

EL PORTAL



...PHELAN
LITERARY
AWARD...

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SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE

EL PORTAL

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1861

SENATOR JAMES D. PHELAN

1930

Senator James D. Phelan bequeathed to the San Jose State Teachers College the sum of \$10,000, the annual income of which was to be awarded to students for excellence in poetry and for the Montalvo Contest as sponsored by him. The cash prizes made possible through the generosity of Senator Phelan have stimulated a keen interest in creative writing throughout the college. There were over four hundred entries in the contest this year. The speaker of the day at the Phelan literary program was the famous novelist, Mrs. Charles G. Norris.

In the judging of material the college was fortunate in securing the services of prominent critics: Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, editor of *The Overland Monthly*; Miss Loverne Wilson, associate editor of *Westward*; Dr. Arthur Hicks, head of the English department, Bellingham Normal School; and Dr. Anthony F. Blanks, professor of public speaking, University of California. The English department wishes to thank the judges for their kind assistance in the contest. In this issue are found the contributions meriting awards and honorable mention. This issue of *El Portal*, containing the third annual literary awards, is dedicated to the memory of the sponsor of the contest, Senator James D. Phelan.

SAPPHO'S ISLE

The winds do not sigh o'er this beautiful island
But sing as they pass on melodious wings,
And each river that sallies down valley or high-
land,

With voices of silver, more liquidly sings:
The bee at his task in the blossoming flowers,
The bird in his flight through the gathering hours,
The waves in the strength of their maritime
powers,—

Each with its separate melody rings.
For a singer, whose peers are as few as the
leaves on

A winter-struck tree with its ribbons of snow,
Once breathed her soul o'er this island that
grieves on

The breast of the ocean for days long ago—
When life was a thing one could feel of and
foster,

And sin was not indexed in schedule and roster,
And souls were not sold like the wares of a
coater,
But grew into beauty as rose blossoms grow,

She died, but her voice echoed on strong and
deathless;

The anthem of nature, it lingers as fresh
As it sprung when her songs left her sweet sis-
ters breathless

As birds who fight wildly the fowler's swift mesh.
We hear it in mountain and beach and in river,
Its strains in the breezes go happily ever,
It rustles in grass—and is silent—oh, never!
It pulses as blood does in feverish flesh.

Had she sung in the darkness of Europe's grim
ages

Her song had been sadder—but scarcely as wise;
Or, now, when decadency scribbles its pages,
Her passion were worthless—her love would be
lies.

But she lived in the dawn and her voice is of
morning,

The oriole's warble first heard without warning,
The beat of strong wings that arise, the earth
scorning,

The sudden emotion in love's startled eyes.

Oh, she lies, now, alone where the ocean is bluer
Than the grey northern waters the Kraken ex-
plores,

Or the seas of the south where the bergs are not
fewer

And albatross skirt the most desolate shores.
She lies in the sea the Phoenicians sailed on,
The sea that the winds of the Odyssey wailed on,
The sea that the wrecks of Kolouri were bailed on,
The sea to which Hercules opened the doors.

She lies, now, alone on a bed in the ocean
With coral around her and grown through her
bones:

The heart that once burned with ecstatic emotion
Now heeds not the water and hears not its moans.
The breasts that were firm are apparent no
longer,

The sweet supple thighs are not smoother or
stronger,

No kiss has the power to win her or wrong her;—
She lies all alone on the coralline stones.

And Phaon—where is he—the stony-lipped lover
From whom she turned, weeping, to give to the
sea

The beautiful body its blue waters cover,
The love that but death had the power to free?
He is dead in his bier, all alone and untended—
To the dust whence they sprung are his features
descended;

But the songs of his lover, not loved, are not
ended—

The words of her passion are diamonds to see.

—Albert Johansson

THE DOOR OF DEATH

I

Impregnable! Your amaranthine strength
Dissolves the waves of time that crash athwart
Your stygian or elysian rocks, as noon
Dissolves the misty vapors of the dawn;
Inscrutable! Forgotten melodies
Of Egypt's sleeping sphinx are better known
Than any slightest mystery you keep
Behind the baffling silence of your night.

All paths converge before this terminal
Of life, and though each soul demands to solve
The spell of death, when time has come to end
Uncertainty, it gasps, and screaming tries
To turn away the future—that is past:
For fear is greater than desire to know.

II

The fawning devotee of God who buys
The Garden of Hesperides with prayer;
The smiling atheist who builds his trust
On fancied pleasures of oblivion;
The shrewd ambiguous one whose heart beats
time
To heaven's hope, or hell's despairing pit;
The slave of fate, who seeks surcease from
thought
By spineless shrug and mincing attitude—

Each quails when life commands his passage
through

The open door! No platitude on death
Can take away the dream of immortality,
And as the drowning man attempts to climb
The visioned steps of straw that hang in air,
The soul attempts to force the Door of Death.

III

Here Moses wrote the history of God; *
Here Sappho carved her name with highest song,
And Socrates wrote wisdom of the wise;
Here Christ inscribed the flaming sign of Love—
And Nero hacked his name with bloody sword;
Here Dante burned his plea with love's hot torch,
And Shakespeare gave to time the greatest blow;
Here Shelley, Chopin, Rembrandt, Hardy, Liszt—

But all is dust, and all shall disappear!
And Sappho's deep-etched chronogram
Shall flake away like scurs of rust on steel,
To leave this final monument unmarked:
The polished shaft shall rise alone and bare
When time and destiny shall be no more.

—Wesley Dexter Gordon

SONNET

In which the poet begins to imagine what would
happen should Napoleon, resurrected, take the
chief place in France.

In noisy Paris he who died, alone
And much forsaken, on an island borne
By green Atlantic waves, lies eve and morn
In solemn sleep, unbroken by a moan:
Within a monument of gilt and stone,
His scepter from his quiet fingers torn
And in his ears no herald's prideful horn.
He sleeps—but cannot call his bed his own.

The fallen emblem of a sunken state,
His mouldering body is of France a part—
His life, a tassel on her thread of fate.
O mighty one, if you should wake and start
Again from death (new armies march and wait)
To clasp the harlot, Europe, to your heart!

—Albert Johansson

SONNET

After they all had gone, she went again
Into the stifling shadow of the room
Where he lay dead. The silent, pressing gloom
Made candlelight seem cold and full of pain.
She dared not lift the rough sheet from his face,
Or touch the huddled figure on the floor,
But only stood, unmoving, by the door
And looked at him for but a little space.

Then she snuffed out the candle and knelt low,
And crossed herself, as she had never done,
And did it now unthinkingly and slow,
Pale in the darkness like a hooded nun.
Humbly she knelt, and did not moan, nor sigh,
In the still grief of women when men die.

—Jean Vera Smith

REPETITION WITH ELAINE

JAMES LAWRENCE BILLWILLER

SHE LOOKED like a sweet kid, I thought when I came into the class room. There was a vacant seat next to her; so I sat down. She was sort of holding her binder against her breasts, and I guessed she was a freshman and maybe a bit nervous. I didn't look at her too much right away, but I had the impression that she was sweet and sort of pretty, and it felt good to be sitting there beside her. The professor came in after a couple of minutes and handed out the cards for us to fill in, and I pretended that I didn't have a pen with me and asked her if I might use hers. It's an old gag, of course, and I realized that she'd seen it before, but it's always ok; maybe just because it is so old. Anyhow it was easy after that.

The class was English Lit., and Owsley told us he'd have the syllabus ready when the class met Wednesday and let us go. She'd laid her binder down when she made out the registration card; so I picked it up and she had to walk with me. She had her name on the binder—Elaine. I told her mine was Jack, and pretty soon we were wise-cracking back and forth in the way you do when you meet a girl for the first time and don't know just what to say to her. She was quick, I found out, and she appreciated my gags, and I began to feel warm and happy the way you are when you're with somebody you like a lot and haven't seen for a couple of weeks.

I asked her if she wanted a cigarette, and she said she did; so we found a bench outside the quad and sat down and smoked for a while. I liked the way she held her cigarette, and her hands were good. It was one of those uncertainly lovely early-spring days, nice to look at but sort of cold. We sat pretty close together on the bench, and I could feel her body a little when she moved. We talked back and forth and laughed a lot, partly because we were both a bit nervous, but mostly, I guess, because we liked each other right away.

Doris went by, and I waved a hand at her and let her go, because I wanted her to know that I was still kind of sore about the night before. She looked at Elaine and half shrugged a shoulder, which I didn't like because it seemed rather obvious, and I could feel Elaine stiffen a little beside me. I knew that she wanted to ask who that was and didn't quite dare; so I talked about something else, and pretty soon she began to laugh again, and I guessed she'd forgotten about it.

When it was eleven, she said she had a class, and I said I had one, too; so we walked back to

the English building, and I gave her her binder. She looked up at me and hesitated a little and said, "Will I see you again?" and I said, "If you don't, I'll be very much surprised," and she laughed, and I went on to my psych class and sat down beside Doris.

She was nasty all through the hour while Watson went on about the neurons, but for some reason it didn't bother me as much as it usually did, and I found myself thinking about Elaine instead. Her eyes were blue and very wide, I remembered, and she had a cute trick of looking up at you even when her eyes were on the same level as yours. And I thought about her hands and the lipstick on her cigarette and tried to remember what she'd been wearing. I couldn't at first, and it sort of bothered me, but after a while I remembered she'd had on a plaid skirt and a green suede leather jacket, and I felt very pleased with myself because I'd managed to think of it.

When Watson dismissed us at twelve, Doris had decided to be nice again, and she took me up to her apartment and made a couple of sandwiches and some coffee for lunch. After we'd eaten, we stacked the plates and cups in the sink and sat around talking and necking for a while. It was always nice kissing Doris, but somehow there wasn't much kick in it for either of us that day, and I figured maybe we were both still feeling a bit uneasy and resentful about the night before; so I suggested that we cut our afternoon classes and go to a show. It wasn't much good; so we sat back and kidded it, and when we came out we both felt a lot better.

The next day was Tuesday, and I got up about nine-thirty and shaved and had a cup of coffee at the co-op and walked over to the library where I usually saw Doris in the mornings. She was sitting over in a corner talking to Russ Arundel. I decided I wouldn't cut in and went out again, telling myself that it wasn't her fault, but feeling a bit hurt, because she knew that I always found her there in the mornings.

On the steps I met Elaine going in with a couple of books, and she smiled very nicely and started to go by. I stopped her and said that she should never let me see her going into the library, because I had a prejudice against all women who studied, and besides I was willing to bet that she hadn't had any breakfast. She looked pleased and said she hadn't; so I took her over to the co-op, and we had orange juice and tea and a couple of doughnuts apiece.

I was surprised how much better I felt for seeing her, or maybe it was just the food. Anyhow I stopped worrying about Doris, and when Elaine said she had to go home and clean up her apartment, I said I'd walk that far with her. When we got to the house she stopped, and I could see that she was thinking about the Dean of Women's rules; so I laughed and told her that the Dean had given up trying to enforce the section that read, "Unmarried undergraduate women may under no circumstances entertain gentlemen other than members of their immediate families in their rooms, apartments, or other dwelling places," years before. She looked relieved and asked me to come in.

Her room-mate was there, a pretty girl from Elaine's home town—pretty but stupid, for when I said to Elaine that I was a congenial knight errant, and that if anyone tried to hurt her, I'd protect her with her life, the room-mate obviously didn't understand what we were laughing at. Elaine made a couple of passes at dusting the room, but when the room-mate went out to an eleven o'clock class, she tossed the dust rag back of a chair and sat down beside me on the chesterfield.

We talked for a while about college and courses and books, forgetting about being clever, because we felt more used to each other, I guess. Sometimes we wouldn't say anything for a while, and she'd lay her head back almost touching my arm, and I'd look at her. She was awfully pretty and very nice, I thought, and I wanted to kiss her, but I decided that it wouldn't be fair; she was only a freshman and might think I was being serious, and after all there was Doris.

Elaine asked me to stay for lunch, but I figured I'd stayed long enough and told her I had a date with a fellow for lunch. She held out her hand and said, "You're nice, Jack. Do come back." Her hand was firm like a little girl's hand; I could feel the tingle of it along my arm. I said I'd see her the next day, anyhow, and thought how sweet her lips would be and walked back to my room and got my own lunch.

After my Shakespeare class at one, I went over to Doris' place and found her with Arundel. She was patting her hair when she let me in, and I looked Arundel over, and he was pretty pleased with himself. I didn't feel sore; I didn't even seem to care very much; just kind of dizzy and sick. I stayed about half an hour, and we all wise-cracked and laughed just a bit off key, and then I left. Doris walked to the door with me, leaving Arundel in the living room with his self-satisfaction. When we were in the hall I said, "What are you trying to do, kid, give me a brushing off?" She put her hands on my shoulders and said, "Of course not, dear," but she didn't look at me, and we both knew she didn't mean it. I said, "It's ok, kid, I'll be all right," I tried to feel the way

a guy is supposed to feel at a time like that, but it didn't work; I felt dry and tired, and that was all. I slipped her high school ring I'd been wearing off my finger and gave it to her and kissed her and said again, "It's ok," and went out.

It was sort of funny not feeling all cracked up as I'd always thought I'd feel if I ever lost Doris. I went home and lay on my bed a while and tried to think about Doris and how I'd wanted her, but I thought about Elaine and how sweet her lips might be, instead. It didn't seem right to be thinking about her, and wondered if I'd ever loved Doris and knew that I had.

I went down to Murphy's for dinner and met Bill Warren there, and we talked for about an hour. I went home and read "Troilus and Cressida" and took some notes on it for Grayson and went to bed and slept so well I was kind of ashamed of myself the next morning.

I was a couple of minutes late to my English Lit. class and came in to find Owlsley seating us alphabetically, which put Elaine several rows away from me. I looked over at her and smiled, and she smiled back, and after class she waited for me at the door. It was beginning to rain outside, and we ran most of the way to the library. The place was crowded, but I spotted a couple of vacant chairs at the other end, and we sat down. She opened her anthology and read the selections from Blake that Owlsley had given us for Friday, and I pretended to be reading my psych, but most of the time I watched her. She was a bit flushed because of the running, and there were tiny drops of water in her hair from the rain. Her hair was wavy and cut very short, and I wanted to pull it gently and feel it against my fingers. After a while we walked out and stood in a doorway where it was dry and had a cigarette.

It was quiet there, and we didn't say much; just listened to the rain. Once in a while she'd look up at me and smile, and when she did I felt calm and happy inside. When the rain stopped, we walked over to the English building, and I patted her on the shoulder and said good-bye. It was nice touching her; she didn't move when I did it but just left her shoulder there, and I could feel how warm and soft it was.

I went into my psych class and sat with Bill Warren and a couple of other fellows over by the windows. They looked kind of funny, and I could see that they were wondering about Doris, but they were all nice guys; so they didn't say anything. After the class I hung around a while to let Doris get out first, because I didn't feel like running into her. Bill and I went over to the co-op and had lunch, and I looked around for Elaine, but she wasn't there; so I guessed she was eating at home again.

After lunch I went over to the Dean's office, where they kept the student directory cards, and looked up Elaine's program and copied it on the

back of my student body card.

She had History of England at two; so I went around and waited outside the room when the class was due to break up. She came out talking to some blond lad, but when she saw me she said good-bye to him and came over to me. I took her books from her, and we walked over toward the library. I asked if she'd seen the picture at the Paramount, and she said she hadn't; so we went uptown.

We sat in the loges and were pretty much by ourselves. After a while she put her hand on the arm of the seat between us, and I took it, and we sat there just holding hands. I thought about what a sweet kid she was, and wondered how old she might be and guessed at eighteen. We talked about the things we liked and didn't like, and we were happy when we agreed, which was most of the time. When the news reel came on again I picked up her hand and kissed it and said, "Come on, kid, let's beat it," and took her home.

She asked me in, but I said I had to go home and get my dinner, and asked her if she was doing anything that evening. She said no; so I asked her if it would be all right if I came over to study, and she said she'd like it.

I went over about eight and Elaine was there alone—the room-mate had gone to a YW meeting or something. We studied for a while, and then sat back on the chesterfield and talked and listened to the radio. We danced for a couple of numbers, but the rug was thick and made it awkward, and it was too much trouble to roll the thing up. She danced fairly well, and her body was warm and soft against me as I held her.

After a while she picked up her history book and said she had thirty pages more to read, and I took the book away from her and told her she wasn't going to, and she reached over me for it, and I held it away with my right hand and put my left arm around her and kissed her, just as we'd both intended I should, I guess. Her lips were as I'd thought they'd be—sweet and slightly moist—and I kissed her gently enough so that I felt them tremble against mine. I knew she wasn't much used to being kissed; so after a while I touched the lobe of each of her ears with my lips and sat there just holding her, with my cheek against hers. I said, "You're awfully sweet, Elaine," and she didn't say anything, but pressed my cheek with her hand and slipped her head down on my shoulder. Presently we heard the room-mate on the stairs, and I moved over to the big chair before she came in. I stayed about five minutes after the room-mate arrived, and Elaine walked down to the door with me when I left. I kissed her twice and said, "Good night, dear," and she said it after me, hesitating a little as if she were repeating a lesson.

We spent most of our time together after that.

I'd wait for her after her afternoon classes, and we'd sit around the campus, or go over to her apartment, and most of the evenings we'd study together or walk or maybe go to a show. I took her over to my room for dinner once, but I could see that she was nervous and unhappy about it; so I didn't suggest it again.

It was kind of funny, I suppose, that we never did any really heavy necking—I'd just put an arm around her and hold her against me and kiss her now and then. I wanted her, of course, but I couldn't seem to really try to make her. Maybe it was just because she seemed so awfully young and sweet, or maybe it was because I was so happy just being with her that I was afraid of spoiling it.

It was about three weeks after that first evening, I guess, that she told me that some fellow in one of her classes had asked her to a frat dance and asked if I minded if she went. I did, of course, but I knew that I'd be crazy if I objected; so I said, "No; go ahead." Elaine said, "I won't if you don't want me to, Jack," and I said, "It's all right, dear; I'm not supposed to be jealous, am I?"

The dance was Friday night, and I went home that week-end. I got back to the campus about three, Sunday afternoon and left my suitcase in my room and went over to see Elaine. The room-mate came to the door. She said, "Oh, hello, Jack—Elaine's not here. Dick Boyd came over about an hour ago and took her out for a ride." I said, "Who's he?" and she looked at me for a second and then said, "He's the fellow who took her to the Alpha Chi dance the other night." I said, "Oh; sure. Tell her I'll be back this evening."

I went back about seven-thirty, and Elaine let me in. She was wearing her grey formal, cut tight under her breasts. I looked at it, and she said, "Dick's taking me to the Carey Club tonight."

I said, "Oh, I see . . . well, I'll see you tomorrow," and started to go. I heard her say, "Jack" and turned around and saw she was crying. I put my arms around her, and she put her head down on my shoulder and said, "Jack, I—" I said, "Sure, dear, I know how it is." She held me tight for a moment, and her body was very sweet in my arms. Then she said, "You've been awfully nice, Jack . . . Good-bye."

I said, "Good night, Elaine."

I went down to Murphy's for a cup of coffee. When I gave the guy back of the counter my nickel, he said, "What's the matter, fella; you don't look so good."

I said, "Nothing; got a lousy headache, that's all."

He said, "It'll be ok in the morning, I guess."

I said, "Sure; maybe it'll be ok in the morning," and went out into the street.

SHADOW ON THE ALTAR

By Charles Leong

Shadow on the Altar, the essay winning first place in the contest this year, has been accepted by *Asia*. Consequently the editors of *El Portal* regret that they will be unable to print the material here, but they wish to congratulate the author, Mr. Charles Leong, upon this unusual distinction.



PEGASUS NEEDS A SHOE

By James Clancy

* * *

CHIMERA

By James Clancy

The editors of *El Portal* regret that *Pegasus Needs a Shoe* and *Chimera*, the two plays of Mr. James Clancy winning first and second places respectively, could not be published on account of their length. Each is a three-act play of approximately sixty-five pages. *Chimera* was successfully staged by the players of the college.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A GREAT MAN

He said:

Death
Respects the great and small—
Alike.
What can his position offer now?
His were as well a pauper's corpse.
Yesterday he was a high hill.
Today he is a hill washed into the sea:
Tomorrow his name will vanish
Like grave-flowers,
Even now it is on tongues
That are decaying.

Death treats presidents
And tramps
Like brothers.

I replied:

Would you
Prefer to be a hill
That felt one kiss of dawn,
Then sank beneath the sea,
Or a marsh-damp mound of mould?
Would you
Rather be a bud that died,
Or the dust
Of a rose that bloomed?

We are the only ones to know
That he is dead:
He only knows he sleeps.
I should rather
Build
One paper house—
Than never to have built.

—Wesley Gordon

SONNET

When he came home his wife was always there,
Standing beside the doorway, looking out.
And he remarked with heavy eyes her stout
Hot body, and the ragged, graying hair.
And when they ate he watched her in disgust
While she, unheeding, took the greasy food,
Sensing alone that it was hot, and good,
And satisfying to a certain lust.

He felt again the touch of cool, white skin
And smelled gardenia and faint, sweet smells,
And heard a voice made up of many bells
And saw himself a prisoner, shackled in,
Endlessly wandering about the maze
Which life had fashioned to confuse his days.

—Jean Vera Smith

RECAPITULATION

I have seen joy in the upturned face
Of a wandering beggar,
His smile with the sun full upon it.
I have seen joy in a herdsmen's tramping
As he trod toward the chilly dawn—
Whose heart has been flung wide open
To all the unreality of daytime's awakening.
I have seen joy in the dancing lights
That come from some mountain village,
Nestling between the silent protection
Of forested hillsides.
I have seen joy in the fool's open gaze—
And the wise man's silence—
In the proud, patient suffering
Of child-bearing mothers—
In hopeful eyes
Of trusting youngsters.
I have seen joy in the rich man's gloating—
And the poor man's freedom.
I have seen joy—
—But I know it not.

—Barton Wood

CATHEDRAL

I could not pray;
My soul was full of a tumult of questions,
But I went into the empty church.

I heard slow, soft organ music,
But the organ stood quite dark and still;
And the choir that sang the glorious obbligate
Was not before my eyes.

I went into the empty church,
And the song was in myself.

By the altar was the figure of a woman.
I saw her kneel:
Her head was held within her hands,
Frail hands like goosamer wings of some
Ethereal creature faintly outlined in the light
Of the dim and flickering candles.

I saw her kneel,
And I knelt, too;
And the song burst into a chorus.

—Sadie May Sanor

SONNET

Isaiah 21:6—Go set a watchman; let him declare
what he seeth.

"You set a watchman on the wall I know—
What did he see, and how report the sight?"
"He could not see at all for lack of light,
And could not tell a sound—the wind blew so."
"But did not star and moon from where they go
Illumine slightly, yet enough, the night?"
"Well, he retired confused in great affright
From where I set him pacing to and fro."

"Then something must have caused his fear, I
pray
You tell me of the marvel that he saw
To drive him from his post upon the wall."
"If you must hear; he saw afar away
The striding shape of Hopelessness, in awe,
Go trampling down the world, and that was all."

—Albert Johansson

WHEN TIME HAS COME

When time has come for me to quit this earth
Of siren melodies and elysian joy,
No fear of black oblivion shall cloy
My final pulse of consciousness—that birth
Unwound a chain of golden years whose worth
The acid strength of time cannot destroy.
Though dust are now the walls of conquered Troy,
Still lives the fact of Helen's ancient mirth.

The mystery of life is not that I
May sometime live again to see a dawn
Deploy the clouds like alabaster ships
Across the near horizon of the sky.
The mystery is this: that I have drawn
A single warm response from your sweet lips.

—Wesley Dexter Gordon

MELODY IN CONTRAST

Within one heart, a Master's melody;
Within one mind, a kingdom's discontent.
Why must one strain be starved and cruelly spent
By foreign notes that know no harmony?
Why must this song of Life, endangered, flee
From all the greedy joys that Life has sent—
And, like a Roman slave, whom lions bent
Upon his death pursue, seek land that's free?

But still, all deeds that Nature knows are real,
And ever sterling in their usefulness.
Perhaps the melody that great men feel,
Entombed beneath conflicting chords that press
It down, resembles most the oyster's pearl,
Whose very prison forms its beauty best.

—Barton Wood

HELEN

A woman shall compass a man. Jeremiah, 31:12.

For ten dark years upon the Trojan strand
Men and demi-gods most high
Waged bitter war while Helen cast her eye,
From Ilion, across the bloody sand.
For hair like metal, for a fragile hand,
For vinous lips, and for a perfumed sigh
Men gave that life which no man can deny,
When death has signed and sealed his curt demand.

She sat within her brightly marbled hall
And smiled on Paris while life's purple sheen
Was clotting on the sand outside the gate.
She faintly heard the steely rallying call
And toyed with love as war passed on unseen—
Her heart, the tender nourisher of hate.

—Albert Johansson

THE FIRST MAN

WILBUR BAILEY

What is life?—a frenzy.
What is life?—illusion;
A shadow and a fiction.
And the greatest good is small;
For all of life is dreaming,
And the very dreams are dream.

—Calderon, *La vida es sueño*

And who has told you that the comedy
is not real, and true, and felt?

—Unamuno, *Niebla*

THE EARTH was young. In its miasmatic marshes and fringed forests swarmed the luxuriant life of the new creation. On the arid peaks of granite mountains strange great birds nested. Gigantic beasts grazed in the herbage of fecund plains.

God the creator slept. His pillow was the evening star, and the Milky Way his covering, and his bed was the illimitable emptiness of space. The cosmic wind that blew ice-cold between the stars ruffled his solemn beard, made of the tails of wandering comets, and disturbed his troubled sleep, turning it now and again into nightmare.

Up the slope of a volcano climbed with infinite pain a creature in human form, naked, stooping, hairy, with receding brow. At his side crawled a serpent. And behold, the serpent guided the man, guided him into a grotto in the side of the volcano, guided him to the innermost part of the grotto, where was a crystal globe as large as an apple.

And the serpent said to the hairy, stooping creature, showing him the crystal:

"Take it, look within, and tell me what you see."

And the man took the crystal ball within his clumsy hands, and, with dull eyes almost hidden beneath heavy arches, peered within the thing, in which he saw nothing but a murky cloudiness similar to the darkness of his torpid brain. And so he answered the serpent.

But the serpent, transfixing the eye of the savage with its penetrating regard, said:

"Look within, and tell me what you see."

And the ugly creature, stooping, with little understanding, turned again his slow eyes to the crystal, and looked within it long, long. And little by little, as he looked, the cloudiness of the crystal cleared, and he began to perceive indistinct and confused forms, and things incomprehensible. And he asked the serpent:

"What is this that I see? What does it mean?"

And the serpent made answer:

"How should I know? Look, and tell me what you see."

And the creature, savage, primitive, with his halting speech, little familiar, and with infinite pain for he lacked words, tried to tell the serpent what he saw.

And always regarding fixedly the innermost part of the crystal, he saw unknown beasts, tamed by men erect, with smooth skin, mounted upon other beasts. And more curious was that these erect men began to tame the plants, and till the earth. And that which even more filled him with wonder was that these beings, made out of dust to return unto dust, hungered for immortality and built vast pyramids and temples of marble and imperishable granite to leave on the earth the mark of their passing.

And all this he related to the serpent, with his halting speech, little familiar, and with infinite pain, lacking words with which to manifest that which he had never seen nor imagined. And he asked:

"What is this? What does it mean?"

And the serpent made reply:

"How should I know? Look, for the crystal is the mirror of your mind, and reflected in it you see the embryos which are already germinating in your torpid brain."

"But what can these strange things be? What do they mean?"

"How should I know? Do you see them in the crystal? Then they are to be. Look, and tell me what you see."

And the creature in human form, dull, uncultured, crouching over the crystal, turned again to look within it, and he looked long, long. And little by little the muddy cloudiness of its translucence began to clear, and he saw bearded men who walked together among the olives, seeking truth. And he saw a superb flowering of the intellect, and of the arts of beauty. And then he began to hear rumors, confused and vague—the tramp of marching legions, and the weeping of women.

Suddenly the crystal became clear and luminous. Within it danced the *ignis fatuus*. Letters of light appeared, saying:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men."

And there was a man of gentle mien, who went about doing good. And because he taught men love, they hung him from two crossed bars of

wood. But his mark remained on the earth he had trod.

And the legions marched and marched again, while the luminescence of the crystal paled, and in the darkness passed rough horsemen scouring the face of the earth. And this endured long, while on the earth were hunger and pestilence and shadows.

But the creature in human form, savage, rude, hairy, peering within the crystal ball, beheld rising out of the chaos nations, and peoples, and sciences. And that which seemed most strange to him was that the nations used the science of the peoples to destroy one another. For in all that time there was seen in the background a legend, written in letters of light:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men."

And the man, uncouth, hairy, with his halting speech, little familiar, and with infinite pain, for he lacked not only words but understanding of that which he related tried to describe it all to the astute serpent.

But when he turned his gaze again upon the crystal, mirror of the embryos germinating in the matrix of his mind, the ideas that were one day to clothe themselves in material form, he found it once more full of a murky cloudiness. And he looked long, long, and saw nothing more than flickering gleams of light among dark shadows, whence could be heard a confused rumor of irons, and of legions trampling the earth.

And turning upon the serpent with bitter words

and menacing gesture, the creature demanded:

"And is this all? Was it for this you brought me here, to see in this globe only the darkness that is in my mind?"

But the serpent answered:

"Turn again, O man of little understanding. The future lies within the shadows of your sluggish brain. Regard the crystal, and tell me what you see."

And the hairy, crouching figure turned once more his heavy eyes upon the crystal ball, and sullenly regarded its murky shadows. Long he looked, while he seemed to hear as from far away the clashing of irons and the tramp of booted feet, and the wailing of children and mothers. And all was darkness, save for a legend, hardly visible in the innermost part of the crystal, and beside it another, which he saw as for the first time and yet knew that it had always been there:

"Ye shall know the truth
And the truth shall make you free."

And as he looked the light grew slowly brighter, and the rumors ceased, and little by little a green and happy world appeared. A world of peace and love and understanding, where each man helped the other, and all were free.

But while the first man looked in the crystal globe, the wind of the worlds blew cold and strong between the stars, and pierced, colder and colder, the Milky Way. And with a rubbing of eyes and a cosmic yawn the sleeping God awoke. And lo, there were neither stars nor moon nor earth, nor darkness nor light. As it was in the beginning of time, all was without form and void.

SONNET ON THE BIRTH OF MOUNTAINS

No sudden cataclysmic deluge and no break;
Only the slow erosion; and the mountains shake
To embryonic fragments. Tide, wind, and sun
Work eternally, relentlessly, as one,
Whose mission, though accomplished, waits
The ultimate approval of the fates,
Yet, still dissatisfied, creates, tears down
His failures. And their memories drown

To be reworked, reformed and built up endlessly
Beneath the quenching silence of the sea,
Until their weight, pressing against the loins of
Earth,

Forces them outward, pours forth in painful birth
The tears of molten rock, and sends them high
To stand as breathless prayers against the sky.

—Margaret Delano Rose

SONNET

This relates to one of the earlier Viking discoveries of America—they sailed away.

The sea gave way to icy shores at last,
All littered with grey chunks of broken stone
Between which tidal currents made a moan
As though the sea were injured or outcast:
The long dull coast stretched, crude and bound-
less, past

The vision of a man, and, with a bone
Of white between their teeth, the breakers blown
By wintry winds crashed down it. In the mast

A viking (where his heaving war-boat lay
A half-mile off the shore) surveyed it all,
And grunted when he saw the bitter shore:
He little thought, upon that wintry day,
The mighty empire that he left the thrall
Of savagery five hundred winters more.

—Albert Johansson

JUDGMENT

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

CHANDLER TRIPP

CHARACTERS

JEFF BAKER
HALLIE BAKER, his wife
CLINT BAKER, their oldest son
BUD, their youngest son
BILL SHARP, the sheriff
A SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

SCENE: A cabin in the Ozarks.

TIME: Early evening.

A rudely furnished room in the Baker cabin. Center stage is a table, bare of cloth, set with coarse dishes and the remains of a recently finished meal. At the back of the stage in the center is a fireplace with a blackened crane holding a pot. Over the mantle is an old muzzle-loader and two powder horns. There are three straight chairs, unpainted and rough, around the table. Upon the wall hangs an odd assortment of clothes,—jeans, sweaters, old hats, etc. To the left of the table is a hickory-split-bottomed chair. There are two doors, on the extreme right and the extreme left of the stage. Curtain rises on JEFF BAKER, a giant of a man sitting facing audience, at the table, picking his teeth with the blade of a knife. He has a full beard, stern-lined face, and malevolent and piercing eyes.

HALLIE BAKER, a sallow, thin woman in a calico dress, is stuffing leaf tobacco into a dirty, blackened corn-cob pipe. She is sitting across the table from JEFF. Behind her is their son BUD, a lad of sixteen, with a clean strong face, very much unlike his father and mother. In his lap is a Bible.

JEFF (glaring at BUD). Take your nose out o' thet book and git on up to the still. I've told you to 'tend to thet still, twice to-day. Thet mash is stinkin' ripe. (BUD does not look up. JEFF hangs on the table and yells.) Did ye hear me? BUD!

BUD (looks up quickly). What?

JEFF. I said fer ye to git on up to thet still!

BUD. But, Paw! Hit's Sunday. The book here says you had ought to rest on the Lord's Day. 'Sides, I been a-hocin' corn since sunup. What's the matter with Clint? You said thet he was goin' to stay up thet tonight. 'Sides, I don't like the idee of goin' again the law. I want an eddication, and if I'm to be eddicated I can't go 'round breakin' laws.

JEFF. Lord A'mighty! Thet moonshine's feedin' us, ain't it? Yer so smart! What would you eat on off'n it wasn't fer the licker? I'm payin' fer yer

clothes out o' thet licker, so ye can go to school. I don't know why I bred ye at all. Yer no good around the shack. I have to make ye work so ye can help pay fer yer grub. Now, ye want an eddication! (Very sarcastically) Ye ain't one of us Bakers, thet's sartin.

HALLIE. Thar warn't no weaklin' among the Starbuckses, neither.

BUD. I'm sick of a-goin' agin the law. Hit brings nothin' but trouble. Joe got kilt last week by one o' them revenoo men.

JEFF. We kilt him, didn't we? The gov'ment will never know what happened to him. I been a-makin' corn licker fer forty year, an' I'm a-goin' to keep on makin' hit. A man can't live without the law a-sneakin' up on him.

BUD. Shore he can, effen he wants to live right. A-breakin' the law and a-killin' men, thet ain't no way to do. A law-lovin' fellow cain't live like he wants to, in these mountings. I'm a-goin' to be somebody—git an eddication—find out about things. Miss Edie, she says thar's somethin' better fer me out thar.

JEFF. Miss Edie! Thet little school-marm! Yer a-stayin' right hyar! A-puttin' notions in yer head! (Squirms in his chair to emphasize his disgust.)

BUD. She says effen I study this summer, I mought be able to pass the county examination, an' then I'm a-goin' up to Birney to high school.

JEFF (Jumping to his feet and roaring). The hell ye air! I told ye once ye were a-goin' to stay right hyar. Eddication never done nobody no good, 'cept to make them dissatisfied with their lot. Look at me. Ain't I done all right? I never had no book-larnin'. Git that idee out of yer head, or I'll take ye out of school.

HALLIE (stirs and takes her pipe out of her mouth). You ain't set the world on fire. (To Jeff)

JEFF (turning on HALLIE). Shet up, Hallie. Did ye ever go to school?

HALLIE. Ye ain't never heard me a-braggin' about hit.

JEFF (turns toward BUD and slowly sits down). What's good fer the both of us, is good enough fer him. (Jerks his thumb at BUD). Ye don't see Clint a-moonin' round with his nose in a book.

HALLIE. I allus did say Bud was different. He's jest like my Uncle Piney. He was a dreamin' sort of man. Last time I heerd of him, he was a-leadin' a camp meetin' down in Troublesome Valley. He's a good parson and I think Bud would make a preacher man.

JEFF. *(emphatically)*. Thar ain't a-goin' to be no parsons in this hyar family.

BUD *(looks up, his face set with determination)*. Why not? Ain't nothin' wrong with preachin'.

JEFF. Git that out o' yer mind, do ye hear me? Ye do as I tell ye.

(The right door opens and shuts with a bang as CLINT BAKER, a boy of twenty, flings himself in, breathing very hard. They all jump to their feet.)

JEFF. What's the matter with ye, Clint?

CLINT. I got to git out o' here! *(Leans gun against table.)*

HALLIE. What's wrong? What have ye done? *(HALLIE moves toward food cupboard.)*

CLINT. I jest shot Bill Soames. I heerd he'd been lookin' fer me. I seen him first, and dropped him with a load of buckshot.

(HALLIE begins to stuff food into a flour sack as JEFF goes to the mantle.)

CLINT. Got any shells? *(Moving toward mantle)*

JEFF. About half a box. *(Takes shells off mantle, pours them into CLINT's coat pocket.)* Ye strike out over Granite Mountain; take the lower trail to Uncle Joe Calvert's. He'll hide ye till this thing blows over.

(HALLIE takes a coat from the wall and drapes it over CLINT's shoulders, and thrusts flour sack into his hands.)

BUD. Why don't ye give yerself up? If Bill was out to git ye, ye can prove it, can't ye?

CLINT. They ain't a-goin' to shet me up in no jail! *(Buttoning coat)*

BUD. But effen you shot in self-defense, won't the law—

CLINT. This ain't a matter fer the law to settle. *(Moving toward door)*

HALLIE. I been tellin' ye, ye'd better quit foolin' round Bill Soames's sister. Bill was bound to git on to ye sooner or later. A Soames is pizen; you ain't got no business fallin' fer her. *(HALLIE and JEFF follow slowly toward left door.)*

CLINT. Ye keep yer nose out o' my business, and keep yer mouth shet!

JEFF. Better git a-goin'; there ain't no time fer argment. *(Shoves CLINT.)*

(CLINT shoulders his gun and runs out left.)

BUD. More killin'! This means more trouble.

JEFF. Hit's likely the sheriff'll be along purty soon. Ye keep yer traps shet an' let me do the talkin'. Ye ain't seen nothin'. Ye don't know nothin'.

(HALLIE begins to pick up dishes off the table.)

JEFF moves a chair over near the fireplace and sits down. BUD sits, staring straight ahead of him. Presently there is a knock at the right door. JEFF exchanges glances with HALLIE and BUD. Gets up.)

JEFF. Who's thar?

BILL SHARP. Hit's me—the sheriff.

(JEFF goes slowly to the door, opens it, and steps back.)

JEFF. Hello, Billy! What air ye a-doin' out this time o' night?

SHARP *(enters followed by deputy. SHARP is a mountain man. He carries a gun.)* I'm a-lookin' fer Clint, Jeff. Mought as well give hisself up. I got the goods on him this time.

JEFF. What's he done?

SHARP. I reckon ye know. He's been hyar; we seen fresh tracks through the bresh.

JEFF. We ain't seen Clint since mornin'. He went over to Little River to do some fishin'.

SHARP. Ye're lyin', Jeff, an' ye know hit.

JEFF *(makes a move toward SHARP. SHARP lifts his gun a little higher.)* Ain't nobody ever called me a liar and got away with hit. Now ye git out o' hyar afore I git mad. I tell ye I ain't seen Clint, an' I don't know what ye're lookin' fer him fer.

SHARP. Well, he just killed Bill Soames; shot him in the back while he was a-goin' through the woods.

JEFF. I don't believe hit. What'd he want to kill him fer?

SHARP. Plenty! If ye're hiding him, Jeff, ye kin git into trouble. It's agin' the law, harborin' a criminal, even effen he is your own son.

(The two men look around the room, under the bed.)

BUD. But effen a man shoots in self-defense, won't the law protect him? Effen he had to do hit?

SHARP *(turns quickly toward BUD and asks in a suspicious voice)*. Who said he shot in self defense?

BUD. Why—nobody—but effen he did—

JEFF. *(stepping between the sheriff and BUD)* Don't pay no 'tention to him, Billy. Bud's a-hankerin' fer an eddication. He's just showin' off. Shouldn't wonder effen he'd be one of them lawyer-men one o' these days.

BUD. No, I'm a-goin' to be a preacher, Paw.

JEFF. The hell—*(moves threateningly toward BUD.)*

(Sheriff turns toward right door.)

SHARP. Well, I ain't got no time to waste 'round hyar while ye make up yer mind what yer a-goin' to be; but it'll take a mighty slick lawyer to git Clint's neck out o' the noose; or maybe ye better start prayin' fer him. *(Looks at BUD.)*

JEFF. You ain't got nothin' on my boy. *(Strides after SHARP.)*

SHARP. I ain't, ain't I? He's been a-sparkin' Matty Soames, and everybody knows that Bill hates Clint.

HALLIE. Matty Soames ain't no good.

SHARP. Laze' night she an' Clint was a-plannin' to run away, an' Bill caught 'em. He tied Matty up in the cabin. Ye know Matty's got a temper

like a wild cat with kittens. Well, she got loose this evenin' and went to Clint a-bowlin' and a-ravin'. Clint laid fer Bill as he was a-goin' home and let him have hit in the back. Bill never knowed what hit him.

JEFF. How do you know all this?

SHARP. Well, I might as well tell ye, Jeff. We got Matty in the calaboose. She's told everything.

HALLIE. She's a liar. That woman would say anythin' to save her own hide.

SHARP. She ain't a-goin' to save her hide. She's been a-talkin' to Miss Edie, the school-marm. She's made her confess. Miss Edie was right fond of Matty when she went to school, an' she's the only one who could git the gal to tell the truth.

JEFF. That snoopin' little polecat! Miss Edie better keep her nose out o' other people's affairs, effen she don't want to be rode out o' hyar on a pole.

BUD. Miss Edie never done nothin' but what was right.

JEFF. Ye shet ye're mouth. Ye've done enough talkin'.

SHARP. Well, I give ye one more chance, Jeff, to tell whar Clint's a-hidin'. My hounds don't miss the trail very often. (He walks over to the back of the room and grabs a coat from the wall, starts out with it.)

(HALLIE and JEFF take coats off the wall and follow SHARP out of the right door. BUD sits quietly with his head bent over the book, facing the left door. The door opens and SHARP sneaks in, and comes over to BUD's chair.)

SHARP. What do ye know about this killin', Bud? Effen you'll tell me I'll send ye to Birney next winter, to high school.

(BUD glances around the room nervously, and then looks up into the face of SHARP. His face is flushed and eager. Again he looks around the room, at each door.)

BUD. He struck out over Granite Mountain. (The right door opens revealing JEFF. He stops in surprise when he sees the sheriff talking to BUD. He steps back a little as BUD continues.) He's a-goin' to Uncle Joe Calvert's by the lower trail. Keep yer mouth shet; Paw would kill me effen he knew I told yer.

(Sheriff puts BUD on the back, and walks out the left door. BUD slowly gets up and JEFF follows, slowly raising his gun as he walks. BUD disappears out the left door. JEFF slowly goes out the left door raising the gun and sighting as he disappears. Just as JEFF disappears from sight there is a shot.)

CURTAIN

TWO BALLADS FOR FRANCE

"—drunk with their blood as drunk with wine,"

—Bible

Hitler

He stands alone on solid feet,
Behind him gleams the gear of war;
He raises up a hand to greet
The eager people massed before—
Above, his eagles dip and soar,
And, in the distance, cannon speak
About the vengeance they will wreak,
In future years, for what is past.
Oh, in the North, no longer weak,
The ancient gods awake at last.

Envoi

Ye Frank, beware what pelf ye seek,
What tribute ye exact or owe,
From those ye humbled;—on the blast
I hear a voice that is not meek,
"The ancient gods awake at last!"

Mussolini

The Caesars stir within the tomb
And reach for crowns of beaten gold,
Their emblems are the hand of doom
Stroked heart to quiet and to cold.
As in the purple days of old
The streets of Roma, tense with pride,
Watch legions march whose sires defied
The Gaul within his native land—
And, seeing, can it be denied
The past has pointed Rome a hand?

Envoi

Ye Gauls, be wiser than deride
A man who sits where, deified,
Augustus sat—from where ye stand
Your eyes can see, your mind decide,
The past has pointed Rome a hand.

—Albert Johnson

THE ALIEN

Each year his mind would wandering go
When wind and clouds were blowing free,
And he'd forget his sweetheart's face
In deeper longing for the sea.

The sea was more than love, or home,
Of fireside joys, or kith or kin,
And he was sick, when breezes blew,
For seas, and ships to sail them in.

Deep green-blue water filled his dreams,
Though he had never heard nor seen the sea,
But only wheat-filled Kansas plains,
When winds and clouds were blowing free.

Yet every day a deck he strode—
His plodding horses made their furrowed rounds,
And all he saw was sea-born sights,
And all he heard was sea-born sounds.

—Harold Bettinger

IN A WORLD WAR CEMETERY

The brave that lie here do not sleep,
But wake, and watch us as we go
The very path they grew to know,
And, sorry for us, walk and weep.

It is not that they much regret
The life they gave in tears and blood,
And, giving, proved their hardihood
So well that we remember yet:

It is not that they much disprove
The warlike spirit in our breast
That does not give us any rest,
And asks for mountain chains to move:

But they remember all too well
The starved, pinched children of the street,
The pregnant lass who had no meat,
The widow with no gear to sell.

Yes; all things small and innocent
That feel the careless hand of war,
Remembering, they sorrow for—
And do not keep their timent.

—Albert Johansson

THE WASTER

You ask me what is the shop I keep
That I wander the whole day long,
That I've time to smile at the vagrant clouds
And weep for the dearth of song.

Why do I pass the time away
When 'tis now I should be plowing?
Why, to walk upon the scented earth
And hear the green trees sighing.

Ay, I know your harvest will be great
And your coffers overflowing—
But I'll hear the song that summer sings
Though wintry winds be blowing.

—Margaret Delano Rose

I'M TO MEET APRIL TODAY

I've lost my kerchief and one of my shoes
But I've raced the wind down the hill.
The rain's prying fingers have tangled my hair:
My new gown is mud-stained; I've nothing to
wear,
And I've a rendezvous at the mill.

But I should be caring what havoc's done
By storms on the meadow way,
Or what my reflection is like in the weir . . .
For the wind's brought me gladness; my new
love is here,
And I'm to meet April today!

—Olive Street

"PRO PATRIA MORE"

I who am woman may never know
How a man's heart thrills
When the bugles blow.
Nor the song that they sing
Neath the lowering skies,
Going down to the dark
With the sun in their eyes.

I who am woman may only know
How my own heart breaks
When the bugles blow.
For red is the flesh that the gods feed on
As they grind out empty years—
And empty my arms that have ached so long
And blinded my eyes with tears.

—Margaret Delano Rose

KARL

HARRIET FELDMAN

IN A corner of the long, shadowy living-room Karl crouched on the floor, studying his fingers. On the palm-side they were pink; that was because he was a young man like Eric. They were hard, straight fingers, too . . . not stiff and bent like those of John, who had worked much longer on the land. When you spread the fingers, they were like fence posts set close together on uneven ground. Or like trees on a hill, with that tall one in the middle gathering the shorter ones about it. Trees! Karl closed his eyes. Imagine tall, pink, flesh trees. They would be smooth to the touch. And warm! Karl put his hands over his face and chuckled quietly. They would bruise if you struck them. If you put your arms around a trunk, it would be like holding a naked body. If the trees in the orchard were pink, instead of making a black ring at twilight, there'd be just a kind of rosy cloud.

A door barked shut. Karl looked up from between his fingers. Eric had come in; Eric was going to town. Karl clambered to his feet, remembering.

"Eric," he cried, "don't forget!"

He stood over his brother, taller by inches, radiant. Why did Eric's eyes move so quickly from one thing to the next? Did it hurt to rest them?

"Eric . . ."

"Well, what do you want?"

"Don't forget my box . . . tool-box."

"Tool-box? Oh, yes, first thing I get to town. You'll get it in the Tuesday mail."

Karl continued to smile as Eric turned his back. The door opened and closed. Karl stepped towards his mother. But she was looking at Eric. Karl returned to his corner. In the Tuesday mail! He tried to see the tool-box by closing his eyes. Maybe it would have brass on the corners. And brass hinges! And in the box . . . shining hammers, a saw, a square! He wouldn't use them at first, while they were so bright. He would sit and hold them in the sunshine, the way Emily held her baby.

"Oh, it's no use!" Eric cried in a harsh voice.

Karl looked up. His brother stood erect, one hand holding fast to the heavy, high-backed chair, the other hanging limp at his side. Karl watched him delightedly. What was Eric going to do?

Eric's voice was thinner now. "I know what she'll say. She'll tell you she can't sacrifice herself for me. She'll tell you she doesn't love me. And you won't be able to change her by crying or begging . . . or praying. I went to her this morning again. I told her it was the last time I'd

ask her to marry me. I said I was going away if she didn't want me."

Karl stared at Eric's hand. It had relaxed, dropped, and the blood was running back into the white fingers.

"And she sat there, holding my child, and said, 'Goodbye, then.'"

Karl closed his eyes. His mother's voice, low and continuous, was like the murmur of things on a summer noon. A stripe of sunshine fell on his face. And what had been darkness behind his lids took color, shape, whirling life. Karl made his body limp and lay drinking in the heat through his eyes, feeling his body ache with the pleasure.

From another world, he heard Eric's desperate, "But how can I go away! I've got to be near her." Then . . . "Mother! She's here! Emily . . ."

Karl pulled himself to his feet slowly, blinking. He wanted to see Emily. And the baby! The room was empty. He could see his mother moving in the sunshine on the lawn. Karl bounded out of the house and met the women on the steps. Pink and gold Emily! Quickly he lifted the baby from her arms.

In the living-room Karl took his place in the corner again. Now he ignored the sun. He held the baby's body between his hands, feeling the beating of the heart under his thumb. He laid his face against the soft body, breathing the warmth of the child. He ran coarse fingers over the baby's face. What smoothness, what softness! His chest suddenly glowed with a strange warmth, and he pressed the child against the heat, pressed him closer and closer, until the child cried out.

He met the look of the two women. Emily was sitting in the chair Eric had held so tightly. Her hair caught the last bits of Karl's sunlight. She leaned forward, speaking slowly and evenly. "I know you think his name for my child would be compensation. Very generous compensation. But I'm afraid I've lost my concern for respectability. He means nothing to me any more. Why should I devote the rest of my life to him?"

Karl looked into the baby's eyes. Each large, black pupil reflected his face. He bent closer, watching his image grow. The baby reached for his nose. Karl grinned. And the baby smiled. Karl chuckled; the baby's smile widened. Karl burst out laughing; the baby gurgled. Karl stretched his legs on the floor and roared. Through his tears, he saw his mother sitting with bent head. Emily was coming towards him . . . holding out those soft arms for the baby. He followed her to

the automobile, staring at the shining hair and the pink skin.

In the house he found Eric pale, ill-looking.

"Are you sick?" Karl asked.

"No."

"Don't forget my box . . . with brass. In the Tuesday mail."

A long, purple twilight at last yielded to night. Karl stood in the still, silhouetted yard and breathed deeply. The air was so sweet, so cool, you tasted it; you drank it. Through his shoes Karl spread his toes to grasp the roundness of the ground. If you stood that way, still, straight, looking ahead into the sky, it was like being a tree. Karl moved towards the orchard, looming black before him. He walked slowly, caressingly, over the broken ground. From time to time he stopped and laid his hands on a stout trunk. Trees were like dogs. They liked you to notice them.

Suddenly Karl cried out in surprise. He had almost stepped on some one. It was Eric, lying full length on his back. Karl laughed, "Eric!" and threw himself down beside his brother. "Don't forget the tool-box . . . with brass. With brass!

Tools . . ." It was hard to say things; so he lay quiet and watched the milky face of the moon coming towards him through the trees. The orchard was becoming lighter; the trees separated, one from the other, became silver, then green. Karl glanced at his brother. Eric still lay with his face towards the sky. But he held something black, loosely, in the hand on the farther side. Karl started. A revolver. Guns were dangerous. No one ever let him handle them. Eric mustn't hold that so close to his head. Karl leaned across his brother. Only one finger held the gun. Karl touched the finger. It was cold and slightly damp. That dampness was on everything in the orchard. Evening dew. But why was Eric so cold? On the side of the head nearest the revolver, there was a large, black spot. Karl touched the spot. Something moist gave way under his finger. Eric was hurt or sick. He must be taken to the house. Karl struggled to his feet with the weight of his brother in his arms. And he plodded between the trees, saddened by the thought that Eric's trip was delayed. There would be no tool-box in the Tuesday mail.

SENILITY

He laughed that Time should care enough to turn
His richly raven hair to wisps of white.
And when he realized that draughts of night
Had thinned his blood, and set a fire to burn
His bones, he only smiled with unconcern:
His store of guarded memories would light
The final silent hours when speech and sight
Were gone, to bring him joyous youth's return.

Alas! Old frame, where is the memory
That held its precious figures to the sun?
Old Time has splasht your mind upon the sand.
You sit and babble incoherently,
For images the devil sends outrun
The gentle thoughts for which this hour was
planned.

—Wesley Dexter Gordon

REQUIESCAT

'Twere better thus, perhaps; love's hour is brief.
The flower withers ere the root decays,
Nor all our science serves to halt the days,
Give back the green to sere and yellowing leaf.
It could not be: in wondering unbelief
We sensed the fading fragrance of the bays,
And that which once we thought to keep always
Was vanished—is that, then, a cause for grief?

For life goes on. We cannot grasp the gleam
That flickered beckoning before our eyes,
Nor, waking, turn again to dream one dream:
But see! Beyond today tomorrow lies!
Go boldly forth to meet it—leaving one
Who, still remembering, must walk alone.

—Wilbur Bailey

FROM ONE GOING BLIND

What hath the earthworm for a light,
And what the mole to guide him by?—
And why should I deplore the sight
Which faileth in mine eye?

Frail creature, these, but complicate
With muscles, organs, nerves, and veins—
With power to love and procreate,
With senses and with brains—

Frail creature I and much as they—
The prey alike of mortal rot—
Then why should I bewail the day
That they, small things, have not?

If darkness hems me all about,
And night forever shuts me in,
And keeps the light of heaven out,
And turns my eyes within—

Should I, like Cyclops, rave and wail
And call upon the gods to see
Their handiwork, and faint and fail—
And curse my destiny?

Or should I but consider these,
The shiny mole, the earthworm dank,
And praise the gods on humble knees—
The works of heaven thank?

If thus I did, it would be hard
For I have had the gift of sight
And read and written as a bard,
And revelled in the light;

I've seen the wine, the color there,
The garnet and the golden, too,—
And in the sun I've thought it fair
Ere drinking it to you;

I've seen the shining limbs of maids
(By heaven what is that to touch?)
All mottled by the sheens and shades
Of groves I've loved so much;

I've cheered great armies marching by,
The grim, grey dust of weeping war.
And, seeing this, I longed to cry,
Yet shouted as before—

Aye, friend, when these are past and gone,
When with a cane I tap my way,
What is there that is not withdrawn—
What is there left to say?

—Albert Johansson

SILENT THOUGHT

That sudden strangeness came again last night;
I had not known it since you left.
I found it in the fragrance of a lonely blossom
That bloomed among the dead.
It seemed so odd that my footsteps should
Lead me to the place I dared not visit.

A bright moon guided me,
And I stood again in the garden where we said
goodbye.

I remember how the roses and the asters seemed
to acquiesce

When our lips were tightly pressed.
And how a gentle breeze blew lightly through the
trees

As we said goodbye. And I felt a sudden strange-
ness

Fill my soul.

Last night I went into that garden:
All the roses lay wilted on the ground,
And the asters were crumpled on their stalks.
The breeze was dead. The garden seemed a ren-
derous
For lost memories.

I walked quite slowly down the paths we once
had walked

Together. And I found a rose
Quite new and lonesome blooming on a long-dead
bush.

The rose was new, and within its leaves I seemed
To see your face.
And I felt that sudden strangeness that I felt
Long years ago.

I plucked the rose and left the bush quite forlorn
Standing gloomy in the night.
I need not tell the rest. You know how I placed
The rose upon your grave and lay it where I
knew
It would rest upon your bosom.

I can but wait now;
I shall not be afraid.
Together we will walk within a garden
Where each blossom has a glory of its own.
And when the garden fades and the winds do not
blow,
We'll walk together, hand in hand,
And never miss the roses.

—Sadie Mae Sanor

SONGS OF DISCONTENT

Year after year
Have I watched the seasons
March mysteriously to some
Ultimate, consummated finality;

I have seen the spring
Slip softly through the woods,
Like a shimmering green thread
Weaving most giddy patterns.

I have seen all the eagerness and quest
Wearied; all the green and spray sinks,
And is swept back to the unguessed
Depths from whence they came.

I have seen the fragile glory
Of the clouds swing from the south,
Poignant and perfect, and are gone
As mists flee from the sun of dawn.

Nightly have I seen the stars
Whirl dizzily in complicate design,
Spinning their misty trails
To some far fulfillment.

I have seen men come and go,
Each dreaming in a wilderness alone—
A candle flitting past a door—
A falling leaf—as lightly remembered

* * *

Oh, the dagger of your going!
All my gallant dreaming
Through the great empty hours
Was cupped in your small hand:

I have no choice but to follow
In the wake of your passing.

Sometimes in the broken heart-beat of night
The little pale ghost of her hands
Will twitch at me, hurting me.
The swift yearning music of her
Is gone from this shrugging earth;
And yet the white tragedy of her hands
Remains a half-remembered song to grieve me . . .
But then, perhaps this is the final strength.

Strange, and a little cruel,
That my loss should be
A never-quite-understood gain
To fleeting, transitory man.

Tonight I scribble words . . .
With shadowy fingers
Clutching at my heart;
And once—once I felt her heart
Beating under my hand.

It is twilight and I am alone,
Alone with the coldness and loneliness
Of clouds and the little wind of dusk.
In the dim orchard I wait in silence
For I know that you still dwell
In the twilight you knew so well,
That you will walk once again
To the strange dark music of the heart,
To hear once again the ghost of a lute
Tuned to a beauty of sound past all enduring.
In this silence I will wait,
In the soft dusk, until I hear
Again the faint ghostly music of you;
I will seek in the darkness of the night
A little gate that led to a garden,
And the old and secret ruin of temple
With its bell that makes no sound.

—Richard Hintz

PHANTASY

ESTHER HENDRIKSEN

FUNERAL silence, tomb devoid of life; the mummy, stark, dead thing, waiting, waiting, for some Tutankhamen ghost to set the fluid flowing through your veins, waiting century after century for life's return—that ancient mystery.

Jagged rocks, like the green dragon's jaw; dim flame, flickering o'er a palette of tallow; stooping wizard, sallow, bearded skeleton with sunken, blood-shot eyes; vague outlines of test tubes, the retort, watery solutions, crystals, melted metal masses, and beyond, blackness with its formidable hordes of bats—medieval mystery.

Scrupulous cement floors, bulky machinery precisely arranged, flash of a brilliant, beautiful torch of Bessemer converter, pouring molten iron, shadowy men in goggled helmets—modern mystery.

Or is it mystery? Ever since that first dawn the cloud of superstition has darkened the path of science. But knowledge vanquishes fear, and the glow of electric incandescence obliterates the gloom cast by that cloud. Man pauses, amazed at the work of his creation—the splendor which he has added to the world.

Here, where dinosaurs once roved, where chattering monkeys scolded, where the thundering elephant thrave, here stands London, Paris, Chicago or New York. Man has tamed the wild. He is all supreme.

The seas once raged with furious tempest, the waves lashed high one upon the other, and the winds roared with the challenge, "Conquer if you can!" Man grinned, took the dare—and won! The seas became as glass, and the winds subsided—man won!

The skies once rent asunder and poured forth fire, stone, and a deluge of waters—rumbling with the same challenge—"Conquer if you can"—and man won! The heavens gave up the rainbow crowns, and the skies were subdued, blue, calm—ever serene.

Out of the text books on the table before me those scenes arose. The history book, the science book, and a text on the appreciation of art all seemed to unfold and agree with unanimous accord, "Yes, man is very, very wise."

I leafed through the pages of the book on art appreciation, and sought out the pictures I loved best—Reynolds' "Age of Innocence," Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," Bonheur's "Horse Fair," and finally I paused and gazed into the sweet face of Whistler's "Mother." The composed features and cool grey eyes reminiscence over times long gone by. She dreams of her own childhood days and of the little ones who played about her knee.

But I have studying to do and cannot linger thus. I seize the chemistry and make a strenuous effort to concentrate, but my poor brain is not in a receptive mood. I bang the book closed, and seat myself at the piano.

My fingers plunge into the black and white keys and wander aimlessly until they chance upon an E minor chord, which leads them into a Grieg "Sonata."

In the gray dawn I am carried to the summit of a great mountain. The colorful aurora borealis dances in the north, the snow scintillates with its white purity, and the graceful pines sway rhythmically. In the depths below, the waters of a black ocean wash upon the rocky shores and up into the vast fiords. Suddenly the waters part, and a monstrous form protrudes. From behind a heavy snow drift two trolls converse in uneasy whispers. The sea-monster crawls up the mountain side. An avalanche of snow and ice slides down the precipice behind him. The sea-monster approaches nearer. I am frantic. With terrible exertion I lift myself to a still greater mountain. The monster gains the top of the lower mountain. He looks down into the hollow from whence he came.

The snow is whiter, the waters a dark blue, and the orange sun beams coldly against the ice-bordered horizon. There are more trolls and more coarse whisperings. The sea-monster is crawling up my mountain now. My heart thumps frightfully. He is upon me. The monster is cruel. His tentacles clutch at me violently. I gasp and struggle again. For hours the fight continues. The monster is tireless. I am worn and would die. Thousands of trolls are assembled around us, waiting to drag me to their realms under the mountain. The sight of them intensely angers me, and with all the strength man ever possessed, I envelop the sea-monster in my brawny arms and crush him. He is no more. The trolls, too, vanish. I am alone. My worst enemy, my baser, uglier self suffers defeat. I am triumphant!—The sonata is finished.

My hands tremble. They are cold and moist. My face burns. I am hot. No wonder I cannot study. The house is much too warm. With a sudden impulse I fling the doors open and throw up the windows. The crisp morning air rushes in and invigorates my soul. I cannot resist; I grab my books and dash outside with the determination, "I'll study on the hilltop in the sunshine." After all, there are reasons enough to justify my studying in the open. If I live in the country I may as well enjoy the outdoors. Walking is a healthy sport, and if I have exercise and plenty of fresh

air, of course I can complete my lessons very easily and rapidly.

Full of new spirit, I run over the old wooden bridge which creaks with every step. The water ripples on down the stream, and the fragrance of the spicy smelling brush is exhilarating. The dogs, eager for a hike, romp about me. Once across the old country road and under the barb wire fence, I hesitate to decide whether to go around and up by way of the gentle slope, or to climb the steep incline which immediately confronts me. The steep way is the shorter, and up I go. I have to stop on the side of the hill to catch my breath. The dogs have seen a rabbit and are chasing off under the brush.

Oh! Joy of all joys!—See there, just a little above me, there blooms a poppy, the first I have seen. I pluck it, caress its golden cup, and plod on up the hill again.

From the hilltop I look out over the ranch—I can see where the little stream, with the willows nodding over it, wends its way through the green fields. I can see the big red barn, the two tall silos, the horse barn, and the house, almost hidden in that clump of locust trees. To the north, the south, the east and the west, the misty blue hills roll outward, on towards the horizon.

The poppy is withering now. I pull off the velvety petals and feel of their softness. The yellow pollen drifts from the stamens on to my fingers. One by one I let the fragments of the pretty flower float to the ground.

I lay down my burden of books, and again they seem to agree among themselves—"Yes, man is very, very wise." "Wise, wise." A big bumble bee buzzes with the refrain.

I glance down the almost vertical incline again. What was it the books said about civilization's being a slow, steady progress? It must be something like trying to climb that hill, only there doesn't seem to be any apex in the awful ascent which civilization strives to surmount.

From yonder valley the sound of hammering comes to my ear. A host of men labor together at some odd structure. Their voices mingle in strange confusion as they work. In the fields rest massive blocks of stone, and it is these with which the laborers seem to be concerned. A group of them are fastening oxen to the heavy stones. The men move in a body, and the boulder is lifted to the shoulders of the giants. Block is placed upon block, and a pyramid looms over the valley. The men are finished, and stand about to admire the edifice.

"But it is not right!" Many tongues murmur the protest, and the Egyptians turn in surprise to the north.

A solitary cloud descends into the valley. A throng of foreigners join the Egyptians, and after much gesturing and wrangling, the Egypt-

tians assent—"It is not right."

The hammers begin their pounding anew, and the Egyptians work side by side with the strangers. The pyramid waxes into a Parthenon temple and Egypt's lapidary art is obscured in a multitude of slender Doric columns.

Suddenly the hills are ringing with the words, "Fools, is all your building done simply for art's sake?" From between the hills arrive more people.

"We," they announce, "are the engineers of this world. Why did you not summon us?"

The Egyptians and Greeks dispute furiously with the newcomers, but within a short time they are hammering peacefully together. Other foreigners come in on the clouds and from between the fair hills and beg to help with the project. The Romans direct the activities, and Assyrians, Babylonians, Carthaginians, Hebrews, Persians, Egyptians and Greeks all associate in blissful harmony to remodel the Grecian temple into a rigidly constructed "Coliseum."

But again the hills vibrate with the trampling of many feet and the noise of wild talking. Swarms of Huns flood the valley and threaten, "We are the invincible Goths. Unless you obey our command, we shall destroy you and your 'Coliseum!'"

The Romans surrender their forces and the Goths plan and reckon with them for a long time. Eventually the total populace tear down the "Coliseum" and begin to erect the monument anew. A cathedral, most magnificent to behold, appears on the site where once stood the "Coliseum." The people are awed with the rich murals, ornamental carvings, and perfect sculpturing. They know that at last they have created "Art," and they thrill at the sight of their stupendous masterpiece.

"Masterpiece?—Call you that a masterpiece?" A single man mocks their pride and relates in exaggerated fashion of the splendors he has seen in the Far East. He shows them fine silken robes, sweet-scented perfumes, balmy spices, and miniature ivory carvings, the like of which the people have never before seen.

They question among themselves, "Who is this Marco Polo? What is this splendor of which he speaks? Can it be that other nations have art greater than ours?" The people hold council and decide to invite the Far East to trade with them. A yellow race with long slanting eyes and high cheekbones accepts the request and pours into the valley. The cathedral is criticized and shaped again into another architecture. A huge dome crowns its top and a pool of deep waters reflects its grandeur. The cathedral has assumed the aspects of a "Taj Mahal."

More of the yellow race enter the valley, and the people follow their advice and build a "Great Wall" around the "Taj Mahal."

In the north the white race has heard of the appalling manual labor with which the poor people have raised a nation, and they bring them machines to lighten their work. The Northmen laugh at the fanciful "Taj Mahal." "Your whims have blinded you and led you on into impractical frivolity," they jest.

The people are bewildered and inquire, "Is not art the end of all living?"

"Ease before luxury," respond the English. "Let us help you to build with economy. We can demolish your 'Taj Mahal'; and in seven days we shall have raised a superior structure, a useful one, one which shall tower proudly up to the sky, up to the throne of God."

The people waver at the promise and turn to the English with fresh hope. They have tired already of their elaborate "Taj Mahal."

Again the valley surges with busy men. The English bring in derricks, ladders, pulleys, buzz saws and many other mechanical devices. An "Empire State Building" rises high into the air, and the people look up and marvel at the ingenuity of man.

"This," the people declare, "is civilization, product of man's wisdom!"

They pull down the "Great Wall," and with the bricks thereof build themselves houses, factories, stores and other tall buildings about this "Empire State Building," and they call their place "The New World."

"Let us have law," propose the Romans.

"And justice for all!" complement the English.

"And democracy!" the people shout.

"Democracy!" The word resounds from the lips of black men, white men, yellow men, and brown men alike, and it echoes and reechoes through the hills.

All the races of "The New World" assemble into a mighty "League of Nations" to determine who shall head the democracy.

The Egyptians nominate Pharaoh, the Greeks nominate Pericles, and the Romans nominate Caesar, and shortly the whole hall reverberates with names—King George, George Washington, Charlemagne, Shah Jehan, Dido, Stalin, Catherine the Great, King Louis, Bismarck, Alexander the Great, Herod, Napoleon, Xerxes—all to be included on the primary ballots.

Politicians stand on the street corners and blab and stutter and argue with the people. For days the streets clamor with political jargon—and then the big day draws nigh. The people throng to the polls for the preliminaries. From the many names voted upon three top the list—Roosevelt, Hitler, and Mussolini.

Again the people stir restlessly. The politicians storm forensically. The excitement is keyed to a higher pitch as the final day approaches—and then it is all over. Franklin D. Roosevelt is

elected! He reigns from his palace, the "Empire State Building." Some of the people exult vociferously, but some shake angry fists at the "Empire State Building" and boisterously complain, "Durst you thrust out our culture? Is this democracy?"

The Egyptians demand, "Tear down the 'Empire State.' Rebuild the 'Pyramid'!"

The Greeks lament, "Ah! the 'Parthenon' has lost its art in the maze of civilization."

The Romans wall, "Our 'Coliseum,' too, has been destroyed that this ugly tower might stand in its place."

The Germans bemoan, "Yes, the stained glass windows and carvings of our cathedral are shattered. Woe that art should so die! Woe unto us!"

"Where," questions the yellow race, "where is the marble white dome of our 'Taj Mahal'?"

The Americans look down on the disheartened masses from the king's palace. "Be still, ye fools! This is your 'Pyramid,' your 'Parthenon,' your 'Coliseum,' your 'Cathedral,' your 'Taj Mahal,' your culture, and ours. This Roosevelt is your ruler, and ours. This is your democracy, and ours. Peace be unto you! Thus you have voted; your desires are fulfilled. You have democracy, you have law, and inasmuch as you have these, you have justice. Go your ways. Disturb us not. Your wisdom is ours."

The people continue to soothe and to murmur against their government, their ruler, their democracy, their law, their justice and wisdom. They conspire against the ruler in the "Empire State Building." They revolt. They invent bombs and airplanes with which to distribute the bombs. They discover poisonous gases, and manufacture dynamite and nitroglycerin with which to blow up the "Empire State Building."

The Egyptians rejoice, "We shall rebuild the 'Pyramid' again."

The Greeks remind them, "But the 'Pyramid' was not right. Let us rebuild the 'Parthenon' instead."

The Romans disagree. "No, we shall make another 'Coliseum.'"

Likewise, the Goths insist on the erection of another "Cathedral," and the Mongolians will have nothing but the "Taj Mahal."

The Egyptians hail Pharaoh as king, the Greeks will have no other than Pericles as ruler, the Germans proclaim Hitler their sovereign, the Mongolians support Shah Jehan, the Carthaginians, their Dido, the Persians, Xerxes, the Romans, Caesar; and there is strife among the revolting peoples. They direct the newly-made cannons upon each other, they fire guns upon each other; and soon the streets are clouded with the smoke of revolvers and poisonous gases. Spears and swords flash. Blood spills on the sidewalks. Black men smite down white men, yellow men plunge

daggers into the backs of brown men. The havoc of war incites cruel hate in the breasts of men. They contend bitterly. Murder and slaughter prevail in "The New World." The booming cannon, the reports of revolvers, exploding dynamite, bombs, starvation, plague, misery, and death all claim the red life blood of the fighting nationalities.

The Americans look out from their "Tower of Babel" and laugh heartlessly. "We only have wisdom! Poor devils! Ha! Ha! They defeat their own wisdom. Ho! Ho! Ho!"

Suddenly the earth shakes violently. The "Empire State" sways from side to side over the poor struggling peoples. Some of the Americans stumble hurriedly to the battle-worn streets, some fall from the windows to the pavements below. The earth quakes with the challenge, "Conquer if you can!" The "Empire State Building" crashes to the ground. The fingers of devastation grasp greedily at the laborious efforts of man.

The hills erupt and the hot lava of a Vesuvius pours out to complete the destruction. From the bowels of the earth a deep voice rumbles, "Conquer if you can!"

A tidal wave rolls over the hills and washes away the debris. The hills are left bare, the valley desolate.

The sky flashes with strange comets. Showers of stars hiss past. The cold planets quiver and burn as never before. The earth spins off somewhere into space. The whole solar system jeers, "Conqueror! Ruler of the sun and stars, of the land and sea, conquer, conquer if you can!"

A cold nose sniffs my face. I must have been dreaming. The dogs are panting over me, their tails wagging happily.

The misty hills roll outward, on towards the horizon. Cattle graze quietly in the green pastures, and the little stream flows gently on.

The poppy lies scattered where I cast it—never to blow in the breezes again.

My books are still where I left them. I long for the comfort of Whistler's "Mother," but she merely stares blankly out of the page. She is just a portrait—lifeless, tired, expressionless. She can neither speak nor dream. She is only an illusion.

From some hidden lair a meadow lark chants his plaintive elegy. A blue jay scolds with raucous mockery, "Conqueror, conqueror!"

From the house below the radio blares with a howling tenor voice. I cannot make out the words, but I know the tune—"Why Don't You Practice What You Preach."

TIDES

Do you remember?—ah, can you forget?—
That August night—it was so long ago—
When hand in hand we watched the silver flow
Of breaking surf where earth and ocean met;
When down we strolled, down where the sands
were wet
With salt spray from the ebbing tide below,
And dim stars cast their pale celestial glow
Over the ocean's darkened silhouette.

We watched them break, brave tides that knew
no bound
Until at last before our feet they died.
We did not know—as hand to hand we clung
And saw the silver surf borne in and drowned—
Hearts too can break, urged by an unseen tide:
We could not know, we who were then so young.

—Wilbur Bailey

THE MISANTHROPE

The child's delight is in a painted toy
With which to pass away his careless hour—
There is the essence of his little joy;
And there, his infant ecstasies can flower:
The youth's delight is in a budding maid:
The man's is in the knowledge of success:
The dotard's, ere his failing feet are stayed,
Is in the past and grows each minute less.

But my delight is in the hope of death
Where I can moulder and, in peace, decay;
Without this dull recurrent pain called breath,
Without this iterated war called day—
I give the world, and gladly, to the devil;
Its war and sorrow, and its fevered revel.

—Albert Johansson

SEEKING

Though joy is sweet, sorrow is greater than the
laughter of the heart;
The quick torment of beauty is a climbing vine
of sorrow, nor chokes the soul,
But binds the heart with strength of trees and
rocks that wait in silence.
Not for joy do great rocks stare blindly seaward,
nor feel the sting
Of high keen winds and mist, and mist—
The bitter nostalgia of the small rain from out
the restless sea;
Not for joy do the high far stars glimmer, wheel
passionless and patient and pale
For the dark hair of beautiful women and the
small wistful hands of children;
Nor for joy does the still sad voice of humanity
slip into the uneasy past,
Driven forever from the doorstep of the world.
Can they remember the ageless, dew-drenched
sarcophagus of a dream they sought?
Why must I seek this dream, ransack the room
of the heart?
And yet—again—the quietness of earth
Will cover these yearning eyes.

—Richard Hiatt

DEFENCE

My brother is a careful man;
He loves the new-turned sod
And thinks that golden-ripened grain
Is truly praise to God.

But give me the sea wind,
The eerie wild gull's cry,
The scent of far-flung places,
And green seas crashing by.

I know the rover's a renegade
And never lays up gold,
But think of all the memories
For when a man is old!

—Margaret Delano Rose

COMING OF MARCH

I see March coming down the road
To meet me with twinkling eye;
He whistles a tune that speaks of June
And echoes the wind's chill sigh.

He brings me a bunch of daffodils wild
With violets peeping between;
The dew sun-missed, the roots earth-kissed
Where they tenderly cling to the green.

I shake the snow from off my shoes;
Tilt my bonnet of springtime mode;
My young heart sings, my feet grow wings;
I see March coming down the road.

—Rose Catherine Gunn

THE EGOTIST

When first they met, his face already to
The stars was turned. She thought him wonderful
And humbly gave him all she had to give:
Herself—her hands, the work that they could do
To smooth his path; her native wit, to help
Him pass the hours, when, squeezed dry,
He could not work; her ripe, red mouth for his
To fasten on, the lovely woman flesh
Of her which clung and flung her flame to his
When that was what her lover craved. All this
She gave, and sometimes sighed because it was
Not more; all this he took quite casually
As though it were his due. The woman was
His wife, his writing was his mistress and
His love. He climbed the road to fame, and stooped
At last among the wind-swept stars. A small
And gallant figure, she had humbly walked
Beside and smoothed the rough steep road as best
She could. But when at last the height was
reached,
Her work was done. She gave a sigh and died.
He stood alone among the wind-swept stars—
A lonely atom in the gusty void—
And not till then did he well know his love.
Pain wracked him and he wept, but with his tears
He spun a web of gold and silver mesh:
His grief was no less real because the web
Ensnared for him eternal, shining fame.

—Harold Bettinger

THE ENCHANTRESS

Ulysses held captive by Circe laments his fate.

We turned our gilded figure-head
Into that river of the dead
And set our silken, purple sails
To catch the lusty wind that hails
Out of the darkening west,
Till sailing silently we came
Upon an ancient withered dame
Who lifted high her soiled hand
And pointed back along the sand—
And none there were in my true band
But feared to stop at her command;
For she was sister to the three
Whose evil hands hold destiny.
"Ulysses, turn, sail back!" cried she;
"Yet if you sail on you will see
That which ne'er again might be."
And saying so, she vanished.

We feared, and yet were so aflamed
We sailed and laughed, but half ashamed . . .
Until at length we came
Unto a place without a name,
And there the river of the dead
Plunged its dark and foaming head
Into a silver stream that ran
With music like the pipes of Pan
Played on high Olympus.

A magic perfume filled the air
And towering mid sweet gardens fair
We saw a marvelous palace built
Upon the fertile river's slit.
A fitting place in which to hymn—
Bedecked with every precious gem—
The gods' own brightness.
And suddenly our oars were stilled;
The perfumed breeze no longer filled
Our sails. As men by reason left
We drifted, all our sense bereft.
A slumber deep as death may be
Befell my noble Greeks and me.
If years went by, I know it not—

Time here in ageless webs is caught
And men in time.
Till Circe plucks them forth to be
Meal for her passions endlessly.

Of witchcraft she, a priestess fair,
With silver crescents in her hair,
A tangled dark and ebon skein
Which no man loves and may remain
As sane as what he was before—
For brooding passions lock that door.
Yet for a glance from those dark eyes
All other pleasures men despise
And for a taste of Paradise, quaff deep
(Just as the drunken lout can sweetly sleep)
The cup of burning, flaming Hells.
She laughs, and as the chime of mocking bells
The lesser demons laugh.

Her lissome body glimmers bare
Through draperies by far more fair
Than any mortal hand might weave,
But she is lovely—to deceive.
A leopard plays about her feet
And rises mockingly to greet
Newcomers; they but other brutes
Who ate too well of passion fruits.
And black swans on a turquoise pool
Disturb a jewelled fishes' school
And open their crimson beaks to see
Hell's mistress play Divinity.

Yet, at the bidding of her lovely hand
Proud captains kneel, hers to command.
I left my manhood, and my sword I broke
To make a hauberk for her swan-like throat.
She harms me not, if no harm there be
In letting me live, so endlessly,
Gone is my ship and its shining sail
Gone my men in their burnished mail—
And where my captain's plume adorned my brow
Are only withered vine leaves now.

—Margaret Delano Rose

TRUE FRIENDS

JAMES LAWRENCE BILLWILLER

**ARE YOU LONELY? LET US FIND YOU A
TRUE FRIEND**

Universal Letter Club
Box 77, SAN FRANCISCO

July 7, 1932

Universal Letter Club
Box 77, San Francisco

Dear Sir or Madam:

I saw your ad in the paper which I am inclosing where you say that you find True Friends for lonely people. I am a very lonely man because I don't know hardly anybody, and I would like to have you find me a True Friend.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden
General Delivery
San Jose, Cal.

Mr. John Borden
General Delivery
San Jose, California

Dear Mr. Borden:

We are happy to be in receipt of your letter of July 7. Enclosed you will find a copy of our magazine, "Universal Friends," in which we feel sure that you will find described some lady who will make an ideal correspondent. The name and address of any of the ladies mentioned will be promptly sent you upon the receipt of one (\$1) dollar. We make no further charge at any time.

If by any chance none of the ladies mentioned in the magazine seems to you to be exactly the right friend for you, we have lists of very refined ladies who do not care to have their descriptions published but want us to select a gentleman friend for them. Since we feel sure that you are a real gentleman, we will be glad to choose a lady for you from our lists upon receipt of five (\$5) dollars. Trusting that we shall hear from you soon, we remain,

THE UNIVERSAL LETTER CLUB

by Robert A. Nicholas

July 13, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Thank you very much for your nice letter and the magazine. I have read it very carefully, but all the ladies are so nice that I cannot make up my mind which one to pick. So please Mr. Nicholas will you take the five (\$5) dollars which are here inclosed and pick a nice lady for me.

I am a white man, forty nine years old, and

am employed at a steady job at which I am a janitor. I should like to write to a nice lady about forty five years old. I am a Presbyterian myself but I do not care what she is so long as she is no Catholic or Christian Science for I could never be a True Friend with one of those kind of people. She must not smoke and drink either because I think a lady that does that is no lady, do you, Mr. Nicholas? I must close now. Please write right away.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden

July 15, 1932

Dear Mr. Borden:

We are in receipt of your letter and money order of July 13, and we are happy to tell you that we have found a lady whom we think will be satisfactory in every way. Her name is Mrs. Dorella Reynolds, and her address 117 Orange Street, Stirling, Illinois. Mrs. Reynolds tells us that her husband, a painter by profession, fell from the roof of a barn which he was painting and was killed in 1929, leaving Mrs. Reynolds alone in the world. She is forty-four years of age, five feet two inches in height, and has red hair and blue eyes. We are enclosing a photograph.

Mrs. Reynolds was left fifteen thousand dollars in Liberty Bonds by her late husband, and owns the house in which she lives. While she herself is a Congregationalist, she tells us that she has no objection to a gentleman of any Protestant faith. We recommend that you enclose this letter as identification when writing to her for the first time.

Although we are perfectly confident that Mrs. Reynolds will be congenial, if at any time you should find her in any way unsatisfactory, we will be happy to furnish you with the name and address of another lady upon the receipt of the additional sum of five (\$5) dollars.

Please write us occasionally and tell us how you are progressing, for we are always glad to hear from our members. Wishing you all the joys of True Friendship, we remain,

THE UNIVERSAL LETTER CLUB

By Robert A. Nicholas

July 16, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Thank you for the nice letter and the photograph. How can I ever thank you for finding me such a nice lady to write to. I must close now be-

cause I am going to write to Mrs. Reynolds right now.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden

September 17, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

You asked me to write and tell you how I was getting on, but I have been so busy writing Mrs. Reynolds that I have forgot it until now. We have written back and forth very regular, Mr. Nicholas, and it will surprise you to hear that I have found love in my heart for this nice lady. I have not told her of it because our correspondence is very proper because I am a gentleman like you said and Dovey which is what I call Mrs. Reynolds is a real lady but I think she likes me too because she calls me Johnny boy which is in fun of course but I think it means something dont you Mr. Nicholas.

Well, Mr. Nicholas, what do you think? Dovey which is what I call Mrs. Reynolds has a birthday which is September 22 and I am going to take the five hundred dollars which I have saved in the bank and go back east and surprise Dovey which is what I call Mrs. Reynolds on her birthday and ask her to marry me which I think she will do because she writes very regular. I must close now, but I shall write you on the train because I will not have anything to do anyway.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden

P. S. You did not mention about smoking and drinking but Dovey, which is what I call Mrs. Reynolds is the president of the Stirling W.C.T.U. so that is all right.

September 19, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Well, Mr. Nicholas, here I am on the train which is going east and is very empty because there are not very many people on it. I have just had lunch which is very expensive because I guess the train people think that everybody that travels is a rich millionaire. I must close now because the man across the aisle has just asked me would I like to play checkers of which he has the board and men.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden
September 20, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Well, Mr. Nicholas, I beat the man I told you about two games and would have done it three times only he knocked over the board and 2 of the black men got lost. So then we got to talking and he says his name was Mr. Jerry Henderson of Morgan Hill and he says he is going back east to

perpose to a widow and I says I was too and what was her name and what do you think, Mr. Nicholas, it was Dovey which is what we both call Mrs. Reynolds. He met her through the Worldwide Letter Club and they have been writing ever since August 9 because he showed me one of her letters. Well, Mr. Nicholas, we both sat there just as surprised. Then we got to thinking that it might be too much for her if we both came because she is not expecting us because we have not told her we were coming and she could not marry both of us anyway because there is a law. So Mr. Jerry Henderson says that we will play checkers to see which of us will go and see Dovey which is what we call Mrs. Reynolds and the other one will go home. And because it costs so much to come east the one that wins will give the one that loses one hundred (\$100) dollars to make up for the expence which he will not mind very much anyway because Dovey which is what we call Mrs. Reynolds has fifteen thousand (\$15000) dollars which the winner will get some of when he marries her. So tomorrow is the game which will be two out of three because Mr. Jerry Henderson is going to get some more checkers the next time the train stops which it is always doing because people want to get on and off. So I am going to bed now to get a good rest for the big game which I know I will win because I am a very good checker player.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden

Hotel Statler, Chicago
September 21, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Well, Mr. Nicholas, I won the first two games and I must say that Mr. Jerry Henderson is a real gentleman because he shook hands and said I had won fair and square which I had and that he was not ashamed to lose to a good checker player like me. So I gave him the one hundred (\$100) dollars and he got off the train at Kansas City so he could take another train back to Morgan Hill which is a very nice town he says although I have never been there.

I got off the train at Chicago because the train I was on does not go to Stirling but goes straight on to New York where I do not want to go because I do not know nobody who lives there. So I came to this hotel which is a very nice hotel bigger than any in San Jose and tomorrow I will take the train down to Stirling.

I am very happy, Mr. Nicholas, because I won so I will close now.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden
Hotel Statler, Chicago
September 22, 1932

September 22, 1932

Dear Mr. Nicholas:

Well, Mr. Nicholas, here I am in a little old hotel in Stirling although this paper says Hotel Statler because I took some when I left this morning because it was such nice stationery and it was left in the room. I am very tired because it has been a very hard day like I am going to tell you.

Well, I got here about twelve o'clock and got off the train and got in a taxi and said to the man take me to 117 Orange Street which he did. And he wanted a dollar which I gave him although it was too much and got out and went up to the door and rung the bell but nobody answered which I thought was funny and all the shades were pulled down. And I saw the people next door peeking out and kind of snickering so I went over there and

asked the man if he knew where Mrs. Reynolds was. And he said she's gone on her honeymoon to Niagara Falls with a man because she asked me to tell the milk man to stop leaving milk. And I says do you know what the man's name was. And he says yes it was Henderson or something like that and he must have a lot of dough because I hear him tell her he flew down here from Kansas City in a airplane and it cost him one hundred (\$100) dollars. So I guess that is all Mr. Nicholas so I will close now.

Your humble servant,
Mr. John Borden

P. S. I am coming back to San Jose because of my job there where I am a janitor which I have not lost because this is my vacation. It will be pretty lonely, Mr. Nicholas, so will you please take the inclosed five (\$5) dollars and send me another True Friend like you said you would.

RESURGENCE

These are the joyous resurrection days
When from decay and death of winter's pall
All nature awakens to spring's magic call
And sings her glad symphonic roundelays
Through tree and leaf; through bud and petal-
blaze;
Through nascent life fresh surging over all,—
A swelling vibrant choir in madrigal
That lifts itself in rhapsody of praise!

We, too, may sing the resurrection song!
From the dark tomb of our dead selves arise,
Take up the strain, the antiphon prolong!
Roll back the stone that seals; look to the skies;
Ascend into the realms of truth and light;
There, know our oneness with the Infinite!

—Frances Moyes

SONNET

Full quiet are these forms that throng the brain
In wonderment at passion spent, for clings
Like morning mist this cold reflected pain
To earth, then drifts into the dawn such things
As were reality, and with the sun,
The queer half knightly figures turn and wave
An almost longingful farewell, but none
Will stay to show the soul what living gave.

In its bewilderment to know a truce
With death, now child-like in its consequence,
The mind sees only darkness from its loose
Regard of day that lights a dream fled hence.
And still calm thoughts pursue their bootless way
While in a scentless garden flowers away.

—John Brocher

PAPAGO LOVE SONG

Music, what is it that you seek?
Do you seek in the dim starlit meadow
some slim girl
Who moves not merely to the lamentation
of old bells,
Seek dark, wind-swept hair enfolding
a half-seen witch-like face?

Music, oh music playing in the starlight!
I can see your bows moving together
beneath the trees,
In the shadows, like the phantom hands
of phantom queens.
You, too, seek in the faint dreaming meadow
a sleeping sorrowful dream.

Music, let your fierce desire stalk out
of cold tombs.
Tear open with your voluptuous hands
a woman's heart,
Feed her on slow and secret laughter,
cause her to dream
Beneath a labyrinth of stars, drowned
in a world of moonlight . . .

Her white flower-feet whisper through the grass,
Haunting dead vineyards, swimmingly to music
from your lips.
Violins, reach with your sweet and savage hands
and finger the stars.
Music, hush my heart with soft and dulcet hands,
sweep it clean.—

That I might not feel the grief of your
throbbing strings,
That weaves such slow magic about me
in the frosty starlit air;
Your white arms about me deliciously—quivering
liquid lips of a flute—
Cool lips against my heart, that I
might sleep again.

* * *

Oh wait! This is no music that I hear!
It is the music of my heart, the spear

Of longing stabbing at my dream, the vain
Belief in beauty grieving me again.

"Oh Christ! let not both dreams and beauty die!"
My voice echoes humanity's small cry.

—Richard Hiatt

AN EXHORTATION

Let's lay the weary lyric muse aside,
And take her epic elder to our heart—
But, ere the lighter sister doth depart,
Sing one more song to welcome as a bride
The stately song that cannot be denied
A noble place in any nation's tale
Of history, for though a race may fail
Its songs live on as founts that are not dried.

Too long have we been satisfied to sing
The passing passion of a moment's span;
And those who try to strike a deeper string
Are only mortals of the race of man—
Give, then, a greater heart, O gods, to ring
An anthem for Beersheba as for Dan.

—Albert Johansson

WHAT BITTER AUTUMN

What bitter autumn bred such winter cold?
This hearth was broad and ever full of flame.
Here was bright warmth in plenty, ere you came
To check the lifted cup, the tale half-told.
What need was yours, who had good food and
fire,
That you should covet mine, when mine was all
Of any guard I had against the squall
Of querulous wind; the barren, fruitless briar?

Such greed is not denied. Since you have taken,
In spite of me, my sustenance and laughter,
I grant you master in this house. Hereafter
Walk lightly, lest old, painful echoes waken;
Lest the brand fall, igniting in a pyre
This domicile erected by desire.

—Jean Vera Smith

OMAR KHAYYAM

DAVID F. WALKINGTON

"I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled—"

I, TOO, am sure that the reddest of roses honor Omar's tomb in distant Nishapur, and that their descendants beside Fitzgerald's grave in the sleepy little English village are equally red.

As you gaze on the weather-beaten tomb you can but hope that somewhere, though he himself did doubt it, Omar and his Singer have, "with a loaf of bread beneath the bough, a book of verse, a jug of wine", found a Wilderness that "is Paradise enow." It seems that there was little else than these three things that Omar wanted, it appears that he did get them; and that he wasted little time and fear on some dim tomorrow.

But, what of Omar himself.

First, his name—Omar Ibn Ibrahim al-Khayyam—Omar, the tent maker; yet he appears to have inherited the name, as do our Smiths, Archers, and Masons, from his family's hereditary occupation. He used the name of Khayyam as his Takhallus or non-deplume and spoke of it in this whimsical manner:

"Khayyam, who stitched the tents of science
Has fallen in grief's furnace, and been suddenly burned;

The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes
of his life,

And the broker of Hope has sold him for
nothing!"

Second, his boyhood, youth, and education. Omar was born in Nishapur—probably less than a hundred paces from where he is buried. His father, a tent maker, was not poor, yet he was not even moderately wealthy, holding a small governmental position as a tax-gatherer in the small community. Omar played in the rose gardens, saw men enter into the taverns, and, troubles forgotten, reel laughing out, until the age of ten when he entered school. To quote from Nizam al Mulk, lifetime friend of the poet, author and statesman himself:

"—and so my father sent me to Nishapur, where there did reside a great philosopher and teacher, the Imam Mowaffaq, of whose pupils it was said that all did prosper. There did I meet two men who were my most dear friends, Omar Ibn Khayyam and the ill-fated Ben Sabbah.—" The three boys, under the tutelage of the wise man, were quick of wit and gained much know-

edge of letters, and the science of the day. Before their parting the three youths swore a strange and solemn oath—again to quote Nizam al Mulk:

"—and Hassan said, 'let us make a vow, that to whomsoever fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the other two, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself.' 'And be it ever so,' quoths Omar and I." Nizam was the first to gain eminence in worldly life, and remembering his oath he shared it with them. But is it not a strange coincidence that all three should be remembered, on their own achievements, nine centuries later, and in a different language? Two were famous, Omar and Nizam. And Hassan? His name comes down to us as a terrible synonym of premeditated murder. Assassin, "the Old Man of the Mountain"; terror of the East and the Crusader, was Omar's boyhood friend—that alone once saved Omar's life.

Third, his life as a man.

Omar, except for one short period at Merv under the Sultan Malik Shah, lived and died in Nishapur, working, dreaming and wondering. Instead of asking for a court position as had Hassan, he asked only a small court pension to give him the small necessities of life while he worked on his astronomy and solved his problems in algebra. For it was not as a poet that Omar was known in his day, but, rather, as the great mathematician and most learned astronomer of the time. Indeed, so great an algebraist was he that a great modern French university still uses his thesis on higher algebra as a text-book. That he spent many of his resting hours as devotee of the wares of the wine merchants is certain; but he had other and more important pleasures, his poetry, his singing lover, and his favorite flower—the rose. Omar loved the soil and most of his life was spent close to it; his pleasures and his wants were as simple. He speaks lovingly of the strip between the desert and the tith; half-watered land where wild roses and spring flowers flourished in season. Physical labor he avoided as his pension gave him sufficient security to make work needless.

To the Persians his most important work was the revision of the Calendar and his treatise on algebra and geometry. Omar's Calendar, the present Islamic one, was nearly as accurate as our Gregorian system, though it required nearly seven years of his labor to perfect it. His applications to higher algebra may be found in almost any school boy's text, and though it is not credited

to Omar, the Royal Mathematical Society has proved the work to be his.

Omar, his poetry.

His poetry was a far more finished product according to our western standards than that of any other Persian poet. However, his advanced thinking, bitter mimicry, and audacious speech made him unpopular with his fellow countrymen who held him as a target for the epithet of "Infidel." He is said to have been particularly unpopular with the Sufite group whom he consistently harried with his laughing ridicule and icy mockery. The Sufite leaders were little more loyal to the Mohammedan teachings than he—but they turned their work to propaganda and to mysticism, thus using the same ideas, many of them "lifted" from Omar, to further their own ends. Omar, too brave and too honest to stomach this dodge was, therefore, many times in that doubtful position between the hammer and the anvil. He had failed to find any Providence but *Destiny*, or any world but *This*, and, failing, set out to make the most of it. Again in Omar's words:

"How sweet is mortal Sovranty"—think
some:

Others—'How blessed the Paradise to come.'

Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go;
Nor heed the rumble of the Distant Drum."

Again in telling what he knew, he flung the challenge as a stone at the Faith his brothers held:

"Oh, come with old Khayyam, and leave the
Wise

To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;

One thing is certain and the Rest is Lies;

The Flower that once has blown for ever
dies."

Three of the world's greatest seekers after God have been called cynics; worse, they have been called skeptics. Compared to the angry heresies of the Israelite, Job, or the bitter fulminations of disgust from the Latin poet, Lucretius, Omar seems only mockingly incredulous.

The lines that damned him most to his fellow Persians, will, perhaps, damn him most today:

"There was a Door to which I found no Key;

There was a Veil past which I could not See:

Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee

There seemed—and then no more of Thee and
Me."

Omar's philosophy contained no time for sad regrets or preparation for tomorrow's reward; for he felt that too soon into dust we return, without wine, singer, song, or—end. Life was short. There was no guaranty of tomorrow. So if life be short, let life be sweet—and no regrets—such was

Omar's maxim. Two quatrains hold his precept like a torch for all to see:

"Ah, make the most of what we may yet
Spend,

Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,

Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and sans—
End."

His reason for this belief follows in one of his clearest pictorhymes:

"Come fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way

To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing."

You may condemn his credo—many have—many will. His philosophy of life is more easy to understand if one takes a peek into the past, and sees the Persia of his day. Persia was not the arid country that it is today, the climate was the same, or nearly so; but they made up for the small rain-fall by a good irrigation system. That this irrigation system long since broke down was the cause of Persia's economic downfall. Iran (Persia) was a land of plenty. The plenty was not only of food and wealth; but of all things, even of religious sects. The country was under the sway of a Moslem Sultan, who, with his court and dancing girls, led a dissolute and easy life while many of his subjects suffered from his greed. Omar could not reconcile this with the theology he had been taught. This resulted in his cynicism—cynical, yet lovable, wrong, perhaps, but able to meet life with a brave and fearless gesture:

"While the rose blows along the River Brink

With old Khayyam the Ruby Vintage drink:

And when the Angel with his Darker

Draught

Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not
Shrink"

Omar, desperate and bitter, because of his inability to understand and prove the "Is" and "Is Not" of human existence in his scientist's mind, cast all faith in God and divinity aside with his angry and mocking lines:

"Into this Universe, and why not knowing,

Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:

And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,

I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing."

"What, without asking, hither hurried
whence?

And, without asking, whither hurried hence!

Another and another Cup to drown

The Memory of this Impertinence!"

Later he again recognized a God, yet questioned him in all his works—for lacking Faith the poet and astronomer could find no comfort in, to him, barren creeds. His failure to understand—nay, reverence, a God who created both good and evil; who could not be proved by mathematical formula, or study of the earth and sky; who damned before he blessed, was the stumbling block of Omar's life, for he found he could not "Drown the Memory of this Impertinence." So in pity and not a little anger he penned the saddest lines in poetry:

"Shall He that made the vessel in Pure Love

And Fancy, in an after Rage destroy!"

"None answered this; but after silence spake
A vessel of more ungainly Make:

"They sneer at me for leaning all Awry;

"What! did the Hand then of the Potter
shake"?"

A question asked, but never answered; for Omar could not give the "Blind understanding" that he felt Heaven asked.

To the end he doubted; yet one cannot help admiring his sturdy acceptance—and willingness—to meet his fate; and to take what it brought when he stepped through the veil through which he could not see, and his "Caravan starts for the Dawn of Nothing." For all that may have failed in his life he made some atonement when he gave us his immortal *Rubaiyat*. Omar's fame will last longer as a poet than as an astronomer or mathematician. He could not have known that, yet he knew that compared to the immensity of the human riddle, his rules of two-and-two, and circuit of the stars were naught. His learning, and it was one of the best of his time, could not answer his question; so he threw it into the heap of ruin where he cast all else that did not go with one. But let him speak for himself:

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went."

He felt that his worldly knowledge, though gained through years of toil, had been just an idle quest. No good came to him from it; no answer to his question; no promise of a longer life than destiny (and how he reviled the name) ordained, and no gift of after-life and faith. He said that he had struggled to learn all that man may know, and, having learnt, knew nothing. For: "And

many Knots unraveled by the Road; But not the knot of Human Death and Life." Poor Omar! He was bittered that all his work could give him no answer but this:

"With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand labour'd it to grow:
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd
'I came like Water, and like Wind I go'."

and no comfort, for, said Omar,

"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

Poor Omar, who struggled in the dark! For all his bitterness, Omar's work was more iconoclastic in its cynicism than was Lucretius' sour melancholy. How deeply Omar felt his statements we can never know, for when he was at his merriest the under-tow of sadness was at its strongest. And again, when we find him at his bitterest, his skeptical cynicisms may turn to a shoulder-shrugging, "Gather - ye - rosebuds - while - ye - May," Oriental incredulity. Then you wonder—Did he really believe?

Thus at Nishapur did live Omar Khayyam, working, dreaming, and loving his Singing Lady; living as his philosophy decreed until his death at the age of seventy-three. He asked little to be done for him at his death; his sole request was to a pupil—that he might be buried where the north wind would scatter blossoms over his tomb. One other request he penned to the world at large, and more specially to his mystic desert Moon:

"Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no
Wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again:
How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me—in
vain!

"And when Thyself with shining Foot shall
pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the
grass,
And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—Turn down an empty
Glass."

Tamam Shud

Goodbye to Omar Khayyam, born in the Christian year of 1050 and dead in the year 1123 . . . Resurrected by Edward Fitzgerald in the year 1858, re-died—(?)

BALLAD OF MANILA

Ere reaching Frisco they were friends
(Or so it seemed to us, at least)
The mate and second mate—and went
Ashore as to a lovers' feast:
But after all the lines were stowed,
Manila, our next port of call,
We saw a change—as when the snows
Upon the fields of autumn fall.

They cursed each other long and loud,
And talked behind each other's back—
When one would say, "As white as snow,"
The other called the object black.
It seemed a curious enmity,
The reason we knew not at all—
A growth of senseless passion like
The umbrage held his heir by Saul.

We lay one night (a mazy one
Of stars and warmly gentle airs)
In far Manila—where the fort,
Corregidor, to seaward stares—
And all the wardroom not on watch
Decided for the shore and beer—
The two went with the rest of us,
But with a frown and with a leer.

The "Philadelphia Bar" was full,
But there we stayed to drink our glasses—
A riotously laughing group
(If some one said a group of asses)—
And there the one in tipsy tears
Drew out a tattered photograph
To show a chance-found friend,— and turned
A sudden round to hear a laugh.

We laughed. For, there, his shipboard foe,
The veins distended on his brow,
Was staring like a demon—else
I cannot tell you better how.
He fixed the picture like a man
Who sees the object of his hate
Before him on the bloody ground
Twitching still but insensate.

We thought it funny—but we heard
The watcher's voice as hard as stone,
"I *thought* you spent your minutes well;
I *knew* I left you two alone.
Whose is the picture?" With a sneer,
Grown bold on Filipino drink,
The other answered, "You have not
The honest wife you think."

"For that I brought you to my home
In Frisco!" With a sudden sweep
He seized a bottle from the bar
And threw it. Red, and wide, and deep,
A line upon the other's head
Appeared—he staggered, stood, and fell
To lie, quite still, upon the floor—
The blow had served him all too well.

Tomorrow (so the message says)
A man will hang at Bilibid,
And so erase a sudden crime,
And so revoke the wrong he did:
I'll sit upon the afterdeck,
And, maybe, talk to you while he
Is dying from a gibbet with
His friends four-thousand miles at sea.

—Albert Johansson

THE COUNT OF THE SAXON SHORE

A Lyrical Tale

The Saxon shore is long and steep,
Its waters wild and grey,
But e'er across that boiling deep
The raiders make their way.
They do not reef for gale or storm,
They do not reef for me,
And do not seek for fire to warm
When snow is on the sea.

My legions guard in thorpe and tower—
Their beacons flash in air
To signal us the fateful hour
And what the hour doth bear;
And it doth bear the keels of black,
With dragon sterns and prows,
That throw the hissing ocean back
And hurl it from their bows.

And then my cohorts muster in
The helm and bright cuirass—
Our trumpets clash amid the din
Like brass that rings on brass.
The ships come through the roaring bar
And grate upon the beach,
And men, more fierce than demons are,
Come pouring out of each.

Once more, once more, the red blood flows
Upon the cold, wet sand;
And, once again, the crimson shows
Upon the flinty land;
And, once again, a soldier lies
Where once a soldier stood—
The glare of death within his eyes
And life in widowhood.

The battle goeth well for them?
Then be it so.—They speed,
As bees to every flower stem,
To glut them of their greed.
And here they rob and there they rape,
And here, again, they kill—
But, then, I call more legions up
To slay them at my will.

The battle goeth ill for them?
With curses and with cries,
They seek the dragon-ships again—
Not craven men, but wise.
Then, once upon the seas they know,
Their second home and bed,
They care not what the winds that blow—
The skies above their head.

But, soon again, as flies are drawn
To meat, their ships are seen
As specks of black against the dawn—
As gulls upon the green.
And, once again, their war is made
And, once again, the tale—
And, once again, the northern raid
And bloody northern sail.

The Saxon shore is steep to see—
Its waters, deep and cold—
But does not serve to keep from me
The cruel and the bold:
So, here, where Rome has set her seal
Upon an alien land,
I keep her watch and watch her weal
Along the stormy strand.

—Albert Johanson

TO A LITTLE TOWN IN SOUTHERN FRANCE

All day long from dawn to dark
Across the little town,
The shadow of a mighty past
Marched up the road—then down.

Marched up to meet the splendor where
The sun sank from the sky,
But who was there to ever see
That silent host go by?

And who was there to ever know
That Caesar's legions bled,
And fought and died and made their roads
And buried here their dead?

And who was there to ever dream
That such things still could be?
The men within the market-place
Had lost their sight to see.

The women in the market-place
Had worked since day'd begun,
And when they found a moment's time
They gossiped in the sun.

They spoke of this—they spoke of that,
(As men and women do)
But of the glories of the past
They neither cared nor knew.

A ghostly soldier crowded close—
"Hear ye, hear ye," he said,
"Twas here upon this very spot
That Caesar's legions bled!"

His whisper reached the ears of one—
A stalwart lad and strong,
Who rose, half-smiled, then turned his back
Upon the eerie throng.

"A fig for fame! What's fame?"—I ask.
"A bubble when all's done—
Do as you wish, but as for me,
I'll lie here in the sun."

The soldier fled, a saddened wraith;
"Once men were men," he said,
"Oh, better far to be a shade
Among the storied dead!"

He never paused again to call
Those in the little town,
But with the rest in stern array
Marched up the road—then down.

—Leona Spitzer

ECHO OF THE PAST

Ishtar, you are mine!
This moment, seated at your feet,
Brings to fulfillment a quest of centuries.
It will pass, this ecstasy, as Ur and Babylon,
But in the unwritten scroll of Man
It will remain as immutable as those.

Surely you have not forgotten me,
Your lover, Tammuz, of the golden dates?
The Tigris lapped around your feet
When first we met, and to its
Rapid rise and fall we lent a mystery,
Half mocking, half divine.

Chaldea knew our power and our hot desire;
The Fertile Crescent flowered beneath our union.
Our temple then was bedded deep in passion,
And from its incense rose a proud and lusty
nation;
Almost childlike, yet superb.

But now your breasts are covered from my sight,
Your body hides itself in modest, awkward
swathings;
And I, changed likewise, must respect these
things,
For Time's sharp edge has smoothed us to a more
Conforming shape.

But when I call you—
Ishtar, Ishtar!—
Then look deep into my eyes;
Seize the votive offering there.
Throw back the century-studded veil;
Recognize our primal meaning.

—James Clancy

OMAR'S SONNET

It may be I have sold my Soul away,
Enslaved it to the Spirit of the Vine,
And for the merry Pleasure of a Day
Have given up an Heritage of Mine:
It may be, too, that for the Lips of Love
I've traded off what Chance I had of Fame.
And lost a cushioned Throne with Those Above
The motley Masses and the Common Name:

However this may be, I do not care,
For I am satisfied with what I've done—
And all one knows of Souls is wind and air,
And Fame is faded ere its fame is won:
To live my Hour in peace is all I pray,
Forgetting Morn—forgiving Yesterday.

—Albert Johansson

SHELLEY CLIMBS PARNASSUS

WESLEY GORDON

IT IS CHARGED by certain lovers of "sheer beauty" that Shelley allowed the prophet to destroy the poet. They say that he allowed vulgar emotions to cheapen his art. Let them define art. The music of certain oriental countries sounds harsh to most occidental ears. These critics really mean that art has nothing to do with the urge to prophecy. They compare Shelley to Keats, and unfavorably, basing their comparison on the assumption that Keats' works are better than Shelley's because he had no desire to "save" anyone. They refer us to Sappho as being an example of one who wrote purely for the purpose of creating beauty. She was interested in the Greek sky, not in Greek institutions. Must we conclude from this that the poetry of Vachel Lindsay is inferior, as poetry, to that of Edwin Arlington Robinson? Shelley and Lindsay have much in common. They both tried to save people. And, instead of calling Robinson the greater poet because of his apparent blindness not only to human misery, but to the possibility of the alleviation of this misery, we think future generations will consider the prophet's works superior. The world of tomorrow will refuse to take cognizance of poetry written to Luna's beams or to Pan's pipes written within sound of machine-gun fire and the screams of dying men.

"Refusing to fag at Eton, he was treated with revolting cruelty by masters and boys; this roused instead of taming his spirit, and he rejected the duty of obedience when it was enforced by menaces and punishment." Mary Shelley wrote these words about her husband soon after his death. Future generations will love Shelley for not entering a monastery of self-pity; they will love him for passionately identifying his own pain with the pain of mankind; they will love him because his protestations were not for himself alone, nor even primarily for himself, but for others. He could not play his melancholy music, "beautiful" though it might be, while a world was in conflagration. His was the voice which shouted across the curve of the centuries,

"... The universe,

In nature's silent eloquence declares
That all fulfill the works of love and joy—
All but the outcast man. He fabricates
The sword which stabs his peace; he cherishes

The snakes that gnaw his heart; he raiseth up
The tyrant, whose delight is in his woe,
Whose sport is in his agony . . ."

From the same poem, "Queen Mab," he shouts,

"Kings, priests, and statesmen, blast the
human flower
Even in its tender bud; their influence darts
Like subtle poison through the bloodless
veins

Of desolate society. The child,
Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred name,
Swells with the unnatural pride of crime, and
lifts

His baby-sword even in a hero's mood."

We have heard many ministers say that never again could they blaspheme against the teachings of the Man of Galilee, using the New Testament from which to choose texts to support armed conflict, as they did in the World War. How the poet's spirit should suffer if he knew what Mussolini is doing to the Italian babies! Shelley saw what the Italian statesman fails to see, and what the Spartans failed to understand, that right by force is the most ephemeral power in the world. Rigid discipline did not prevent Sparta from going down to destruction; nor did it prevent Sparta's conquerors from following her to dissolution a few years later.

Timeless is this challenge to us, coming from Shelley's pen in 1804:

"Power, like a desolating pestilence,
Pollutes what'er it touches; and obedience,
Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth,
Makes slaves of men, and, of the human
frame,

A mechanized automaton . . ."

Man is more of a "mechanized automaton" today than he was when these lines were written. Again, we read,

"Nature rejects the monarch, not the man;
The subject, not the citizen: for kings
And subjects, mutual foes, forever play
A losing game into each other's hands,
Whose stakes are vice and misery . . ."

Imagine telling that to Stalin, or Hitler, or Mussolini, or to the British House of Lords, or to the Ruling Class of Japan, or to the presidents of Bolivia and Paraguay, or to any Chinese bandit!

After the war (which was fought for democracy) was won, the gullible sat back to rest from their virtuous labors, prayer won. But the rulers of the world saw an unparalleled opportunity to secure for themselves things long coveted, and now, nearly two decades after open hostilities

ceased, we find the world's great leaders playing "A losing game into each other's hands." Shelley goes deeper than platitudes. We know from the following quotation that were he to return to us and hear of the war now in progress in South America, he would enquire as to the natural resources of the territory in dispute. (We often wonder what would happen should Admiral Byrd discover huge oil fields in Little America.)

"Commerce! beneath whose poison-breathing shade

No solitary virtue dares to spring,
But poverty and wealth with equal hand
Scatter their withering curses, and enfold
The doors of premature and violent death,
To pining famine and full-fed disease,
To all that share the lot of human life,
Which poisoned, body and soul, scarce drags
the chain,

That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind."

Surveying the danger spots in the world today, where do we find them? In South America, where there is oil; in China where there is oil and iron; in Abyssinia, where there is oil. The potential question of dispute between the United States and Mexico and the South American republics is the curtailment of business activity financed by Wall Street. The sad fact is that Uncle Sam has never sent his uniformed nephews into a South American country except to protect property which was being exploited by North Americans. We can never know how much truth there is in the statement that the words "Made in Germany" caused the World War, but we recall having heard a citizen of South Africa say, "Do you want me to tell you what caused the World War? I can. It was you Christian nations fighting over my heathen Africa!"

When has there been a time when the following words could apply to *more* fair cities and palaces?

"Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid
Yon populous city, rears its thousand towers
And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops
Of sentinels, in stern and silent ranks,
Encompass it around; the dweller there
Cannot be free and happy; hearest thou not
The curses of the fatherless, the groans
Of those who have no friend?"

Are the fair cities of Italy free? Do the streets of Berlin recall the noble Goethe, except in contrasts? Is London today more free from the terror of enemy Zeppelins than she was in 1919? Shelley warns:

"There needeth not the hell that bigots frame
To punish those who err; earth in itself
Contains at once the evil and the cure;
An all-sufficing nature can chastise
Those who transgress her law . . ."

Empires are created because of the selfishness of one man, or a small group of men. When the rulers die, the empires soon crumble. History affords us many examples—of great leaders who had their brief little day and passed suddenly down the road to destruction. Caesar sheathed Brutus' sword in his heart; Anthony met False Pride and died by his own hand; Hannibal met a like fate; Napoleon died on St. Helena, a miserable, broken man; Nicholas II of Russia, and countless others of the world's "great," were assassinated. "An all-sufficing nature can chastise Those who transgress her law . . ."

Is there no way to build an empire which need not face inevitable destruction? Shelley thought there was. He did not fight political systems as such. He fought the institution of selfishness in the human heart, believing it could be destroyed. We in America have only recently become alarmed by the knowledge that a democracy can be just as vile as a monarchy.

" . . . These gilded flies

That, basking in the sunshine of a court,
Fatten on its corruption!—what are they?
—The drones of the community; they feed
On the mechanic's labor: the starved hind
For them compels the stubborn glebe to yield
Its unshared harvests; and yon squalid form,
Leaner than fleshless misery, that wastes
A sunless life in the unwholesome mine,
Drags out in labor a protracted death,
To glut their grandeur; many faint with toil,
That few may know the cares and woe of
sloth."

It is painful for us not to forget how the "gilded flies" and "the drones of the community" are filling the streams of our national life with their pollution. The scandal of graft in our Community Chest drives and in Federal Relief work is a terrible indictment of our civilization. Again the poet speaks to us with penetrating insight:

"Those too the tyrant serve, who, skilled to
snare
The feet of justice in the toils of law,
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;
And right or wrong will vindicate for gold,
Sneering at public virtue, which beneath
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled,
where
Honor sits smiling at the sale of truth."

Shelley says what we all know. No nation can long exist when her citizens become so corrupt as to say, "Everyone else grafts, why shouldn't we?" Our national graft is not limited to the vast oil fields of the west and southwest. There is an Albert Fall in every American community. A few years ago the world was thrilled when an innocent man, sentenced to a terrible exile by a

French court of Justice, was restored to citizenship and freedom. The impression is growing in America that there are many Dreyfus cases, which may never be discovered, occurring in our courts. As Shelley wrote, however,

"Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs
Of outraged conscience;"

and

"Without a shudder, the slave-soldier lends
His arm to murderous deeds, and steels his heart,
When the dread eloquence of dying men,
Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,
Assails that nature, whose applause he sells
For gross blessings of a patriot mob,
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,
And for a cold world's good word,—viler still!"

These words are vindicated by the vicious activities of munition concerns in every important nation on earth. The dogs of war must have strained at their leashes in eager anticipation when an hireling of certain war-goods manufacturers was sent from this country to represent us in a disarmament conference. Gold was the price.

It has been said that "Religion need not fear the skeptic, but she does need to fear that great-

est enemy—the refusal to assume her moral obligations." This is true of art. Had Shelley's spirit broken under the attacks which assailed him at school, our language would be impoverished irretrievably. There would be no "To the Skylark," or "The Cloud," or "To Night," or "Ode to the West Wind," or "Adonais," or "Queen Mab" and many other beautiful expressions of noble emotions. His art shall live so long as there are spirits who are wishers-of-things-as-they-ought-to-be. The art of the future must recognize more than it does today the humanity of humanity. Not in spite of, but because of a heart which bled for mankind, the poet will be loved ten-thousand generations hence. In the following words he expresses his faith in the ultimate destiny of man, when man has conquered selfishness and quenched the gold-thirst by drinking of the waters of compassion.

"Through the wide rent in Time's eternal
vell,

Hope was seen beaming through the mists of
fear:

Earth was no longer hell;
Love, freedom, health, had given
Their ripeness to the manhood of its prime,
And all its pulses beat
Symphonious to the planetary spheres:
Then dulcet music swelled
Concordant with the life-strings of the soul."

THE POOR WE HAVE ALWAYS WITH US

I've seen men sell their blood that they may eat,
And pawn the clothes that keep them from the
cold

That they may chew again a piece of meat
Or drink a bowl of soup, both sparsely doled—
Such is our vast desire for life; a force
That runs us throughout as waters do
An even tide-land where the sea-waves course
At measured times:—But yet a few

Despise the breath that keeps the body warm,
And curse the heart that keeps the blood aflow,
And seek their shelter from the gusty storm
In narrow beds which armor them from woe—
There no man buys his bread, and none regret
The savor of a meal they did not get.

—Albert Johansson

VILLON

Psalms 116:3—I found trouble and sorrow.

In Paris, when the winter nights are long,
The ghost of Villon passes in the streets,
And, as a moon-cast shadow, subtly fleets
Through alleys lined by merchants wise in wrong.
The ghost sings snatches of macabre song
That smack of longings and of deep defeats,
And with the whistling wind a note competes
In sadness, though the wind be cold and strong.

Does it, the ghost, remember attic hours,
And sudden death, and churchly gold, and wine,
And Katherine with lips of Tokay red?
Or, at the mercy of pale grisly pow'rs,
Does it repent of sin, and greatly pine
To over-write the things once coolly said?

—Albert Johansson

HERO AND LEANDER

A Lyrical Tale

1.

The body washed up on the changing sands
To lie contorted on the yellow beach
With shining limbs, and cold and tight-clenched
 hands
That seemed defiant where most would beseech:
The hard-set face seemed reconciled to bleach,
When rotted, finally, to shining white—
A sneering skull abhorrent to the sight.

2.

The storm wind ran in horrid, shouting glee
To where the flocks were shivering in the hills
From where the torment of the writhing sea
Made liquid thunder. As the scared herd mills,
When the slinking wolf contagious fear instills
In them, the waves ran every way and tore
With foamy, grasping fingers at the shore.

3.

And Hero stooped in awful sadness o'er
The sea's cold prey upon its sandy bier.
Her breasts she beat; her locks she seized and
 tore;
She was like one demented by great fear:
And horror shone in her blue eyes, as clear
As tidepools in the sand. She cried upon
The stormy powers, a victim of their brawn.

4.

"Here he lies who rested in my arms,
Spent with the waves and weary with the sea,
The lovely regent of my sweetest charms,
The king whose kiss proclaimed his empire
O'er all I have, now left alone to me,
The husk of beauty and a useless toy
Married to sorrow since divorced from joy.

5.

"The golden hair whose curls I once caressed
Are wet with waters of the Dardenelles
And damply cling to that brow, white as dressed
Empyrean marble from the sky's cool dells
Of clouds. That voice as gentle as the bells
That ring in peace, when war has gone to hide,
Speaks in cold whispers to a final bride.

6.

"O icy lips, whose color has been changed
To blue from red, let me press these on you
Who trembled once to me, but now, estranged
From passion, answer not! O waters blue,
Oceanus, whom river veins renew
Perennially, what have you done to this
Cold corpse once living only for my kiss?"

7.

"These cleanly limbs; how stiffly straight they
 are!
Those shining eyes; how glaringly they stare!
That vital soul—Oh, tell me what swift star,
And what the climate, what the permeant air;
Has it now found and left this planet bare
Of life and love: Love that is sire to life
And moderator of its madman strife.

8.

"Give me again the arms, the lips, the fire,—
The stormy passion of a moment's span—
The kindling heart that rises from the mire
Of selfish creeds and crudities of man
To taste divinity! Death's read a ban
Against my wishes and against our love,
Slay, oh, slay him, Zeus, from fields above!

9.

"From Abydos to Sestos and my lamp
Leander, dead in all young manhood's pride,
Was wont to nightly swim the waves that cramp
The land to limits. Slowly side by side
We'd pace the beach, the laughing waves deride
As weak, but find no strength of theirs can wear
The cliffs to powder or the beaches bare.

10.

"See where the levin cleaves the cloudy west
And Dian shrouds her in a turgid mist
And how the stars, the outlines of the blest,
Are hidden. To the thunder's challenge, list,
Leander, better had it been you missed
Our nightly parley than to keep it so,
The dear, dead victim of a storm-wave's blow.

11.

"Oh, there's a sphere, broad green Elysium,
Where Homer wanders, sunk in reverie,
Where lovers linger, searching those who come
Across with Charon to the threnody.
Of Stygian waters, hoping they may see
Immortal love outliving mortal frames
And from their lips to sound beloved names.

12.

"So I will climb up on my tower where
I burned the beacon every night for him,
Who lies here at my feet, and through the air
Plunge into death and ere my sight grows dim
See visions daring and in dying limn
Face, eyes, and hair, charms physical and not,
Before I join them in Jove's garden plot."

13.

She climbed the steps, her tresses flying free
Like wisps of cloud around the cold moon's face
While winds blew up her garments to her knee
And rain fell on her. When she reached the place
Where the light was on the roof, her natural
grace

Made her seem Venus lit by Phoebe's fires,
Alone and statuesque in great desires.

14.

Ay, beautiful in tragic sadness she
Stood like a carved Venus in her dress
Of white that blew around her, and the sea
Cried for her teary eyes, whose salt caress
Dripped on its bosom cold, whose tumult less,
By far, was than the unrest in her heart,
That through her wine-hued lips was prone to
start.

15.

Down, down! Is this the face? These parted lips
With red blood trickling from their corners and
With starting eyes filled up with gore that drips
Beneath a mutely pleading, slender hand
That rests, back down, above them: This hair
fanned

By hurrying winds all matted o'er the stones
With bone and fluid life where water moans?

—Albert Johansson

THE PLODDER

Plodding horses—slowly plodding men—
Another furrow—plodding back again—
A single thought—a single, deadened thought—
Deadened brain—men's and horses' brain.

Do these men feel? Can these men ever know
The raising, lifting, surging, God-like glow
That comes to those who see, and plan, and
build—
To those who form their dreams, then make them
so?

Or do they plod—these men with listless eyes?
Must dead men drag themselves throughout the
days,

And follow seasons out like broken slaves,
Their earth by day—and then at night their styn?

For their long task is but to toil again,
Accepting drabness, poverty, and pain
With blackened shells of minds that blind to them
The thought: this deed is offspring of my brain.

Oh God, what cruel jest is this you've done?
What is this soddy curtain that you've hung
Before the lights that brighten up their souls—
Thus making men and beasts-of-burden one?

—Barton Wood

RUST

A gray-haired woman walked about
With trembling lips,
Her eyes downcast.
She neither looked to left nor right,
But walked an unfamiliar path
Around familiar furniture.

Her table glowed with the radiance
Of a table set with love.
She gave it not a glance
For fear of realizing the empty chairs.
She walked about with eyes downcast
And imagined she saw her children there . . .

Her stalwart sons, long since gone away,
Carried on their silly but so serious
Talks on politics;
Her daughters, grown so gay and free,
Brought in the last few delicacies
And called that dinner was ready:
A Christmas dinner fit for kings and queens,
For her children were to her
The royalty of her heart . . .

She passed an aged and wrinkled hand
Across her care-worn brow, and called . . .
But got no answer.

The empty room resounded emptiness

—Sadie Mae Sanor

HIS ANSWER

Ambassadors from the Othmanli are sent to
treat with Timur. They swear they will keep his
peace always if he marches away.

I will attain though Hell itself should bar
My way with burning mountains full of smoke
And thunder! I am not a child to quail
Before the threat of arms; nay, nature's self
(Should she ally her force with thine against
My iron legions) cannot change my course
Or thwart my aim. Out upon you all
If you think empty speech, bombastic phrases,
Can frighten one who saw the Delhi streets
As red with blood as are the passes of
The Hindu Kush white with snow in winter,
Deliver me from prating and array
Your force against me, not your words, and let
The issue of the war rest not with mouths
But weapons. Let the field we see before us
Be the table whereon we may throw
The dice of war—the stake, an empire.
Do you think I come across a half of Asia
To bandy words, to have an hour's chat?
If such ye think, go home, ye squalling babes,
And quarrel with your nurses, leaving me
The deed to all ye now possess—not fit
For such as ye to hold.

Then ye will fight?
So let it be—it is my element
Wherein I revel as the fishes do
In mountain lakes or birds upon the air.
It is my food, my drink, the wife with whom I
sleep
And wake, the bloody mistress of my bloody life.
War! it is a tool I use, the axe I wield
To shape out empires from a shapeless chaos.

—Albert Johansson

SENILITY

He lost his sight the day they planned to wed.
Her parents never let them meet again.
Though many years have past, no sign of pain
Betrays his suffering on Sorrow's bed,
For in his spirit-eye her lips are red,
His fingers weigh her golden hair; the rain
Comes down in silver strips along the lane
To kiss the cheek on which his love is fed—

Her hair and ruby lips have turned to chalk.
The sylph he sees in memory is bent
Beneath the winds of age; her shuffling gait—
Ah, silence now, of this we do not talk,
For he must never know—her eyes are spent
By time, as his, long years before, by fate.

—Wesley Dexter Gordon

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

An Irish Poet, Unfortunate in Life

"... utterly cast down."—Bible

Once, sitting on the sand the waters wore
From cliffs whose crests were crowned with sent-
tered pine,
I heard an eerie melody,—so fine
The wind that made it died, and sang no more:

A single air, along that pleasant shore,
Sang in the trees but once,—yet still I dine
Upon those notes as on fine food and wine,
In quiet and behind a shuttered door.

Those notes were thine, dead Mangan, thin and
clear
And filled with Faerie's crystal bells of joy
Yet shading off in gnomish sounds of woe.

I heard thy love in them, and saw her sneer;
I heard thy pleasure there, and felt it cloy;
I heard thy sorrow,—greater none may know.

—Albert Johansson

"ROUND ABOUT"

JAMES CLANCY

ARE OUR colleges losing their long-cherished ability to function as liberalizing institutions?

Heretofore, they have been acknowledged as the rightful homes of that somewhat indefinite entity known as an *idea*. It was admitted that the ideas produced there were not all feasible ones; that many would be discarded when the originator later came into contact with the somewhat disillusioning but salutary actualities of what was perhaps facetiously termed "life." But still, it was admitted that our colleges had their place; there the younger generation could sow their intellectual "wild oats;" there this same younger generation could fully satisfy their natural but seemingly useless vogue of criticizing all the various laws, habits and customs that might be in fashion at the time that the aforementioned generation of "youngsters" were of the college age.

The colleges of the past, it must also be admitted, exercised that right of criticism to its fullest extent. They criticised God; they, at less frequent intervals, it must be admitted, even criticised the Devil. Unfortunately, it seems that only a few of our healthier educational institutions have retained this happy faculty of criticism. God is a taboo subject, and the Devil is calmly accepted as a somewhat simple reflex action. No longer do our student bodies criticize the actions of the larger groups outside of the college proper; nor, a more lamentable fact, do they criticize each other.

This unhappy truth is brought forcibly to our mind when we recognize the state of what is gently termed "dramatic criticism" in the college. It is true that dramatic criticism is merely one method by which the critical faculties can be put to use; it is also true that it is perhaps one of the minor and more selective paths, but it is an age-old institution, and one that may be held as fairly representative. When dramatic criticism is emasculated and feeble, you may feel sure that the society which accepts such criticism is itself feeble and emasculated.

Many of our colleges, especially those that are state-run, and therefore more obviously democratic, not only permit, but demand, dramatic criticism that is so innocuous and insipid that it reads outwardly like the effusion of an *Urbensian* Little Nell, while inwardly the acute ear may catch the reverberations of a crumbling and disintegrating morale. The students do not seem to realize the absurdity of cataloguing such pap as criticism; they fondly cut out the sugar-

soaked articles and duly file them in their collections of "College Memories." He who attempts to shake them out of their state of paresis by straightforward, if poorly stated, truths, is branded as attempting only to startle; he is classified as that most abominable thing, an egotist, who has no other desire but to display his ill-concealed prejudices in the public eye.

Now it may well be that the self-appointed critic of the college drama is led to his judgments by an imposing array of prejudices, his critical faculty may be as poorly developed as the average, his knowledge of the drama may be of the scantiest, but these points are outside the realm of this discussion—but only because the students so criticised place them there. Those who are criticised never delve into the qualifications of the critic—seemingly they are not interested. In fact, their opinions upon the matter, although mightily vociferous, are correspondingly vague and chaotic. When forced to form intelligible speech, (admittedly a tedious process), their answer to the question of what they object to in the more open type of criticism is amazingly contradictory and indefinite. Uniformly they will say, "Criticism?—Oh, I like criticism." And then they will add, with a deprecatory look in their straightforward, honest eyes, "But it must be constructive criticism."

The critic is silent before an indictment of such stupendous duplicity. If he felt that they actually knew what they were saying, if, indeed, he had the slightest assurance that even, not knowing what they were saying, they were sincere in their ignorance, he might set about to point out what he felt to be their errors; to offer them that for which, in their evasive way, they seemed to be asking. If he could feel that their evasions were of the comparatively simple *Gyntian* type, that they were merely following the injunction of the Boyz to go "Round about," then he would regard their answer with pleasure, he would hail them to his bosom and admit that he, too, was puzzled as to the straightest way, but had they tried this path—or this—or the one that leads through the obscure morass over there? "Shall we," he would eagerly cry, "try the way together?" And hand in hand they would flounder, or succeed.

But such sentimental hand-clasping, the young critic soon discovers, is not to be the program of the day. He may, in his youthful optimism, think that the first rebuff he receives from such a

conciliatory gesture on his part, is merely a mistake. His intentions had perhaps been misconstrued. But the next time he would surely be understood. Again he would write, again he would await results. The irritatingly condescending smiles were nothing to him; he cast them easily. He would go directly to the persons most concerned; this time all would be right. Smilingly he is received. Smilingly and veiledly he is called a sensation seeker, a mountebank of words. In desperation the puzzled critic throws all caution, all subterfuge, to the winds. "But what," he asks, "do you object to in criticism?" An astounded look overspreads the face of the interrogated, a suggestion of the misunderstood creeps into his eyes. "Criticism?—Oh, I like criticism." And then he will add, with a deprecatory look in his straightforward, honest eyes, "But it must be constructive criticism."

And then the young critic, if he is not too young, if he is not too optimistic, knows. He smilingly acknowledges his thanks for this interesting information and withdraws. Outside, he may pause to think, and he will realize how he was deceived the first time he heard that ambiguous yet simple-sounding statement. If he looks deep enough into his own mind he realizes that nobody likes criticism, and that those he has questioned have no idea of the difference that really exists between constructive and destructive criticism; that, to them, the only distinction lies in being criticised or in being complimented. He realizes this, and he wonders at his own stupidity.

To state that one "likes" criticism is as anachronistic as to say that one likes a medicine that one takes to obviate a disease. It is not a matter of likes and dislikes; here the intellect is at play. We take the oil that makes up for our deficiency in Vitamin A, we do the exercises that remedy our tendency to flat chest, not because we like oil nor because we have a *penchant* for that particular form of exercise, but because our intellect tells us that that is the oil we should take, that that is the special form of physical gymnastics through which we should go. To "like" criticism of our dramatic efforts would be as pathological as to insist upon dosing ourselves for diseases that we did not possess.

It is equally absurd to say that one will accept constructive criticism, when one has no idea of the difference that exists between that type of criticism and the type that is both labelled and libeled as "destructive."

It has become the vogue of late to smile knowingly when the name of Mencken or Nathan is

mentioned—just as it was the vogue a few years past to have their latest book in a prominent place on the library table, and their smartest phrase in readiness on the tip of the tongue. Their kindest commentators admit that they had their places, but now, they say, their work is done. Even the extremely gentle A. A. Milne is forced to unfamiliar heights of sarcasm in condemning the vitriolic sarcasm of Mr. Nathan's pen.

Now, the critics of the critics all agree, is the time for constructive criticism. And the dramatically beleaguered minds seem to have seized upon this phrase as a sort of haven. "Give us constructive criticism," they cry, "and we will listen." Unfortunately, these amateur followers of the drama accept no criticism as being of that very special type known as constructive. To say to them that their gestures are awkward and meaningless, that their speech is not so articulated as to carry to the farthest recesses of the auditorium, is not enough. They condemn even such explicit statements as destructive. Should it be necessary for the critic to supply the information that there is a very instructive book on Pantomime by Lutz, and that many articulatory exercises will be found in Avery, Dorsey, and Sickle's *Elementary Principles of Speech*? Are they not confusing pedagogy with criticism? Are they not aware that any criticism that is based upon a reason is constructive, that the only destructive criticism is that which is based upon no reason at all?

To state that a person is a poor actor may be termed destructive criticism—if, indeed, it may be termed criticism at all—for it gives no hint of the reasons which led to such a statement. But to say that a person is a poor actor because his gestures are awkward is definitely constructive criticism, fundamental and elementary though it may be. In the college, it is not of primary importance that the critic, in making the statement about the awkwardness of the actor's gestures, has hit upon the fundamental weakness of the actor. It is true that the criticism would be doubly effective if it were both truth-seeking and truth-finding. But in the college it is better that criticism should be a thwarted truth-seeking than an entire disregard of the values that are incident to such a search.

If the colleges are to retain the esteem in which they have been held, the students must strike out, must continue in the path that has been their historic heritage. Theirs should be the youthful skepticism, which, stumbling and awkward though it may be, is the first requisite for him who would discover the end at which all knowledge aims.

ARRAS

ROBERT WRIGHT

ARRAS spat into the Hellespont. The turbid waters swirled and writhed in protest. These waters troubled Arras. For seven days now they had been muddy and restless, tugging at the supports of this mighty bridge that he, Arras, had constructed in five short weeks out of the skill of his brain and the power of his driving authority; and now that the great span was completed, the water-gods seemed more than ever determined to tear it out before its usefulness could be demonstrated by Xerxes, by whose order it had come into being. Arras was not proud of his bridge. It was a faulty structure and he knew it; but by all the gods, how could they expect even the greatest engineer in all Persia to build a bridge of papyrus!

He looked with envy at Bylon's structure, half a mile away. Bylon had flaxen cables for his bridge. The flaxen cables were twice as strong as the papyrus, and less than a talent heavier in five cubits' length; but, as the court emissary had informed Arras, "Bylon is by far the inferior engineer, O worthy lord, and this compensation has seemed justifiable in the eyes of our monarch's council."

He had replied, "Cannot the fools in our monarch's council see that one usable bridge is more to be desired than two weak chains of floats? For know thou, courtier, that Bylon cannot build so strong a bridge as I, even with the advantage of materials. Give me the precious flax and I'll build thee a structure that even the temperamental Hellespont will have to respect."

The ambassador had been courteous but unsatisfactory. "Yea, worthy Arras, I know all that, and I would I could help thee, but I have merely been commissioned to inform thee that the council has appointed Arras to oversee the construction of the papyrus bridge, or—but surely thou knowest the ways of the Ruler of Rulers." Yes, Arras knew only too well the ways of the Ruler of Rulers. He would build Xerxes' bridge for him, but—

An ominous rumbling broke in on the engineer's bitter meditation. It was thunder on the Aegean, far off to the west. Arras's brow furrowed. He didn't like the looks of things here. If that growling grew any louder, it would mean rain; and rain on the Hellespont at that time of year meant hell cut loose. Well, he was glad the last lashings had been made, the last pegs driven. If the gods were good, his bridge would stand an even chance with the elements.

He turned to give an order to a foreman pass-

ing by, then stood and watched the glistening, black Ethiopian slaves as they worked clearing up the debris. They chattered to each other incessantly in their outlandish dialect, growing more and more excited, until finally, as of one accord, they dropped their tools and baskets and each slave dropped to his haunches and waited, sitting on his heels and teetering back and forth, apparently listening for some signal. The foremen rushed up and down behind the blacks, beating them with cudgels and jerking them forcibly to their feet, but to no avail; the slaves offered no resistance, and they permitted the foremen to treat them in any way they saw fit, but each black, as soon as he was physically able, returned to his former position and reassumed his waiting, listening attitude.

Although no sound had heached Arras's ears, the Ethiopians seemed to get their signal, for there broke simultaneously from a thousand throats a long, piercing wail which drew itself out and resolved itself into a low, pounding rumble. The rumble in turn gave way to a chant, low and eerie and awful. Oooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom, ooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom. The hair on the nape of Arras's neck stood out, and a cold tingling shivered over his shoulders and down his spine; his muscles turned to water and seemed unable to support the weight of his body.

Spat! A drop of water struck Arras's forehead, bringing him to his senses. Ashamed of his momentary weakness, he shook his head and bawled orders to his foremen, "Leave the blacks and get to your barracks before the wrath of the thunder-god breaks upon you!"

As if to punctuate his order, a pencil of lightning split the heavens above their heads, followed by an earth-shaking thunder-clap. The men needed no further urging. Throwing their cudgels from them as they went, they broke away across the shell-strewn beach up the slope to the rows of small, snug cabins two furlongs away. Arras remained on the bridge, fascinated by the blacks and their jungle ritual. Again and again the thunder-god slashed the bottom of the rain-basket with his lightning-sword, and with each stroke the rain doubled its vigor. Below, the growling flood of the Hellespont ran faster and faster, reaching higher and higher in its attempt to carry Arras and his bridge off to the west. Through it all the blacks carried on their weird chant—ooo-ah, ooo-ah, boom—now drowned out by the thunder, now

making themselves heard above the roar of the waters, but always chanting on, rocking back and forth in time to their ooo-ah, ooo-ah, boom.

Arras was a little frightened at these Ethiopians; he would never quite understand them. Ordinarily they paid no attention to rain, they had not the white man's regard for the elements; yet here they were, working themselves into a frenzy over a thunder-storm.

Then, suddenly—silence. Loud, deafening silence. The chant broke off. The thunder stopped. The wind and the rain stopped. The creaking of the papyrus cables, straining against the tugging current, was felt rather than heard. The muddy stream was smooth and unruffled, its ferocious current attested only by the long wakes cut in its surface by the supporting floats under the bridge.

Terror-stricken, the blacks stared toward the east and the Marmara. For ten seconds they sat motionless on their heels; then with a wild howl they rose and fled toward the bank, motioning Arras to follow them; but he would not, he wanted to see what it was that had frightened them. But strain as he might, he could see nothing but the broad expanse of gray water spreading far off to the north and east. As the last of the Ethiopian band passed him, two gigantic slaves stopped long enough to hoist Arras bodily to their shoulders and carry him along with them. He protested in vain at being thus ignominiously swept up in the current of his human beasts of burden. Against his will he was carried to the shore and deposited on the top of a huge boulder, whence he watched to see what would happen next.

The clouds had cleared away and the sun was dipping its lower rim into the cold Aegean. The great bridge, curving away toward the Greek shore in a huge arc, strained against the current. It reminded Arras of a huge bow, and—by the gods!—it was pointed toward the west, aimed directly at the heart of Attica! A favorable omen indeed.

Suddenly he bethought himself of Bylon's bridge. He looked; it was gone. The current had carried it away completely. Arras reeled and felt weak again. A vague fear, a presentiment he could not justify was taking possession of his mind. As long as Bylon's bridge remained, Arras knew his was safe, for his was the stronger, but with Bylon's washed out—he turned his eyes back to his own structure, and even as he looked the center of the great bow lunged forward, split in twain. Three seconds later the sound reached his ears, the sound of tortured timber set free, of stretched papyrus snapping under terrific stress.

Slowly at first, then more rapidly as they gained momentum, the two halves of Arras's bridge swung westward with the current, the sun-drenched ends drawing farther and farther apart

until finally, each half being constrained at the shoreward end, they described gigantic arcs, coming up with a series of shattering crashes on either shore. But the Hellespont was not yet done with Arras's bridge. It tore at the planks and battered at the floats, hammering them on the rocks and wrenching them free by the sheer strength of its mighty current. By the time the sun had sunk completely out of sight beneath the waves, there was nothing left of the great structure but the lengths of cable trailing a mile to the west in the muddy Hellespont.

Arras wept, dry-eyed. The slaves, sitting about on the beach, took up their chant again, softly this time; as if from far away it came to Arras's numbed ears—ooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom, oooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom—over and over again, till he felt his own lips forming the sounds—ooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom—he could not help himself—ooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom.

The wind freshened and tossed up the swiftly moving flood into billows. The thunder growled again and the rain began to fall. Still Arras stood on the rock, chained there by an invisible, irresistible force. Day had resolved itself into black night. The chant of the slaves grew louder, and Arras shouted with them, trying to make himself heard above the howl of the elements—ooo-ah, oooo-ah, boom—

A flash of lightning showed him a group of soldiers approaching his rock. Mechanically he greeted them, "Hail, soldiers of the king and scourges of the wicked."

"Hail, Persian, knowest thou where we shall find Arras the engineer?" came the reply.

"Even now dost thou address him, soldier."

"Art thou then really Arras?"

"Aye, though it be no credit to me."

"Know then that Xerxes would hold council with thee."

Arras alid down off the rock and approached the group. "I am for thee to command, O Ruler of All Men."

"Art thou Arras, the engineer, constructor of the bridge of papyrus?" the imperial voice questioned out of the darkness.

"Aye, Master."

"Know then that this night marks thy death, and may all men profit by the example of thy weakness and its reward." There was a low, whistling sound, and a blunt, rough object slashed Arras's cheek, laying it open so that the blood flowed. The whip! Arras had seen Xerxes' mighty whip of rhinoceros-hide applied many times to some dog of a slave, but never had he thought to taste its sting himself!

The lightning flashed again, and Arras saw the king. Tall and gaunt, his black hair and beard matted by the rain, he towered almost seven feet, a full head above Arras. His face was terrible

and contorted with a fury that his voice belied. Then that voice, calm and clear, came once more from the darkness, "But before thou diest, thou shalt see how a man can tame this brook, if he be worthy of the name of man." With that the soldiers seized Arras and bound his wrists behind him. Prodded and beaten by his guard, he made his way to the water's edge and out onto the pier that had once been the approach to his bridge. As in a dream he heard Xerxes commanding the soldiers to distribute themselves along the shore. Frequent flashes of lightning showed him the long line of men, equipped with whips, forming along the bank of the Hellespont. At Xerxes's order, relayed from man to man, they began to scourge the angry water, and while they scourged, they shouted words outlandish and presumptuous, "Thou bitter water, our master thus punishes

thee, because thou didst him wrong, albeit he had done thee none. Yea, Xerxes the king will pass over thee whether thou wilt or no; it is but just that no man offers thee sacrifice, for thou art a turbid and briny river." Xerxes himself threw a pair of iron fetters into the water, to chain its fury. But the Hellespont raged on, and the thunder roared louder.

"The engineer," shouted Xerxes, "the waters shall taste his flesh to appease their hunger!" A huge guard stepped up and, grasping Arras by the neck, forced him to his knees. His head was forced down so that his throat rested on the end of one of the piles that he himself had ordered driven here a few weeks before. From the shore the slaves were still wailing out their weird chant—oooo-ah, ooo-ah, boom, oooo-ah, ooo—

Arras's head dropped into the Hellespont.

THE YOSHIVARA

I see her now, as down she goes
(The tiny lass, Tamako San,
With flowered obi, flowered fan)
To where the steamers lie in rows.

Her eyes are slanted prettily,
And blacker than the midnight sky—
Her little lips are red with dye,
And smile for everyone to see.

Here come the seamen all ashore—
And some for flesh, and all for beer:
I see it now—and no more near
Than twice three thousand miles or more!

—Albert Johansson

GREEK EPITAPH

1.

Do not weep for me at all,
Do not bother here to pray—
I have had no grievous fall
And am happy in my way.

2.

When the wine of life was done
And the cake was eaten, too,
What was there beneath the sun
For a weary soul to do?

3.

So I fled away to lie
Quiet in this lonely place—
Silently, without a sigh,
Sought a bed to hide my face.

4.

Do not drop a single tear,
But remember if you will
That I lived a merry year
And I am contented still.

—Albert Johansson

THE SASSENACH

Lyrical Tale

*Arthur goeth to Merlin, he who was
a magician, and speaketh pleadingly:*

Ghostly confessor,
I take thee my sorrow—
Strike my oppressor,
Ere dawn and tomorrow,
With fever and chill,
With agues that kill,
With sickness and dearth,
Wipe from the earth

The Saxon.

His ships—they are many,
His men are a host;
He is mighty as any
And stronger than most—
He knows not of fear,
And shuns not his bier;
Flees not the blade;
Will not be stayed—

The Saxon.

Merlin, good master,
Weave me a spell—
Fast weave and faster,
Weaving it well.
Blast thou my foe
That we may know
Peace in the land—
Ye can withstand

The Saxon.

Merlin maketh Arthur answer sadly:

Who fears not the blade
Will he fly at a word?
Or will he be stayed
By a magic unheard?
Go, gather men,
A thousand times ten,
March to the strand—
Succor your land

From the Saxon.

And turneth away, muttering:

Ah, my magic is old,
And my power is gone
As the easterly gold
Is perished with dawn.
Men have grown wise,—
And have opened their eyes.
Steel, and not I,
Must speak and defy

The Saxon.

Arthur crieth to his knights there with him:

Call up my legions,—
Arms let them bring—
From all of the regions
That call me a king—
If Merlin stoops,
And Merlin droops,
Then we, today,
Must drive away

The Saxon!

—Albert Johansson

IN JUST A LITTLE WHILE

RICHARD HIATT

SHE CAME slowly and carefully down the rain-washed street, her high-heeled shoes tapping along uncertainly. At first she was only a faint, faltering sound in the cold greyness of the rain, and then, as the sound of her came closer, she gradually emerged like a frail ghost. There was a little stumble in her walk, the halting step of one who knows fatigue.

From both sides of the narrow street came the monotonous singing of the drain-pipes, one unending depressing note that beat its way into the brain until it became a malicious thunder. Rain in October's chill! Rain in April is happy and frolicsome, like a child playing with flowers; joyous, pregnant with promise; but the cold rain of autumn promises nothing . . . it is an old man left to die in an unused alley, forgotten, friendless. It was early morning and the street was deserted, left to the spiritless fall of rain and the thunderous fugal drone of the drains. Not a breath of air stirred.

The girl looked forlorn and frightened. You knew of what she was thinking in a vague pitiless dream, as if the lethargic treachery of some nightmare clung in her brain like the little white maggots of a drug . . . four barren walls closing in, the harsh bareness of a room that was never quite a reality . . . people sitting, staring aimlessly . . . a man slumped on the edge of a bed, a red-eyed silent man, her father, his arms were strong, his fists made thumping sounds that became black blotches . . . her mother was there, a woman whose hands were tired and restless and made twitching motions at things . . . small reproachful eyes stared out of thin small faces, these faces made sounds, high piping sounds, pitiful little animals that begged food . . . people that were never quite a reality, the ghostly figures in dreams, accepted beings that entered only into the consciousness of pain, a swallowed sob that stuck in the chest and hurt . . . There were a few realities. There was the heartless monotone of the drain outside the room's one window. And she was eternally fatigued. And there was an insatiable longing . . .

A spasm of coughing shook her slight body terribly; she paused at a corner and pulled at the wilted corsage over her heart. The faded flowers had been found the night before; she had thought them pretty. Her hands were blue and as useless as bird-claws. The flimsy, inadequate dress hung damply against her body; it was so thin you could almost see her heartbeats. A look of fixed con-

fusion spread over her thin face when she took away the crimson-stained handkerchief. Some of the arterial red got on her hand and as she frantically wiped at it a fascinated suspicion came into her enlarged eyes. Suddenly she whirled in the rain and brought up her palms to her temples sharply.

"Jesus," she said. "Oh Jesus!"

The girl was no more than pretty, in a cheap, an almost child-like way. Her mop of blonde hair was shoved into a ridiculously small hat; wisps of it hung in wet strings. Her wide tormented eyes were a bright glistening blue. Her small face, even to the lips, was white and pinched. She gave the appearance of a tiny, faded white flower. You knew, as she stood there, that her body was small and white.

She peered nervously down the deserted street. Every morning at this time she stopped to watch a young man as he shuffled his big body toward the factories. He always walked with his eyes down, head thrust forward, his hands shoved deep into his frayed jeans. It had been his wild yellow hair that she had first noticed. Once he had stopped and stared at her from across the street; he had started to cross over to her, had stopped halfway, and an instant later had stumbled off. She did not know his name, but she had seen his eyes, hurt puzzled eyes that had stared at her hungrily.

"I don't care," she said. "I gotta wait."

This morning the girl was more lonely and tired than ever before. She shivered and stepped back into a recessed doorway. If he didn't come soon she would be late at the factory, and the thought made her a little frightened. She was terribly lonely, lonely and frightened; she waited.

An old man, bent almost double, walked by in the rain, his thumbs locked behind his back, his palsied hands shaking rhythmically. He was mumbling, and it seemed from his words that he was scolding a little boy. If she had not been so tired she might have felt sorry for him. But she was always tired. The drain by the doorway sputtered and sang fitfully.

Then across the street she saw him coming. She twisted her fingers wretchedly. He hesitated, stopped, then came directly across to stand before her, eyes dumb with misery. Her heart pounded so heavily that it seemed to fill her whole body, she was lying on a sandy beach and the surf was pounding on her chest and its thunder was in her ears, drumming . . . couldn't hear

... and yet he was talking ...

"... Now he'll be all the worse. He come home last night and knocked Ma down. Drunk! I best him up. I wanted to kill him, but Ma ... I don't care! It's no use, I know him. He won't stop ... I knew you'd be here. I had to see you. I don't know why. I had to see you."

He needed her! She felt wrenched with sympathy. She fought back the ever-imminent cough and reached out a furtive bird-like hand to him. He stared down, dumbly, into the frightened smallness of her white face. He looked shocked ... He needed her! She felt a glow of happiness that some one should need her. After one fleeting thought of the factory she took his big fist in both her tiny claws.

"Let's walk," she said. "Let's walk up on the hill."

They turned from the doorway and walked slowly into the rain, and they could find no words to say. When the street became steep they stopped at every corner to let her rest. It had almost stopped raining, but the sky was still overcast, the morning still a grey twilight. A fat, red-faced man turned a corner walking rapidly and bumped into the girl, and when he lifted his hat with a mumbled apology, she clung proudly to her companion, rubbing her shoulder against his sleeve. A drain tinkled and whispered drowsily.

In front of a huge church they stopped to listen to the deep throbbing tones of the organ. They did not know that the organist was practicing the Prelude to Lohengrin; they only knew that they were filled with longing and that they clung to each other's hands. When the music finished they stood motionless and breathless for a moment; then like eager curious children they walked up the steps, through the imposing doors, and so into the vast stillness and grandeur of the church. They sat in one of the back pews and watched the organist arrange his music. The girl took off her hat and shook out her hair.

The silence beat as loud as music against them. The youth went to his knees and bowed his head on the back of the pew in front of them. She followed his action out of the simplicity of her heart. She did not know what to pray for—she just felt ... feeling the strength of this youth, and his loneliness. Very softly and tenderly the organ began a little song ...

'Tis only you may ever know
How I have yearn'd alone,
May ever know my sorrow ...

She looked out of the corner of her eyes at the bowed head, feeling hushed reverence for his prayer. The quivering thread of melody weaving over their heads—seeking ...

... Never again to see
The one for whom I yearn'd
'Tis gone, can never be ...

How could he need her, he who was so strong? And who was she? She looked away, her lids hot and throbbing with the stinging suppression of tears.

The sun suddenly came through one of the lofty windows to cover the two, and it was warm and comforting. She felt him stir. She knew he was holding his breath.

"Your hair is pretty," he said. "Your hair is soft and pretty."

She turned her small eager face to him, but she couldn't see; she didn't even know her mouth was wet with her tears. After one little sob she didn't move or whimper; she couldn't breathe. As in a half-remembered dream she heard him gasp, and then, still kneeling, she was in his arms. She wept then, silently, like a small heartbroken child.

"Why can't we be happy—like other people? We could be married after a while. Yes. I'll make enough ... somehow ..."

... 'Tis only you may ever know
My sorrow; I yearn alone ...

"... You're so little ... I've watched you every morning. You're so little and pretty."

The passion of happiness was more than she could hold back; it became hot fingers that tore at her chest. She threw her arms around his neck, her slender body torn terribly with the released sobs.

"Don't cry. Gee, you're so little. Don't cry. Don't cry."

Obediently she dried her eyes on his shirt while the heaving sobs slowly subsided ... As they went through the doorway into the sunny warmth of the street, the organist plunged into the heartbroken anguish of *Soulden's Liebestod*. They turned down the street and the hungry exalted music followed them a little way.

She looked out over the city, at the countless wreaths of smoke that curled lazily upward, leaning obliquely like stripes in an awning, at the patches of cloud-shadows drifting idly over the glistening lengths of streets ...

"Gee, you ... I'm happy ... I'll work hard. And we can be married in a little while."

His head was high, and he swung his free arm. She struggled against the racking cough that threatened to consume her. The effort made her dizzy and a little sick. When it passed she looked up at him and nodded, not daring to attempt speech, her eyes brimming.

"You're so little ..."

She clung tightly to him, blinking her eyes against the sun.

"... It won't be long ... In just a little while ..."

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

ROBERT WRIGHT

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

—*Quaint Old Saying*

AND MY days on the earth had been twenty-one years when the Lord called me unto Him in a manner most remarkable to tell. I stood at a busy intersection of the ways, and a stranger approached, begging alms. Too late I realized my error, for I had just been counting over my money in the palm of my hand, and the stranger had seen, and found it good. And I was ashamed and gave him of my small stock, cursing myself the while for a spineless fool. And the beggar departed, saying, "Tanks, Buddy."

Now it came to pass that about a week later I stood, late at night, at the same intersection, waiting for the same red light to turn green. It was a sloppy night, raining steadily, with the snaky reflections of red neon trying to gain a permanent foothold in the unsteady mirror of brown pavement. The theater crowds thronged the sidewalks and made much inconvenience with their dripping umbrellas. And I espied my panhandler, hatless, and with his cloth coat collar turned up under his chin, slouching beneath a store-front awning. Even as I averted my face to address an impatient remark to the red traffic signal across the street, I saw the flash of recognition in his eyes. It was too late; he had seen. He sidled up to me suddenly, and with an artistic little cough demanded to know whether or not I could spare him a dime for something to eat. My weakness was upon me and once more I parted with money.

With rather bad grace I waved away his thanks and started to cross the street. But at the moment of my stepping down from the curb a mammoth motor-car pounced at me from around the corner. As I wheeled, half falling, to gaze horror-struck into a glaring headlamp barely twelve inches from my eyes, I felt strong fingers grasping my left arm and jerking me back to the sidewalk. I turned shakily to find my panhandler grinning broadly. "Good God —," I breathed.

"Sh-h," he whispered, laying a finger upon his lips. "Wait a minute." I waited while he alighted out of his coat like a butterfly out of a cocoon. I waited while he reached inside his shirt and produced a luminous hoop of what looked like glass tubing and adjusted it at a pert angle on his head. I waited while his hair miraculously changed color from black to silvery gray, and his complexion from pasty white to swarthy brown. I

waited while he puffed himself out and expanded in all directions until he was fully eight feet tall and built in pleasing proportions in the other dimensions. Then I waited no longer. I screamed, loudly and long; but the giant merely smiled. Grasping me like a baby in his long strong arms, he leaped straight up into the air. Up, up, up we soared. "Lord," I thought, "will we never reach the top?" Then suddenly I realized that the energy that was bearing us aloft was no longer of a kinetic nature, and that my companion was capable of extending his prodigious leap indefinitely. "What the hell?" I asked, eyeing him coldly. There was something strange here, something very, very strange about the whole procedure. That unusual glass tube, cocked rakishly over his right eye, lighted up his face and showed him to be an old oriental, well preserved, but withal exceedingly ancient.

He grinned a toothless but nonetheless disarming grin. "Look," he said, tilting me over his arm so that my gaze was perforce directed downward. I looked. We were poised, apparently motionless, about a hundred yards above the street. In spite of the fog and the rain I could see clearly what was happening below. There was a chunky yellow cab, with its left hind wheel up on the curb, tilting at an unusual angle against an iron lamp-post, like a huge fantastic bulldog. An ambulance skidded foolishly around the corner and stopped beside a crowd of black umbrellas. The umbrellas dispersed, and there, lying in the gutter,—but hold on a second, I was up here. And yet there could be no mistake, I was down there, too. Then, suddenly, truth dawned. I squirmed around to get another look at my bearer. He was quite definitely Hindu.

"Who in hell are you?" I cried, panic-struck.

His large black eyes were exceeding wistful, and as I gazed deeply into them, I felt that their owner was infinitely wise. He spoke in a shrill piping voice that somehow carried with it a conviction that it had not always been thus, that once that voice had been melodiously thunderous; and the language was an ancient Hindu dialect the knowledge of which I had marvelously acquired during the past few minutes. "In Hell," he began, "I was, until a very few decades ago, the most respected and at the same time most hated being in existence. Now I'm no longer even a standing joke in that province. I'm an anachronism."

I began to suspect him of evasion. "Who are you?" I asked, more calmly than before.

"I am Love," he replied.

I inspected his wrinkled features again and shook my head, doubting. Let's see, there were Venus de Milo, Liebestraum, L'amour, Toujours L'amour, Love in a Wood, Love's Old Sweet Song, Love for Love, Love Conquers All, God is Love—I looked up, startled. "Good Lord!" I gasped.

He looked down benignly. "Yes?" he queried. "What is it?"

"Are you, then, really Jehovah, Lord God of hosts, and all the rest of it?" I was incredulous.

"Yavah," he corrected quietly.

"And you are taking me to—to—?"

"Yes, to Zion," he smiled; then, seeing that I was still more than a little nervous, he comforted me, saying, "Thou hast earned thy passage, for even at the moment of thy death thou wast engaged in sharing of thy world's goods with thy God." This Fellow certainly talked like the Lord, and there was the halo, and above all He had me at a decided disadvantage. I resolved to believe in Him, for the time being anyway.

"How far is it?" I asked.

"We're here," he said, and sure enough, we were. A great pair of white-enamelled iron gates stood slightly ajar. "G'wan in and enjoy thyself," said my Companion, giving me a playful little shove. I looked back over my shoulder doubtfully, but He merely motioned for me to proceed.

I entered Heaven cautiously and looked around. There was not much to be seen from just inside the gates; green fields to the right and to the left and a broad path leading over the hill immediately ahead. Looking back out through the gates I saw that the Big Fellow had gone. I shrugged my shoulders and set out to find out what was on the other side of the hill, walking in the grass alongside the path, for the air was dry and the path was dusty. As I swung along I hummed a little ditty about a bear who had once set out on a mission much like my own; except that attaining the other side of his particular eminence, that bear had been singularly disappointed, whereas I was sure that from the top of *this* hill I should be able to see many strange and wonderful things. Nor was I to be disappointed. As I approached the top of the hill, I began to hear voices raised in song. As I drew nearer, they drowned out my humming, so that bruin was deserted in the middle of his seventeenth trip, and finally, as I topped the rise, I got the full benefit of the angelic chorus, for such my eyes verified it to be. Immediately upon my appearance, however, there was a great whirring of wings and flying of feathers and the anthem broke off in a series of undignified squeaks.

In an incredibly short space of time the angels

were gone, and I would hardly have believed they had been there at all but for the white feather-wisps settling slowly to the green-sward. I hadn't even had a good look at them. "Hell," I mumbled vaguely. At that there was a slight tremor beneath my feet, and a sound suspiciously like thunder. I sat down on the grass to think that one over. Earthquakes? Heavenquakes? Then I knew. I grinned and dug my fingers into the ground, and quite loudly and distinctly pronounced the word "damn." That one shook me up considerably, but it was worth it, for it surprised some frightened little squeals from a group of angels hiding in a birch tree hard by. I sprang up and made a dash for the tree, but they flapped away indignantly; not, however, before I got a good look. I was disappointed. They were all flat-chested female angels, most of them wearing spectacles.

I returned to my experimentation. "Wonder if 'darn' will do anything," I mused. I tried it. Heat lightning in the distance. I had a wonderful weapon here, if I could but learn to control it, and this I set about to do. I dabbled around in this new science for a half hour or so without any serious mishap. Once, though, when I had tentatively whispered "God damn," I had the uncomfortable feeling that the resultant bolt of lightning came unnecessarily close.

I soon got tired of this (since one must, in time, tire of any diversion, however novel) and set about to explore my environment at greater length. Heaven, apparently, was one vast sheep ranch. Rolling country, with few trees and an occasional stream of clear cold water, and peopled entirely by angels and sheep, with here and there a stray goat or two. The angels gave me a wide berth, and the sheep were not much company; and had it not been for one old billy-goat I should have become fed up with the place much sooner than I did. The old billy I appropriated as a sort of familiar. He followed me about with a sympathetic light in his eyes and looked on philosophically whenever I experimented with my small stock of profanity. I know not how long we wandered, this goat and I, for it was always noon in Heaven, just after lunch apparently, for though I was never hungry I was continually annoyed by the desire for a smoke. It may have been hours or it may have been weeks, but I do know that I became quite bored with the whole situation.

One day about noon, just after lunch as usual, I lay talking to my goat. "What can I do, Bill?" I asked. "The whole gaw—that is, the whole darned mess is telling on me." Heat lightning in the distance. Bill looked as if he was about to speak, but thought better of it and went on nib-

bling at his left hind hoof. "I ought to be able to figure some way out," I said after a while. Bill snorted contemptuously. Something in his snort caused me to look up. His eyes were shining. "Of course," I cried. "I'll blast my way out. Why didn't we think of that before?" Bill went on nibbling.

I stood up and addressed the atmosphere. "Pahaw!" I said. Thunder on the left. "George Bernard Shaw!" The thunder was much closer. Then I tried blasphemy; gossip about the saints and that sort of thing; and the ground trembled beneath my feet. I started the verse of an old fraternity song, and it began to rain. By the time I reached the second chorus the lightning was blazing away at a great rate, and Bill and I had to keep hopping about from place to place to avoid being struck. Eventually the green-sward, in the course of its agonized writhings, split itself in twain, forming a giant crevasse, down into which I scrambled, still singing lustily.

Down, down, down I rushed, leaping from rocky point to rocky point; and the lightning followed. Down, until the sky was a strip of gray light far above me. Down, until the black rain-clouds closed me in entirely and my path was lighted only by the electrical discharges nipping at my heels.

Suddenly I realized that I had reached the bottom. I found myself wading in a rushing torrent of ice-water about two feet deep and not more than a fathom in breadth; moreover, the walls on either side of me, while easy enough of descent, were quite unscalable. My song had spent its force and I resorted again to prose profanity, but in vain. The rocky bed of this tumultuous stream was invulnerable. Lightning, earthquake, volcanic explosion were equally ineffectual. The water swirled higher and higher, lashing about my hips, reaching upward toward my chest. I tried all the major expletives, singly and in lurid combination. Nothing availed. My shoulders were awash. Finally, in a mad moment of inspiration I threw back my head and screamed, "SEX!" Followed a soul-rending crash and the waters fell away from around me, leaving me straddling a rapidly widening crevice into which the icy stream had disappeared. My colossal position, astride this expanding fissure, was uncomfortable, and momentarily becoming more so.

Well, there is a limit to practically everything and in due course of time I found myself falling through black nothingness. At the bottom of black nothingness was a deep body of water that tasted of quinine and sulphur. As I spluttered to the surface, I descried a red light low upon the water, dead ahead. I struck out and in a few minutes was clambering over the gunwale of a leaky old barge. The crew of this vessel, an odorous gentle-

man of uncertain antiquity, looked at me with some surprise and mumbled inconsequent plosives into his dirty beard.

I approached him with fear in my heart and courage in my eye. He didn't offer to greet me; so by way of opening the interview I said, "Who are you?"

"Me? I'm Charon," he snarled encouragingly. "Go away."

"But just a minute, friend, this won't do at all," I said. You're in the wrong theology, you know."

"That wasn't no theology, that was a theocracy—haw, haw!"

I laughed politely and retreated to the other end of the barge. If he wanted to be Charon it was all right with me; so long as we remained afloat.

In a few minutes we drew up beside a long black pier, and my pilot indicated that this was the end of our voyage. I climbed out and started for the shore. As I trudged along I was conscious of a peculiar slapping sound in the water beneath the pier, and looking over the edge I saw a familiar pair of horns and a bedraggled old beard. It was Bill. I reached down and, taking a firm hold on the horns, helped him as he scrambled up out of the water. He nodded his thanks, and we walked on in silence.

As we approached the shoreward end of the pier, a bevy of little black demons came flying out of the Blackness Beyond. They were capable looking little devils, each equipped with a nasty black pitchfork. They made as if to impale me when suddenly one of them pointed to my goat and gibbered rapidly to her companions for several minutes. The upshot was that they all left off hostilities and offered to escort us whither we were bound. It would have been difficult to refuse such a bodyguard; so we suffered ourselves to be led into the Blackness Beyond.

It is a long and tortuous route, but well worth the trouble, for exactly in the center of the Blackness Beyond stands the Pleasure dome of the Damned, where lost souls are punished for their sins. It is a horrible fate, indeed, to be confined to eternal habitation in this den of iniquity. There are dance floors and excellent orchestras for those who have indulged in that pastime while on earth. There are gaming tables and a first-rate dining salon. Off in one corner is the most complete library ever assembled. There is therpian entertainment, both cinematic and legitimate. There are art galleries and tennis courts, bowling alleys and bridge tables; in fact, there is equipment for every vicious and near-vicious form of self-indulgence ever invented by the mind of man. And in the center is the Complete Bar, presided over by an ageless Jew who never touches a drop

himself, by choice, of course, and not perforce.

Into this Pleasure Dome Bill and I were led, after weary miles of stumbling through the Blackness Beyond. Straight up to the Complete Bar our escort flew, and we followed. The Jew smiled affably and rubbed the palms of his hands together. "How do you do?" he asked in as perfect English as I know how to write. "My name is Satan."

"I suspected as much," I replied, "but there's something not quite right. I can't seem to place it now, but—" I was genuinely puzzled. This man looked pleasantly satanic in most respects, but something seemed to be lacking. Oh yes. Horns. He had no horns. "Shouldn't you have horns?" I asked. "I don't mean to be impertinent, but you see I had always been taught to think of you as with horns."

Satan's face was sad, and a far-away look was in his eyes. "No," he said, "that was all an unpleasant mistake. I never married. But enough of that." He waved away his reminiscences. "There is a letter here for you. At least, it's addressed 'The Man With the Goat' and you seem to be he." He reached beneath the bar and produced an important looking legal envelope. I opened it, wondering. In it were a sheepskin, covered with strange writing, and a letter, marked with similar characters.

"What do you make of these?" I asked, handing them to Satan.

He glanced over the sheets and burst into merry laughter. "This," he said, handing me the sheepskin, "is the deed to the Earth. And this is a letter which informs us of the death of one Jehovah, and which also tells us that he has bequeathed all his domains to you. One moment, please;" he looked puzzled. "There's a postscript here which doesn't make sense. It says, 'Blessed are the Meek.' What do you suppose that could mean?"

I knew very well what it meant. It meant that unless I did some very rapid and very accurate thinking I would be burdened with an extremely cumbersome white elephant for the remainder of my immortal life. "Your Royal Lowness," I began, "I, here, in the presence of all these witnesses, do make you a present of—"

"Oh no, you don't," he said quickly. "It is yours, and you must keep it until you find someone who will accept it voluntarily and with his eyes wide open."

Crestfallen, I stuffed the deed and letter back into their envelope. Turning to my goat I said, "Bill, where, in all the Blackness Beyond, shall I ever find an individual who is meeker than myself?" Bill looked up philosophically and stamped his foot. Then he began to nibble at one corner of the envelope. He nibbled and nibbled, until finally there was nothing more to nibble. And during the whole process his eyes had been wide open.

THE PANAMA CANAL

"Stand aside, mountains!"

And they stood.

"River, run here; not there!"

The river ran not where it would.

"Lake, change your bed!"

The lake moved, as the Syrian did carrying his
bed.

"And, you, brother oceans long-parted, join
hands!"

Ferocious Atlantic

And amiable Pacific

Joined hands in peace.

And so were they established in their house,

The wall sundered that parted them—

And by a man.

—Barton Wood

EL MUERTO SPRINGS

Dead men tell no tales, but blood leaves lasting
Signs, and bones bleached white by desert suns,
Washed clean by winter's rains, mark trails where
gold

Has passed, and desperate men, and sudden death.
El Muerto Springs is journey's end of some
Such trails. The blood ran deep when desperate
men

Had traffic there so many years ago.

El Muerto Springs! The droning bees still cast
A drowsing spell about the spot, and rise
All golden-legged from the crimson phlox
Whose sweets they raid. The same old tree
Of juniper still stands, and mocking birds
Still quarrel noisily among the boughs.
But gone alike are killers and those slain,
Though still their bloody, bleached-bone trail is
marked

Across the land

The sun was like a white hot ball of fire.
The heat was heavy, like a blanket laid
Across the shoulders. And the sand threw back
The heat in shimmering waves, so that the sage
And sand and distant hills rocked slowly in
A crazy, deadly dance. The four who rode
Against the sun on weary horses said
No word. Gray with dust of many miles,
They slouched at ease in creaking saddles. Hats
Pulled low and shoulders bowed, they seemed
asleep.

But not a lizard moved or dust cloud stirred,
They did not see. They rode keen-eyed, alert,
Not wishing to be taken unaware.

Hard men! Zwing Hunt and Sandy King, Jim
Hughes,
And Doctor Neal. These names men knew and
feared

Them by. The cream of Tombstone bad men, they
Had ridden in the Lincoln county wars,
And later, with John Ringo, raided cattle off
Sonora ranches and swum them north across
The Rio Grande. Hard men, wolf-mean,
A part and product of the time and place.
Steadily they rode. The miles and hours
Dropped slowly back into the past. The sun
Slid down the western sky, a moment sat
Upon the world's rim, then slid from sight
And dropped into the sea which lies beyond.
Color splashed up and stained the canvas of
The sky. A breeze in whispers spoke of night;
With wandering steps it rustled through the sage,
And with cool hands caressed the outlaws' cheeks,
Brown paper crinkled in strong hands, and
matches

Flared a moment in the deepening dusk
As cigarettes were made and lit, and smoke
Dragged deep to depths of grateful lungs. Soft
talk

And chuckling laughs now mingled with the creak
Of saddle leather and the tinkle of
Their spurs. Still they rode. The evening star
Looked calmly down upon the madness of
Mankind. The colors in the west grew blurred
And disappeared as darkness spread across
The sky. A night hawk swooped on silent wings.
Somewhere a rabbit screamed, and wailing down
The wind came clear a sad coyote's song.
The weary horses scented water and broke
Into a shuffling trot. The outlaws eased
Guns closer to their hands and rode alert
For trouble. The trail led up a winding draw,
Cloaked in shadows. Every rock and clump
Of sage might hide a watching form poised tense
To strike. Sensing trouble, Doctor Neal
Held back, uneasy as a wolf who sights
A trap.

"Aw hell, Doc, come on," Jim Hughes growled. And guns in hand the four rode up. The draw. A horse's steel-shod hoof rang loud on stone; a rider cursed beneath his breath— But nothing happened. Fifty yards they rode, A hundred yards; the gulch's walls loomed close on either hand, the shadows deepened, black and dense they lay. Around a turn, and then—"Quien esta?" a soft voice called behind a sheltering rock. A rifle barrel clinked on stone. Rough hands pulled horses to a stop. "I knew how this would end," rasped Doctor Neal, and tilted up his gun. "Easy, boys," Jim Hughes warned, and to that hidden voice cried,

"Ho, amigo mio,
We look for Juan Estrada and his men,"
"And why? And who are you?" the soft voice slurred.

"That we tell to Juan Estrada, not
To peon bandit dogs like you," The words hung heavy in the gulch. For fifty heart-beats death stood poised to strike. Then, "So," replied

The guard. "Ride on, you gringo peeg. I come behind."

The four continued up the draw,
Preceded by the sentry's whistle, shrill
And warning, cutting through the darkness like
A hard-flung knife. Around another turn;
A fire gleamed golden, flames climbing high
From tindrous sage thrown on to light the trail
Of those who came and make of them a clear-
Seen mark. The flickering light gleamed dully
here

And there beyond the fire where rifles rested
In the hands of cautious man. Alone
Before the blaze, calmly puffing on
A corn-husk cigarillo, gorgeous in
A silver-braided velvet jacket, tall

Sombrero, hand-made boots, waited one who scorned

To seek the safety of the shadows.

"Where
Is Juan Estrada?" Jim Hughes called.

"Senor,
I am Juan Estrada."

"Good, I thought
We'd find you here," and Jim Hughes gave their
their names.

Juan Estrada flung his cigarillo
Into the fire, swept off his high-crowned hat
And bowed with old Castilian grace.

"Senores,"
He cried, "Your names have made a thunder in
This border land. Don Juan Estrada, and
His men, and all he has, is yours. Dismount
My friends, and sit here by the fire, and we
Will talk of what has brought you to this spot,
And why you seek poor Juan.

"Jose,"
He called. A man stepped forward to the fire.
"Take you these horses to the waterhole,
Then stake them out."

He spoke then to his guests
And bade them welcome once again, but still
The flickering light gleamed dully here and there
Beyond the fire where watched his men. The five
Beside the fire talked out the night and when
The gray dawn broke the darkness of the east,
Don Juan Estrada called his men. In short,
Hard words, he told them of the plan which in
The night they five had hatched, and of the wealth
Of glittering gold which they might win.

"Who dares
To ride with Juan Estrada and these four
On such a raid, for such a wealth of gold,
As no man here has dared dream of before,"
He cried. "Aee," the voices of his men rode high
In savage exultation. None held back

* * *

Black troops of the United States, a corps
Of ninety-nine black negroes and a white
Lieutenant, rode from old Fort Davis in
The month of June to cut tobaso grass
And make it into hay for winter use.
The troops staked out their mules and made their
camp

At Lobo in the peaceful Van Horn Valley.
Laughing, gay, the negroes made a game
Of haying, and around the fires at night
Sang songs, and boasted of their deeds and days,
Amused themselves with dance and stories gay
And sad, as is the way of people of
Their race, and all in all, enjoyed themselves.
But the lieutenant longed for action, for a brush
With bandits or with Indians, dreamed of the
Reports that he would send, "Defeated strong
Attacking force today when bandits made
Surprise assault." Then no more haying jobs
For him, but a promotion and, some day
Perhaps, he'd be a general. Perhaps
He would! If only he could have a brush
With bandits! So he dreamed and hoped, while at
El Muerto Springs a plan was hatched to make
A fierce attack upon the Lobo camp—
The bandit gang had need of mules, and there
At Lobo camp were strong, fast mules.

* * *

The flaming sunset faded and a cooling breeze
Began to breathe away the heat as night
And darkness scaled the eastern wall of hills
And took possession of the world. Laughter, talk
And curses sounded, clink of bits and spurs,
Horses grunting as the saddle cinches
Tightened, creak of leather, thud and ring
Of hooves, as Juan Estrada's bandit gang
With Sandy King, Jim Hughes, Zwing Hunt
And Doctor Neal set out to raid and loot
The Lobo camp

The summer stars shone through the gather-
ing dusk

Like candles lit to guide the steps of man
Upon his way. The rising of the moon
Into the sky set all the coyotes yapping.
Presently they ceased their song and went
About their nightly hunts. The moon, a ball
Of gold upthrown, arced slow across the sky,
And fell behind the distant rim of earth.
The stars began to pale. The hint of day
Showed in the east as in a draw the gang
Pulled up. They tied their horses fast and hung
Their jingling spurs upon their saddle horns.
Two men were left to watch the mounts, the rest
Made cautious way to where the soldiers' hay
Camp was, and hid themselves behind a thrust
Of rock. Silently, unmoving, there, they lay
With rifles in their arms. The gay day dawned;
Wood smoke plumed up from mess tent fires. The
smell

Of coffee at the boil and bacon, hot
And sizzling in its grease, came drifting on
The breeze to where the outlaws waited, cold
And hungry.

Zwing Hunt sniffed the breeze and growled,
"The dirty bastards, eatin' all that chuck.
Let's take 'em now. There ain't no need to wait
Until those sons o' bitches eat. And sure,
A breakfast ain't a-gonna help 'em any."

"What's the matter, Zwing? Can't you forget
That gut of yours for once?" sneered Doctor Neal

Zwing Hunt flushed, and would have flung
himself

Upon the other but before the thought
Could turn to action Jim Hughes snapped,

"Enough

Of that, you two. Fight later if you want,
But you ain't a-gonna spoil this plan
By fightin' now."

They let the matter drop,

But Neal's eyes were ugly as they flicked
Away.

"My friend, watch out for Senor Neal,"
Don Juan Estrada whispered to Jim Hughes,
And Hughes nodded slow assent.

A bugle's notes

Ran rippling through the camp, jerked soldiers
out

Of bed and changed the tension of the men
Behind the thrust of rocks. Then whistles shrilled,
The tents spewed men still fumbling sleepy-eyed
With buttons. Lining up before their tents
They stiffened to attention and presented arms.

A straggler slipped into the line but not
Until the roll had passed his name.

"Sam Jones,"

The corporal called, "Two days K. P."

His words

Rang clear and reached the men behind the rocks.
"Well now," drawled Sandy King. "Old Sambo
Jones

Won't have to peel no spuds, I guess, when we
Get through with this here camp." His mocking
laugh

Was echoed by the others. Even dour,
Grim Doctor Neal was forced to grin a bit.

Roll called, the soldiers dropped back to their
tents,

And shaved, and laid their guns aside. No guns
Were needed by a work crew anyway, here
In peaceful Van Horn Valley, though a brush
With bandits still was dreamed and hoped for by
The young lieutenant. Whistles shrilled again.
This time, Sam Jones was in the lead as they
Lined up and filed into the mess tent for
Their morning's rations. The lieutenant watched
them go;

Then turned to stride back to his quarters.

"Now,"

Breathed Hughes. He drew a bead and squeezed
the trigger.

The rifle roared, the young lieutenant fell
Straight back, a rifle ball embedded in
His brain. From eighteen other guns a hail
Of lead ripped through the tent. A man crashed
out,

Ran three steps, and fell. Its guy ropes cut,
The tent collapsed. Teeth bared, lips snarled back,
Neal fired with savage pleasure. Jim Hughes sang
A song beneath his breath, and Sandy King
Grinned amiably, and placed each shot into
The center of the squirming mass. The rest
Fired with wild abandon, and their war
Whoops shrilled in savage exultation, save
Zwing Hunt, who fired methodically and dropped
What ones escaped the mess tent trap. He spat
Each time he scored a hit. A yellow mouth
Of flame began to gulp the canvas. Smoke
Billowed up, grew thick and greasy black as fire
Fed on flesh. The screams of wounded men
Sobbed shriller, higher, till at last they sank
To broken, moaning sobs. A few more shots
Stilled those. "Let's got some grub," suggested
Hunt.

* * *

Only one escaped the Lobo Masacre.
He got away but later died insane.

With ninety-nine men dead, their raid for gold
Was now begun. They took the best of mules
And what they wanted from the store of things
The camp contained, then struck for Mexico.
They splashed the waters of the Rio Grande at
The crossing of the Fortress of the North.
A day's ride south they loaded up their mules
With guano from the bat caves of that place
And drove them deeper south to Monterey.
There they posed as traders, sold their load,
And set the stage whereon to act the play
They hoped would bring into their hands the gold

Which they had come so far to get.
They made their camp upon the town's outskirts
And drowsed the days away, the while their mules
Were resting from the south-bound trip. The
nights

They spent in drinking and in playing monte.
Grouped around a blanket spread upon
The ground to serve as table in the style
Of campfire gamblers. Days slid by, and nights.

Then, when the mules were fresh again, the
men

Of Juan Estrada's gang whispered to
The peon soldiers set to guard the mint,
The smelter and the town, the tale that at
The monte game tequila, free, was to
Be had, and that the dealer's luck was poor,
That he was losing pesos by the thousands.

The ruse worked well—the night was cold,
no moon

Was in the sky, the stars were half obscured
By scudding clouds. Then too, there never was
A peon soldier could resist the lure
Of monte and tequila. One by one
They came to woo their fortunes and to warm
Themselves with free tequila. One by one
They came, in company with the friend to whom
They owed so much for the alluring news.
Twelve there were in all who hoped
To tip a flagon by the fire and flip
A fortune-bearing card that night. None did.
Blood spouting, throats slashed from ear to ear,
they fell

And kicked convulsively and died, lay
Uncaring in a bloody wallow with
A bloody froth of foam upon their mouths.

Before the final peon soldier's corpse
Was cold, before the blood was scarcely more
Than dry upon their hands, the bandits had
The mules in motion. Through the sleeping streets
Of Monterey they plodded at the slow
And casual pace of traders with a long

Day's march ahead, starting in the night
To miss the day's fierce heat. A crew,
Picked men, had gone ahead to loot the mint,
The smelter and the vast cathedral where
The church had, placed upon display,
Its stores of treasure, sanctified, to thrill
The pious. Before the mint the pack train paused.
Men grunted with the weight of sacks of gold
And silver coins, whose clinking, muffled music
Set their pulses pounding hard and fast.
No woman in the world could ever stir
A man so much as gold, for love is fit
For lighter moments, but it's lust for gold
Which drives mankind to greatest heights of mad
Endeavor, drives till God himself looks down
In mild surprise. They put the heavy pounds
Of brightly-minted coins upon the first
Ten mules, who flapped their ears in protest at
The load. Ears flattened, one or two gave thought
To bucking, but their packers kicked them in
The bellies heartily and drove that notion from
Their minds. They moved on to the smelter. There,
They packed twelve mules with all the weight of
gold

And silver ingots that they dared to load
Them with in view of what the north-bound trip
Would be. Inflamed by sight of so much gold,
Stern Doctor Neal forgot his dignity,
And sweated with the peon bandits who
Were lashing on the loads. With feverish lust,
Blind to all save gold, he staggered at
A run between the smelter and the mules
With ingots.

"Here," he ordered harshly of
An ingot-burdened handit. "Put it on
This mule."

His back was turned. The mule reached out,
And with a vicious snap of teeth it ripped
The shoulder from his coat and threw him down
Upon the stones, then struck with both front feet.
But Neal was quicker than the beast. He rolled

And came up on his feet with cat-like ease.
"You damn' whore bastard you," he hissed. He
jerked

The pistol from his belt and crashed the brute
Between the ears, knocked it to its knees,
Then kicked it up again. It would have killed
A horse, but mules are tough. It gained its feet
And stood quite quietly. The ingots loaded,
The pack train shuffled on, to pause at the
Cathedral's carven doors. Estrada's men
Devoutly crossed themselves, but lust for wealth
Proved stronger than their hopes for heaven's
joys.

Within their simple, child-like minds, they felt
That now, at last, they signed their souls away.
All things might be forgiven, save this last
And final sin of desecration. But
Their eyes shone bright at sight of the rich loot
Which here awaited them. Great ropes and bags
Of pearls from La Paz, and rare turquoise
Of blue, and bluish-green, and greenish-blue;
Bags of opals—fire and harlequin,
And cacholong and geyserite—it seemed
That all the live and flaming colors of
The universe were caught and held within
Their depths; and topaz, yellow ranging down
To deepest orange hue; and jade, and all
The jewels priests had gathered in a host
Of ways and added to the glory of
The Church of Monterey. Rich altar cloths
Of cloth of gold, and silver candelabra and
A priceless jewel-eyed image of the virgin,
And all the other treasures of the church
Were bundled up, and went to swell the load
The pack mules bore.

The night was nearly gone,
And with its passing came the storm. There was
No dawn. The rain fell down, the wind bit through
The warmest wraps, and drove the rain until

To men and beasts alike it seemed the march
Was through a wall of water, and Jim Hughes,
Who as a boy had read the Bible at
His mother's knee, was led to muse upon
The tribes for whom the Lord had caused the sea
To part on either hand that they might pass,
And so escape the wrath of that fierce force
Of men who sought their lives. You had to hand
It to the Lord, he thought, for knowing what
To do. You couldn't work the trick like that
In burnt-out Mexico; so He had turned
The trick around, and this time drenched the tribe
To save their lives. A damn good thing it was,
This storm, he mused. Their tracks would be
washed out;

Pursuit would have to go it blind, and that
Might mean they'd get away untouched. Well,
They'd need a sight of luck to get across
The Rio Grande with these damn mules and such
A load. But what the hell—He grinned, and
fanged

A corner off his plug of black tobacco,
And slouched a little deeper in his old,
Rain-soaked saddle.

All that day the storm
Held on, but blew away when darkness came;
The stars shone brightly through the rain-washed
air.

The bandits halted, loosened cinches on
The horses and the mules, and strode stiff-limbed
About. They rested half an hour, and ate
A little jerky, then pushed on again.
At dawn they stopped beside a spring, and let
The mules and horses browse a bit, and did
Not rest the mules by taking off their loads;
Nor anywhere in that four hundred miles
Of hell from Monterey to Dead Man's Springs
Did they loosen by a pound those packs.
Horses would have foundered, and no mules
Save ones hand-picked like these could have en-
jured

That trip. But the mules were tough, and fear
Beat upon the backs of all the outlaw gang.
Good horsemen all, they never lost their heads
To point of killing off the brutes upon the trail,
But drove them to the limit of their strength.
Jim Hughes and Juan Estrada had, for hours,
Debated on the course of flight that they
Should take, and chose the shortest trail which cut
Across the border. But the storm which wiped
Out all their tracks, suggested to Estrada
That strategy might be relied upon.
"My friend," he said to Hughes, "the cavalry
Of Monclova may even now be hard
Upon the ride for us. I bet you what,
They think that we will cross the Rio Grande
Just where we cross him once before, right there
At El Presidio del Norte crossing. But,
Maybe so we fool them, no?"

"Sure now,
I savvy what you're driving at, but I
Don't guess I know just what you're figgerin' on,"
Hughes growled. He rolled a cigarette and eyed
The Mexican suspiciously.

"There is
Another ford far south where we can cross
These longeared ones," explained Estrada. So
They did. They crossed the Rio Grande just where
It meets the mouth of Reagan creek. Across
The wide and lonesome miles of Big Bend sage
And sand the pack train forged toward its goal.
Four hundred weary, killing miles had left
Their mark. Their shoes worn through, their
hooves rasped down,
The mules left blood at every step. Their flanks
Were sunken in, a man could hang his hat
Upon the hip bones; ribs seemed on the point
Of cutting through the hides; their heads hung
down;
They stumbled as they plodded on, and awayed
With half closed eyes from side to side. Gone far
Beyond response to shouts, too tired to mind

The blows of rope or club their drivers first
Had plied them with, they crawled on now
Because their drivers jabbed them in the sides
With sotol stalks, which still brought pain enough
To make them stumble on—

They neared again the winding draw which led
Up to El Muerto Springs. Upon pretext
Of scouting out the Springs to ascertain
That there was on one there to give them cause
For trouble, Sandy King, Jim Hughes, Zwing
Hunt,

And Doctor Neal with Juan Estrada pushed
Ahead. They spurred their weary horses to
A trot and so came out upon the flat
Before the Springs, drew rein, and gazed about,
Their horses standing close together.

"Look,"
Jim Hughes cried to Juan Estrada, and
He pointed to the west. The bandit turned
His head and gazed intently where Hughes' hand
Was waved.

"What is?" he asked.
Without a sign
Or sound, with cat-like quickness, Doctor Neal
Reached and ripped Estrada's throat, then drove
The foot-long blade of razorish whetted steel
Hilt deep into his victim's back, who never felt
The second blow, but only knew the hot,
Sharp flame which slashed across his throat and
cut
His jugular vein. He felt the pain for but
A beat of time before all things went black
For evermore, and bright blood gushed, and
stained
His sweat and dust-caked shirt. He gurgled once;
Then went all limp and slumped, an empty bag
Of flesh.

"Nice work," Hughes praised. They threw
the corpse
Behind a clump of sage. Neal wiped his knife

Upon the dead man's coat and shoved it back
 Into its sheath. They left the horses there,
 Ran back, and hid themselves above the draw.
 They waited till the weary pack train came
 Abreast, the plodding mules spurred onward by
 The Mexicans who knew that now, at last,
 That nightmare trip was nearly done. And so
 It was for them. The leading bandit came
 Abreast, went on for half a dozen strides.
 And then all hell broke loose. Guns flamed
 And roared above the draw, the train was raked
 By lead, the club-like blows of heavy slugs
 Knocked men reeling from their mounts and beat
 Them cruelly down. The bandits fought as best
 They could, save one, who turned and fled. He was
 The only one who lived to tell of that
 Trail's end

* * *

This final murder done, the four outlaws
 Took off the golden packs, and freed what mules
 Were still alive, to wander off into
 The desert wastes and live or die. The trail
 Had reached its end

* * *

They cached the loot of Monterey there at
 The Springs, and with their saddle bags full-
 bulged.

With coins, went on a spree in Tombstone and
 The other, largest, frontier towns. But fun
 Like that could not now fill their lives. They
 robbed

A train, a bank or two, and with the swag,
 Struck out for Dead Man's Springs. And on
 The way, they came upon a father and
 His son, a boy just in his early teens.
 These two were riding in a wagon, old,
 Drawn by a team of bony mules.

"Well now,"
 Said Sandy King, "Why don't we ride in style?"
 And saying this, he shot the father and
 The son, and threw their bodies out upon
 The road.

And so the outlaws came again to
 El Muerto Springs with loot, and there
 They found four miners, Mexicans, engaged
 In driving back into the hill a shaft
 In search of paying ore. Jim Hughes, who had
 More brains than the three others, said, "Now
 there

Are just the men we want. I reckon that
 No man can dig a better hole, than these."

They hired the luckless miners by the day
 To sink a shaft straight down in living rock
 To depth of eighty feet, then tunnel back
 And make a room wherein to store the gold,
 The silver, and the wealth of spoil, blood-stained,
 That they had now amassed. Five months it took
 To gopher out that hole in living rock
 Beside El Muerto Springs. The outlaws whiled
 Away the hours with poker in the shade
 Of that lone juniper which grows there yet.
 The miners dug, and round their fire at night,
 They talked of how they'd spend the gold these
 mad

Americanos paid. They dreamed of all
 The things that they would buy, and thanked their
 saints

Each night that these gringos had come along.

At last the work was done; and then the
 wealth

Of Monterey, and of their other raids,
 Was lowered to the rock-bound room, then sealed
 Away forevermore with cement of blood.
 Those days, the antelope by tens of thousands
 Watered at El Muerto Springs. Shot down,
 Their blood was mixed with granite dust to make
 Such concrete as could rival living rock
 For strength. Those months of toil resulted in
 A cache such as no men had made before,
 Nor ever will again. The miners dreamed
 Their dreams, and when the work was done,
 Rejoiced. But not for long. The work all done,
 The outlaws slew their slaves, took back the
 wealth

They had bestowed upon the miners, threw
Their bodies in a gulch, and gaily went
Upon their way, well cheered by thought of a
Hard job well done.

But when they cached
Their loot away, they sealed it from their own
As well as other hands. And so they had
To ply their trade until they died. That was
Not long. After another robbery,
Zwing Hunt was captured by the law. No jail
Could hold him long. He broke away, but such
Is fate, that the Apaches found his trail,
And following, raked off his scalp. The next
To die was Doctor Neal. He killed a man
Whose ways he didn't like, but did not flee
Quite fast enough. The posses rode him down.
He died, propped up against a juniper,
A smoking gun in either hand. The third
Was Sandy King. He stole a horse, and caught,
Was hanged like any ordinary thief,
Was hanged quite dead, although he swore
That he was innocent. Jim Hughes alone
Escaped quick death. He drifted down along
The border. Hard and ruthless, bad men called
Him king for many years, until one day
A stripling youth, a glory-seeker called
Him out into the street and shot him down.
That broke his pride. He slid from stage
To stage, and ended up at last, a bum,
A mucker in a honky-tonk. His job
Was to clean out spittoons, and sweep the floor.
He begged his drinks; he slept upon a pile
Of sacks and rags within the stable of
That place. His meals were from the free lunch
The honky-tonk maintained. "Old Bar-fly Jim,"
Men called the man who looted Monterey,

And kicked him from their path. And then he'd
whine.

And beg for just one drink, for just a "snort"
For old times' sake, and if they kicked his hull
Away, would grovel back again, and beg
For "just a little drink." Whatever came
To hand, he smoked—cigars or cigarettes—
The butts, of course, although he now and then
Had luck enough to find one whole. One day
"Old Bar-fly Jim" did not appear at work.
They found him dead among his rags. "Old bum,"
They said, and buried him, and few men knew,
And no man cared

Dead men tell no tales, but blood leaves lasting
Signs, and bones bleached white by desert suns,
Washed clean by winter's rains, mark trails where
gold

Has passed, and desperate men, and sudden death.
El Muerto Springs is journey's end of some
Such trails. The blood ran deep when desperate
men

Had traffic there so many years ago.
El Muerto Springs! The droning bees still cast
A drowsing spell about the spot, and rise
All golden-legged from the crimson phlox
Whose sweets they raid. The same old trees
Of juniper still stands, and mocking birds
Still quarrel noisily among the boughs.
But gone alike are killers and those slain,
Though still their bloody, bleached-bone trail is
marked

Across the land

—Harold Bettinger

THE ROMANTICIST ON THE CAMPUS

PHILIP FARLEY

WHY IS IT that "young intellectuals" should invariably be "young radicals?" So frequently is this the case, that it seems almost to be a law. Not radicals in the finest sense of the term, those who go to the root of matters, are they, but in the more loose conception of those who set themselves against the established order. Nor are they liberals, for they close their minds to the arguments of the true liberals and accuse them of hide-bound conservatism and dogmatism.

The youth that goes to this extreme is frequently the very finest and most intelligent; look on any college campus and you will find them forming the political clubs, editing the papers, and winning the literary prizes. They number many of the most brilliant minds, most determined wills, and even, aside from their radical opinions, often the highest ideals. Why is it that they should so unfortunately exaggerate their position and go to such extremes? Unfortunately, because these are the youths who will set our standards in the decades to come, who truly deserve that frequently misapplied term, "future leaders of America," and who even now exercise a vast formative effect on less brilliant persons. If their philosophy is at fault, then, it is worth perceiving what is the true one and why so many intelligent young people should go astray.

Do not doubt, that these outstanding youths are a tremendous molding force on our ideals. Those who set our standards are those who have power, who can force us to acknowledge our inferiority. Whether this power comes from social position, wealth or intellect, it dominates in the same manner. Gradually we are growing away from the dictatorship of the first two—into the sole domination of the latter. So long has the world looked forward to the supremacy of reason, that it is prone to view this ascension with a rejoicing that consideration does not show to be merited. There can be little doubt that logic and intelligence should prevail and should set our standards; yet merely that intellect is to reign does not guarantee that the best intellects will be the judges. The problem in government has always been to select the best man to rule; so here. Here no more than in politics, it is true that the most fit will rise to the top; those who grasp the instruments of power are not always those who will wield them to the greatest good of all.

For the qualities, outside of a high intelligence quotient, that lead to predominance are ambition

and will, self-assurance and contempt for others, all of which are essentially selfish. The so-called intellectuals are noted rather for the looseness than the integrity of their morals; yet they set the standards of our taste. In the colleges as well as in the whole state, the man of pronounced opinions, clever tongue, and facile pen, who is concerned more with victory than truth, succeeds in planting his views firmly in the minds of the susceptible, to the detriment of more enduring principles. In the long run, there is a main current that sweeps through these eddies and ripples of opinion, that often by their conspicuousness seem to be the stream itself; yet with their turbulence they too often captivate the public's attention and assume a temporary primacy.

It seems apparent that in literature, which youth takes so seriously, may be found the key to this triumph of the superficial, of the glittering, which threatens a dedication of true artistic endeavor and makes its greatest appeal to youth, which loves display and cleverness. Not alone in the colleges opposing theories are found, which embody these conflicting elements, usually summed up in the two terms, "classicism" and "romanticism." It is obviously futile to attempt any inclusive definition of the two, but the difference will perhaps be sufficiently clear if classicism be called the theory of objectivity in art, and romanticism the theory of subjectivity.

Classicism has been handled rather roughly by its opponents and even deprecated by its supporters; unfortunately so, because this resulted from a misapplication of the name. For a few generations in English literature, classicism denoted the school who slavishly followed their misconceptions of the Greek and Roman authorities, who set up rigid and artificial tenets of art, and who believed that art consisted in repression rather than in expression. Their influence has been mostly pernicious, for they were not only responsible for a reaction which was equally reprehensible, but they even furnished it with a ground for its existence. The artificiality and coldness of the school, its affectations and forced style, were ample justification for a mild revolt, but not for a mad rush to the other extreme of absolute freedom from any forms or standards.

It is most sad that the classicists in literature should so long have permitted themselves to be grouped with these men without protest; it is a rank slander on truth to say that this pseudo-classical theory was the theory of either the au-

clients or of even such confirmed modern classicists as Matthew Arnold. It is time that the misapprehensions at least be pointed out, if not cleared away, for they are deep-rooted through centuries of reiteration by romantic critics.

Most college students are romanticists; naturally so, because youth is impatient of any trammels, inherently individualistic, and easily swayed by emotions and passions. So the prevailing concept of classicism in the college classes is that it is the school of dogma, that its poets write only in the heroic couplet, that its authors always hyphenate "D--n!", and in general is the essence of conservatism, prudery, and repression. If this were true, we would doubtless all rush to the romantic banner and sing merrily of individualism, abolition of all criteria of merit, and amorality; luckily, it is but another error arising from too much haste and lack of judgment. Classicism is more noble than that; its foundations are built on truths which have been tested in the crucible of application through thousands of years. It is the theory that motivates almost all great art; almost all, for romanticism has produced much that is unquestionably enduring.

The fundamental principle of classicism is the superiority of reason to emotion, its greater worth and more lasting appeal. Contrarily, romanticism contends that the passions are of premier importance, that a pure expression of the desires and reactions that well continuously in the human heart is the ultimate perfection of art. The romanticist writes as the spirit moves him; words flow direct from the soul to the pen, in an ecstatic but confused rhapsody. Feeling but not thinking, experiencing but not interpreting, uttering but not clarifying, the romanticist can hope in his greatest inspiration only for more sensitive perception of moods and a more felicitous pattern of expression. Nor should this be deprecated; the place of the passions in life is beyond cavil. The satisfaction of our cravings occupies a majority of our time, whether they be for food, sleep, sex, or aesthetic expression. Were they removed from our existence, the color and beauty would disappear with them.

But these same desires are found with but few exceptions in the very beasts which we despise; man excels them, not so much in the variety of his desires, as in his selecting, curbing, and sating them. Man has that organ reason which possesses a potential dominance over the lusts of the body; through it is he enabled to choose and repress his longings.

Since this is the attribute that sets man apart from lesser forms, is it not right that we should celebrate it and not its inferiors? So it has appeared to the great classicists; so have they writ-

ten. Not alone of the lusts of man and of the images which tortured him, of the moods which vacillated in him, but of the inward mental struggle, of the conflict within his mind, whether his reason should assert its wonted sway, is he the medium. The classicist does not divorce himself from passion; it is as truly his subject as the romanticist's. Neither does he subjugate his will and intellect to its call, but rather views its cravings through them as his criteria. Man is in his eyes not a chaos of uncontrolled lusts and impressions so long as the mind remains clear and unhampered; let it resign itself to the blindness and incoherence of the emotions, and man is not man, but a will-o'-the-wisp, with no purpose nor self-control, impotent in the face of events and master not even of himself.

Yet what more is man when reason is removed? His lusts lead to nothing but satiety, his satisfactions are dependent on mere chance, he is the creature of unaided instinct. If this is what our art would portray, if this is the object which inspires us, whose contemplation engenders the highest ecstasy in us, the romanticist is right; the subject of art is passion unruly by reason and its instrument man unruly by reason. Then would the greatest masterpieces come from a temporary trance and not from the exercise of a mighty intellect throughout a life; then would the fleeting presence of sensual beauty outweigh the eternal lustre of truth. It is not so; man is greater than the brute in him; his capacities are larger and his mind occasionally fulfills its potentialities. This is the truth of classicism, that man is not circumscribed by his passions, but, when using to the fullest his endowments, looms over them and bends them to the ends of his reason.

Classical theory differs from romantic in the very mechanics of composition, and there it stirs up even greater opposition. Many are the accusations that classical literature is too restrained, too polished, too lifeless;—the classicist throws the accusation in the romanticist's teeth and damns him as discursive, formless, and overly rhapsodic. Certainly the truth lies between the two, but just as certainly, the characteristics given above are not those of classicism but of pseudo-classicism. True classicism believes in restraint, just because art is more than imitation, but implies selection and interpretation. To be beautiful, literature must be attractive; too extravagant realism nauseates and repels most readers. Suggestion conveys more than exaggeration; unnecessary dwelling on details often hinders the symmetry of the whole.

Classicism aims at perfection, not as possible, but as ideal. To achieve the utmost within the limits of the workman's capabilities is his goal;

to that end he files and polishes. Brevity, clarity, and symmetry are cardinal principles of the classicist; yet he does not feel obliged to sacrifice beauty to attain them. Beauty is in order as well as in luxuriance, in clarity as well as in confused impression. In the last analysis, beauty is in the thought far more than in the style or imagery of the author, the chief purpose of which is to convey and not to astound. Few would question this of prose or drama; yet what is poetry itself, but the production, by means of metrical and artificial language, of a mood conducive to the reception of the thought contained? Art should appeal fundamentally to the intelligence as the ruling element in man; since the mind is swayed by the senses and passions, it utilizes these subtly as means to its final purpose. The classicist does not scorn beauty, nature, and human passion as his subjects, for what else is there? That they should be expressed only in vague effusions, however, he does deny; reason and order should be inherent in great art.

Inspiration sways him as surely as it does the romanticist; it is the inspiration that comes from the perception of beauty and truth and the meditation on them. It is the whetting of the faculties to that high point where the mind is nearest perfection; it is the attainment of the fullest capability of man. Yet the mind is always reflective; hence is classicism objective. Always the mind measures the objects of its contemplation against its standards, always it is conscious of its own separate existence. How different is the inspiration of the romanticist! The senses attuned to highest pitch, he yields himself up to the domination of his emotion and loses his own entity in a trance of subjective experience. His mind functions not as ruler but as an instrument; his will is overpowered and neglected.

Thus objective classicism and subjective romanticism divide essentially on the question of the relative value of reason and emotion. But not there alone, for classicism is confident of an ob-

jective truth, while romanticism maintains that there is no standard save one's own opinion. Obviously, tastes differ; what one man praises another damns,—yet almost invariably works succeed or fail regardless of contemporary criticism. It is on the universal appeal of the great masterpieces that classicism bases its standards, it is on the divergent reception of recent productions that romanticism divorces criticism from criteria. The difference may never be decided, but as long as Homer and Shakespeare please virtually all men the classical position will be unassailable.

The better youth of our colleges can be divided into classicists and romanticists quite easily. Regrettably, the larger group is the latter; regrettably, because classicism is the creed of the nobler, stronger mind. It is the philosophy that does not despair of searching out an ultimate order and truth in life, that believes, through intuition and conviction, in the ascendancy of reason, that asserts that while beauty cannot contain truth, truth does embrace all beauty. To be a classicist is hard, for often the world does not seem to bear out its principles; the enticements of romanticism are difficult of avoidance. How much simpler to disclaim any restraint on the individual, to give free rein to the emotions! How attractive it is to be able to write what one would, to think what one would, without the trammels of any natural law! That is the lure of romanticism, the easy way of succumbing to instinct and passion and discarding will and intellect.

Yet how barren of hope of progress is such individualism when compared to the consciousness of responsibility and duty that motivates the classicist! It is a sign of moral weakening and loss of courage, that so many young people are turning to romanticism. Classicism looks to all time and all men; its antagonist views only the narrow present and the confines of its own self. It is the classicist who promises a nobler future; may our colleges supplant their present product with followers of his creed.



