five senses. Some have argued brilliantly that it is not real, and therefore nothing is real. Others have convincingly countered that what we perceive is the only reality. They all should have checked with Vasishtha.

He would say they are both right and both wrong. The Creation is both real, and unreal.

Early in the discourses Lord Rama asks, “If the object of perception is real, then it shall not cease to be. If unreal then we do not see it as unreal; so how to overcome this?”

Vasishtha replies, “In reality neither the

objective universe nor the perceiving self, nor perception exists; only one is – consciousness”.

He is saying that everything is consciousness. There is only one. One without a second. All divisions are illusory, not real. The supreme substance from which all this Creation is projected is alone real.

Vasishtha says the proof of this One substance is union (yoga) with it. “IT is in the seer, the sight, and the seen as the very seeing; when you know it you realise your Self”. This, he says, is the ultimate realisation. Having achieved it, there remains nothing more to achieve, and then there is final liberation from ignorance, and the imagined world projected by the mind alone.

Vasishtha teaches that liberation is available to all, provided passage is obtained via the four “gatekeepers” to cosmic consciousness. He names these as contentment, self-control, the spirit of inquiry, and the company of the wise and good.

There is a great deal to learn about these four great cornerstones. One needs the help of a School. It is said Vasishtha ran a School in the Silver Age for thousands of students. He also advised and instructed the great leaders of his era and continues to inspire and enlighten us a million years later.

Now that is truly standing the test of time.

The Supreme Yoga Vasishtha. Simply supreme.

(Fresh stocks of the two-volume “The Supreme Yoga” will be available in bookshop for purchase next term, at a cost of \$40).

With the Word, it is said, the Absolute began all things. It is said the Word has three syllables, which become the three great universal deities; a Creator, a Sustainer, and a Dissolver. This Trinity is said to be everywhere together, at all times.

One of these Universal Beings is called Brahma in the Vedantic tradition. Brahma creates the entire Universe, everything; and in the beginning it is all perfect.

In the world of Man there is perfect harmony, no disease, no sin, no crime, no error. Man at One with all nature, and in direct contact with his own divine source, the Supreme Absolute. He knows all, loves all, and anything he wishes for is instantly his; but there is not a trace of selfishness anywhere. This is The Golden Age.

After a very long time it ends, and it is said it ends when suddenly one man desires something just for himself, thus excluding another. Then his full consciousness falls to a lower level. No more "Garden of Eden".... Man has fallen.

Selfishness begins to find a general foothold, and Man begins to forget his divine nature and to forget who he really is. So begins the Silver Age, where, it is said, the level of consciousness is still of a high order, and where wonderful warriors emerge to conduct warfare of a type we in this era write "science fiction" about...(may the force be with you!)

The consciousness of that age also powers prodigious feats of memory by those who carry forward a spiritual legacy and history in an oral tradition stretching back to the previous era. In this way a memory is preserved even under the onslaught of illusion created by imagination and ignorance.

Knowing that this general condition would only slowly worsen over time, and that the

Creation is designed to run down, Brahma created a phenomenal sage to enlighten Mankind and to leave a precious legacy of Truth for all time. That sage was VASISHTHA, who arose in the Silver Age at a time we can dimly understand as being some one million years ago.

He articulated the whole truth of Man's origin, existence, and relationship to the Creation. This was carried orally for a time and then written down. We know the writing as Yoga Vasishtha. It comes to us in the form of a dialogue in which he is instructing all mankind through the agency of his questioner, the great Silver Age prince and warrior Lord Rama.

The abridged version of Yoga Vasishtha we know as The Supreme Yoga. Supreme it is. Throughout the ages philosophers have struggled to understand and explain our existence, and our relationship to the phenomenon we call reality.

Many discovered part of a larger picture; and in the modern Western tradition stretching back to the Greeks, we have constructed a patchwork quilt of concepts and formulations massive enough to cover several lifetimes of study and discovery.

In comparison to the Yoga Vasishtha this entire effort seems puny and crude. Vasishtha gave us the whole thing. He stands like a colossus on the philosophical landscape of the ages, unlikely to be matched anywhere, by anyone, at any time.

What is the authority for this ?

The teachings of Vasishtha rose from the Veda, the direct law of the Absolute. This underpins the great tradition of Advaita Vedanta, which in turns forms the basis of the teaching of practical philosophy as we know it in the School of Philosophy.

The fundamentals of this tradition can, and

A Celebration of the Arts

On Sunday, 7 December,
there will be a Concert at the Ficino School Hall
Commencing at 4pm

The Programme will include:

Dance
(two items)

Speech

Drama
(pieces from Shakespeare)

Flute, Piano and Clarinet Recitals

Singing from the Convivium Choir and Soloists

**All are welcome to an afternoon of light and joyous
entertainment, followed by refreshments and good company**

**For all enquiries, phone either Rosemary Auld (412-8782)
or Hamish Hudson (638-9667)**

*"Fine art is that in which the hand, the head, and the heart of man go together."
(John Ruskin)*

Convivium Choir

Concert Review

Venue: St. Mary's in Holy Trinity, Programme: Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring
Parnell, Auckland Ficino School Choir
Date: 10 August 2003 Reflection on Hermes (cello solo)
Conductor: Derek Saunders In the Beginning
Organist: Sherry Shelton Vivaldi's Gloria in D Major (RV
Reviewer: Matthew Roscoe

First a confession. On initially hearing the music of Leon MacLaren many years ago, this student failed to appreciate it and subsequent renderings did not help much. It was thus with mixed emotions that I read the concert programme, having already agreed to write a review.

Now, after hearing the Auckland School's Convivium Choir under Derek Saunders, supported by organist Sherry Shelton and Andrew-John Spicer (soloist), it must be said that their performance gave the lie to some misconceptions and revealed the opening section of Leon MacLaren's "In the Beginning" (based on the words of St. John 1:1-13) as a work of majesty and grace.

And if that is not compliment enough, there was more to come.

We had in fact been initiated with Bach's sublime "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and then treated to a fine selection of several short pieces from the Ficino School Choir, which showed composure and pluck that belied the singers' years.

Following that, Isobel Saunders offered a luminous rendering of the late Valerie Cullen's piece for cello, "Hermes

Reflections", an inspirational work that gave full scope to the range and depth of the instrument and the musician.

The audience being now suitably mellowed, the full effect of "In the Beginning" was unleashed.

Following a short break, we resumed our wooden pews, for it was in St Mary's in Holy Trinity that we were ensconced, and the Convivium Choir gave forth their major work for the day, Vivaldi's great "Gloria" in D major (RV 589). This is not a piece for rank amateurs (not even in the shower) and yet I must now look at my rather expensive CD of the same with less reverence. The choir was that good, from Kayur Ramson, Andrew Hudson and Toby King, the Ficino boy tenors, to soloists Isobel Saunders and Kathy Dean (the latter kindly loaned by the School in Wellington), and finally to the resounding "Cum Sancto Spirito" at close.

Thanks are due to Sherry Shelton for standing in at short notice as organist and pianist. and doubly so to Derek and Isobel Saunders for their service to music in their year with the School of Philosophy and Ficino School in Auckland, without which this fine concert would not have eventuated.

What is Education?

The teacher on one side, pupil on the other side, knowledge between,
discourse joining them.

(Ten Principal Upanishads)

(Follows an extract from Plato's "Laws",
Book 1)

"Then let us not leave the meaning of education ambiguous or ill-defined. At present, when we speak in terms of praise or blame about the bringing-up of each person, we call one man educated and another uneducated, although the uneducated man may be sometimes very well educated for the calling of a retail trader, or of a captain of a ship, and the like. For we are not speaking of education in this narrow sense, but of that other education in virtue from youth upwards, which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship, and teaches

him how rightly to rule and how to obey. This is the only education which, upon our view, deserves the name; that other sort of training, which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength, or mere cleverness apart from intelligence and justice, is mean and illiberal, and is not worthy to be called education at all.... Those who are rightly educated generally become good men. Neither must we cast a slight upon education, which is the first and fairest thing that the best of men can ever have, and which, though liable to take a wrong direction, is capable of reformation, and this work of reformation is the greatest business of every man while he lives."

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Beyond Appearances - Reflective Writings

Golden gleams of light crossed the brown boles of the stately pines; low down through the foliage shone patches of pink sky; to the north and west opened the vast slant down to the desert, illimitable and magnificent in the rosy, shadowy soft dawn. Deer and antelope grazed with the cows in the pasture. Squirrels barked from the trees, hawks sent down their shrill piercing cries, wild turkeys gobbled from over the ridge. Joy of life, radiance of creation, peace and solitude, wholesomeness and sweetness of nature, the exquisite beauty of woodland and wasteland at the break of day, and a marvellous, inscrutable, divine will pervaded that wilderness scene.

Zane Grey, "Nevada"

There is one moment of sunset in the country when the whole visible world seems to gather itself in prayer, and it seems to you strange that men should move on unconscious of this with spades over their shoulders, instead of falling on their knees in the grass; for in that hush, in that benediction of seconds before the first star shines, the Universe seems waiting for a revelation, as if the clouds might part and man know something of his destiny.

H.V. Morton "In Search of England"

It is only in exceptional moods that we realise how wonderful are the commonest experiences of life. It seems to me sometimes that these experiences have an "inner" side, as well as the outer side we normally perceive. At such moments one suddenly sees everything with new eyes;

one feels on the brink of some great revelation. It is as if we caught a glimpse of some incredibly beautiful world that lies silently about us all the time.

J.W.N.Sullivan, English mathematician,
philosopher, writer

...Evening in Makalla...

When the evening came, and the sweet shrill cry of the kites, that fills the daylight, stopped, 'Awiz appeared with three paraffin lanterns, which he dotted about the floor in various places, and, having given me my supper, departed to his home. The compound with its dim walls, its squares of moist earth planted with vegetables and few trees, grew infinite and lovely under the silence of the moon. The gate of the city was closed now; a dim glow showed where the sentries beguiled their watch with a hookah in the guard house.

As I closed my eyes in this security and silence, I thought of the Arabian coasts stretching on either hand: three hundred miles to Aden; how many hundred to Muscat in the other direction? The Indian Ocean in front of me, the inland deserts behind: within these titanic barriers I was the only European at that moment. A dim little feeling came curling up through my sleepy senses; I wondered for a second what it might be before I recognised it: it was Happiness, pure and immaterial; independent of affections and emotions, the ethereal essence of happiness, a delight so rare and so impersonal that it seems scarcely terrestrial when it comes.

Freya Stark

"The Southern Gates of Arabia"

Letter from Scotland

The School of Philosophy in Scotland has some 290 students made up from centres including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Ayr, Falkirk, Lanark and LinLithgow; these are growing term by term as senior members are tasked with giving lectures at outlying centres, some requiring overnight stays for the tutors involved.

Edinburgh itself is where the School in Scotland began and nightly classes are held in rooms owned by the School in the city.

The lectures that we attended there, loving and direct, brought home the universality of the work, even if delivered with a slightly different accent! Everybody we met was very friendly, open and welcoming.

One of the senior members in Edinburgh, Paul Cleghorn, is a headmaster who has introduced a Philosophy course for children into primary schools throughout Scotland. He has published three books, with lessons designed around stories based on true values. He and his wife are also travelling throughout Scotland, training teachers in the delivery of this course. Great interest has been shown, leading to Alan Bryan and Paul Cleghorn being interviewed by the BBC.

Staying with our daughter, son-in-law and two grand-daughters in Burntisland, a little seaside village across the Firth of Forth from Edinburgh, gave us the experience of rural Scotland with its hundred year old-plus buildings, stone walls, narrow winding lanes, wide open rolling fields and of course the beautiful autumn colours of the season,



Carriden House

changing daily. Driving up the coast brought us to other well-defined seaside places; open fields one moment, villages the next, with their sea walls to protect the picturesque fishing vessels.

The sense of going back in time was there whenever we ventured out, with the magnificent stone houses, churches, cathedrals and, of course, the castles: Falkland Palace with its beautifully manicured lawns, where King James the 6th of Scotland and the 1st of England lived; Glamis, where Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother lived as a child, and Edinburgh Castle itself. The sense of history and things ancient was almost tangible, yet not forbidding.

The weather and temperatures: well, they ranged from wanting to wear shorts in the first week of cloudless days, to requiring a jumper when there was snow in the highlands and on the hills behind Edinburgh in the third week. Whatever the climate, nothing

***“The work an unknown good man
has done is like a vein of water
flowing hidden underground,
secretly making the ground green.”***

Thomas Carlyle

Scottish historian and essayist, (1795-1851)

Two senior students of the Auckland School, Robert and Josephine Woods, recently visited family in Burntisland, Fife, Scotland for an extended stay to celebrate the birth of their second Scottish grand-daughter. While there, they attended meetings at the Edinburgh School and also visited several places of interest.

What follows is their "Letter from Scotland".

Turning in between two farm gates, there before us lay a short country lane, lined with magnificent oak trees, leaves turning golden yellow in the cool autumn air and covering the very lane we were to drive over. This was the entry to Carriden House, a lovely old 16th century building that has been beautifully restored to its original splendour by its owner and is now available for use by the School of Philosophy in Scotland for its senior groups' residential weekends and study days.

Carriden House is also available for general bookings and boasts an attractive website.

It is situated some 30 minutes from Edinburgh and the drive through the countryside, along narrow winding lanes to the House is in itself a unique experience for an Aucklander used to masses of concrete and suburban sprawl.

The residential study weekends are run along the same lines as we are used to in Auckland, with study periods, outside work periods and meetings. While I was flying up from Auckland to join Josephine, she attended a Senior Group study weekend, feeling immediately at home amongst the 20 or so men and women gathered.



The Burntisland Parish Church of Scotland church, where it is reported that King James I (of England, 6th of Scotland) commissioned a new translation of the Bible, to become known as the King James Version.

The only real difference to weekends here was that on the Friday night there was a public meeting held at Carriden House with guest speaker David Stollar, a member of the London School, who addressed the life and Philosophy of Emerson, which he has extensively studied and written about. Absolutely fascinating!

Lunch was at 12 noon, buffet-style in the recently refurbished room next to the spacious kitchen, after pre-lunch sherry.

Then there was another meeting with David Stollar, again on Emerson. Apparently the essence of his wisdom is contained in his early essays, a part of which we e-mailed to the Auckland School "webmaster" for inclusion in the "Thought of the Day" service he provides.

The senior ladies Josephine joined were very warm and open and she felt very much at home. The men were also very enthusiastic and sharp of mind, with some very bright sparks.

Why Study Economics?

by Russell Allen

every walk of life. For example, I teach for a living. Many teachers think they go into the classroom with a bag of goodies called "knowledge" which they have to distribute, and get very frustrated when young people rather reject this precious substance.

Well, it is not like that. I go into the classroom and talk and growl, and sometimes wonder if anyone hears a word I say. But at the beginning of the year, the pupils cannot do it. At the end of the year, most of them can. They have matured a little and talked with their friends, and somehow they have found out. Yet if I did not go into the classroom and speak, the students would learn very little of what we consider useful. The speech is like the seed – no more and no less – and the harvest comes when the soil is well tended and nurtured.

In traditional economics, the revenue from an enterprise is divided three ways: into wages, interest and rent. Much has been said by early economists about how these different incomes should be distributed, especially rent, which is seen to be unearned income gained from control of the natural bounty of the earth. Many think it should be taxed and used to meet the needs of the community.

In fact, each sort of income has its proper use. Wages is for the ordinary activities of family life. You may have noticed they are paid into your account each week, fortnight, or whatever, and in no time at all they have disappeared, and all you seem to have seen of them is a small amount of "beer money". The rest just vanishes on what has to be spent on the ordinary necessities of life. This is the nature of wages.

Corresponding to this law is the law of rent, which states that where people can, they will

seek to acquire wealth, with little or no contribution, simply by claiming ownership of what really belongs to everybody, i.e. natural resources such as unimproved land. But this third income, rent, is to provide for something new for the future, or for something special, hence care needs to be taken how it is spent.

Interest is the advantage gained from what is set aside to enhance future production. Much of it goes on maintaining traditions, charities, or preparing for future changes in fortune, and especially education of children. When Henry George was writing, it was the reward from setting aside some of the harvest, so that one had seed to plant for the next year. In this age it is the reward for establishing capital in the form of buildings, machinery, etc.

At a dinner table gathering, one of our number alluded to this. He referred to the fact that he had made more from the increased value of the property provided for his business without a stroke of effort on his part than from the profits of the company, which included all the concern and effort of running a business. This seemed to him unjust, for, as he said, the dollars are the same whether you occupy the land without effort or labour by the sweat of your brow.

The search for economic justice continues because to most of us it does not seem right that much of the world's resources are in the hands of a relative few while millions go without.

This search gives rise to study of the basic principles of economics and how the imbalance can be righted, providing greater equity. Such study is useful for everyone concerned with natural justice.

The Monarchs of Glendowie

by Tom Johnson

During the months from May to August, students visiting the School's property at Glendowie have been fascinated by the scores of beautiful Monarch butterflies swarming there.

This phenomenon also occurred last year but in lesser numbers.

Monarch butterflies swarm every year to winter over in warm, sheltered spots which are protected from cold winds and where there are ample nectar-bearing flowering plants to provide sustenance. The Camphor Laurels and Australian Box trees at 268 West Tamaki Road provide good shelter and heat attracting leaves for the butterflies, and the yellow flowered daisy shrubs nearby give essential nectar.

Monarchs first appeared in New Zealand around 1870 and numbers are increasing every year. It is a native of North America and could have flown here on its own accord, as migration distances as high as 2,500 kilometres have been recorded. However, it is generally considered that the Monarch was brought here by visitors to this

country from the U.S.A. The swan plant, which is the essential food of the Monarch caterpillar, was also introduced at this time, without which the butterfly cannot survive.

Large swarms numbering hundreds of thousands are seen in Mexico each winter, where they are protected by government legislation. Butterflies were important in early Mexican culture and often appeared in Aztec art work. They are also associated with feminine beauty in many cultures because of their delicacy, grace and colour.

In New Zealand the swarms are much more modest than those found in Mexico, the larger ones numbering thousands. These have been observed in Tauranga, Northland and Nelson.

The lifespan of the Monarch butterfly is about 60 days – longer for over-wintering specimens if conditions are favourable, so we wait with some enthusiasm to see if these beautiful creatures will return in numbers next year to grace the property at West Tamaki Road.

Website News

September was the most popular month yet on the website, with visits from... New Zealand, Australia, US Commercial, Germany, US Educational, Denmark, Canada, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Belgium, United States in general, Philippines, Singapore, US Military (again!), Thailand, India, France, Japan, Sweden, Argentina, China and Finland.

The site seems to be going from strength to

strength, and "Thought for the Day", with its pertinent quotes, continues to be enjoyed by many.

From: Thought for the Day

"Spirituality is neither the privilege of the poor nor the luxury of the rich. It is the choice of the wise man."

Swami Chinmayananda (1916 - 1993)
Vedic scholar and mystic

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Thank you to those who provided articles for this newsletter. Please keep contributing. Is there a subject of philosophical interest that you would like to write about? While there can be no guarantee of publication, articles from students are very welcome.

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