

EL PORTAL



SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE
APRIL • • 1933

EL PORTAL

VOL. 2

APRIL, 1933

NO. 5

CONTENTS

Nocturne	Gene Dorais	2
My First Ball, A Midsummer Night's Dream	Ada Louise Root	7
Tante Sophia	Edith M. Peterson	8
Joe, A Symposium You Should Hear About	Norman C. Stines	9
Pokey Pete	Margaret G. Nies	11
General Ricarte: A Monument To A Lost Cause	Leo V. Glido	12
A Scarlet Flower	Janet Ostrom	13
Tradition Of The Military Salute	Albert Viehweger	15
The Depression Strikes Home	Anonymous	17
An Impression	Richard Hiatt	19
The Gardenia Warrior	Belden K. Smith	20
A City Gone Mad	R. Alford	23
I Don't Like Antiques	M. Warren Fowler	25
A Suggestion	Philip Christensen	27
One Hour	Adah Mae Rhoads	29
A Rodeo	Grace White	31
Lopez Street	Jane Kesaler	33
The Valley Of Death	Richard Silva	35

EL PORTAL, A MONTHLY LITERARY MAGAZINE EDITED BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF THE SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, FROM MATERIAL WRITTEN EXCLUSIVELY BY STUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE.

COPYRIGHT, 1933, BY THE SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE

PRINTED BY THE KEESLING PRESS, CAMPBELL, CALIFORNIA

NOCTURNE



GENE DORRIS

The rails stretched out before him like twin silver threads, luminous in the semi-darkness. Above, the stars glittered in the vault of the sky; pulsing as if alive. The boy stumbled on, his weary feet searching for a surer foothold in the shifting, rock ballasted roadbed. Every few moments, the unequal spacing of the ties caused him to lose stride, and shorten or lengthen the rythm of his gait.

The silence of the spring night, broken only by the chirping of the crickets and the mournful hoot of an owl, weighed down upon his spirit. Alone and wandering in, what seemed to him, a friendless world, his youth and inexperience served to increase his sense of isolation.

This was something new. In all of his rather sheltered life he had never before been without a pillow to lay his head upon, nor a roof to shelter him from the night.

It was useless to go back over the past weeks, and yet his mind would turn, in hurt dismay, to his scurvy treatment at the hands of the district manager. Surely he had done his work faithfully and well, and he had known the difficulties to be overcome in such a game. To sell building and farm sites in another state, with only pictures and maps, together with printed propaganda as aids, was extremely difficult. He had not expected, nor been expected to make sales every day. But to have been fairly successful, with his undrawn commissions amounting to several hundred dollars, and then to discover that the manager in Kansas City has absconded with practically all of the funds, was too much for his mind to grasp.

Fortunately, he had been able to pay his hotel bill at the last little town in which he had solicited but it had taken all but a dime or two. Now he must push on, somewhere, anywhere. Surely he could get a job farther on, and the towns were not too far apart.

He thought, fleetingly, of his mother, and for a moment considered writing to her and tell of his plight. But he put this thought aside. He had told them both, his father and mother, that he could no longer stay in such an atmosphere of criticism and luke warm affection. He could make his own way; he'd show them. To write for help would be a confession of his impotence, and his pride flung this consideration to the wind.

His father had been so insistent about a career of business and the bank in which his uncle was treasurer, would be just the place.

But what of his music, his talent, the thing he loved? Why could he not study, and attain the heights toward which he yearned? No, such a life would be too filled with uncertainty; successful musicians were few and far between. It would be much better to rise slowly, under his uncle's watchful eye, and win, some day, a place of responsibility.

He had tried, but the confinement had irked him, and his soul filled with a wanderlust. If he could find no encouragement for his hopes at home, then he would move out into the wider, freer world of opportunity to make his own way.

The warm darkness pressed closer, but as he came out of the mouth of a small gully through which the tracks passed he saw the glow of a campfire, around which four men were sitting.

His first inclination was to stop, if only for a word or two, the sound of human voices, but some intuitive sense urged him on. He hoped to escape, but that hope was short lived. Two of the men hailed him, and when he answered with just a short word but made no change in his direction, the two who had called, came quickly to him, and, taking his arms, led him toward the fire.

He sat down upon the ground, and looked about at the faces of the four men. The firelight flickered, but gave light enough to show him four hard pairs of eyes, four chins generously stubbled with coarse beard. The men were tramps, and their clothes were rough and in a sad state of disrepair.

They in turn looked appraisingly at the boy, and tales he had heard of beatings and robberies passed quickly through his mind.

In response to a question as to the last time he had eaten, he said "Not since morning", and thereupon the man nearest offered him some stew in a small can. It was not unpalatable, and as he ate, in silence, his spirits rose a little. There was a spark of kindness in these hoboes. Perhaps their appearance belied them.

But presently the leader of the group started to speak, and as he unfolded a plan with which the others seemed familiar, the boy's heart sank.

They had been on the lookout for someone like him. Someone, whose clothes were not too shabby, who was not too unshaven, and who looked innocent enough. They wanted this newest recruit to go into the next town, which was only two miles farther on, and sometime during the day, go into the bank on some pretext or other, and look carefully at the safe which stood in the paying teller's cage. They wanted to know the make of safe and the approximate size of the combination dial.

The railroad ran right through the center of the town, and

within a hundred feet or more of the bank. The plan was to dynamite the safe just at the moment when the fast east-bound freight with two locomotives, passed through at about 1:15 A. M. The roar of the engines and the cars would effectively drown the noise of the explosion.

Once again, the boy acted intuitively. Without too much eagerness he agreed, knowing that he must appear to fall in with the plan. He had their secret, and men desperate enough to try such a robbery would stop at nothing.

Time wore on, and when they stretched out around the fire in preparation for sleep, the boy also lay down. There was in his mind no plan, no hope, and he closed his eyes in an intense desire to blot out the whole nightmare.

Toward morning, long before the first lifting of the darkness, a chill wind waked him. His coat had slipped off his shoulders and his bones ached from the unaccustomed hard bed. He lay quiet, listening. Slowly he turned, looking from one to the other. All asleep, breathing heavily, but motionless.

His chance! Carefully rising to his knees, feeling his way at each step, he slowly backed away from the dying fire, his glance darting quickly from one to the other of the sleeping forms. At the slightest motion he must be ready to flatten out. He prayed that no mis-step might loosen a tell-tale rock, or crack a dried twig. Step by step, his muscles tense, his every sense alert, he slowly withdrew until he knew that, at last, he was close by the tracks. Still using the utmost caution, he rose, and tip-toed from one tie to the next, until he had left the little camp several hundred yards behind him. Then he increased his speed, until he was moving at almost a run. His wind was beginning to plague him, but his fear drove him on, spurred him to an effort normally beyond his power.

Suddenly, like a beacon of hope, he saw, ahead, the warning signal lights of a freight train. It was waiting for the fast east bound Manifest, the roar of which could now be heard. Skirting the caboose, he passed quickly down the track and climbed over the side of a gondola, midway of the train.

At last the waiting was over. The train moved and he was putting distance between himself and the fearful experience of a few hours before. Sleep seemed far away, but at last, in spite of the noise and the bumping of the cars, his eyelids closed.

The sun was creeping over a misty horizon, when he awoke to the sound of a gruff voice, and a vigorous shaking of his shoulder. The train had stopped on a side track, and the brakeman exhorted him in loud and unvarnished language to be off.

The automobile highway was just across the fence, and the boy wandered rather aimlessly westward, looking for a ride. He was very

hungry and hoped that a farm house or town might soon come into view. Several cars passed him, ignoring his hail, and gloom once more settled on him. Apparently, he wasn't going to get any breaks, but at least he would keep away from the railroads and use the highway.

As he rounded a turn, he came upon a red faced little man deep in the throes of engine trouble. The car was well off the pavement, the hood was up, and tools and greasy rags were generously distributed on the running board. The boy stopped. He had always been interested in gas engines, and he had acquired a fair degree of skill in diagnosis and repair. He hesitated a moment, then asked:

"What's the trouble, Mister?"

The little man looked up just long enough to glance at the youthful figure near him and answered, impatiently:

"I'm not sure that I know, but I am certain that you don't."

This was rather dashing, but realizing the older man's annoyance, the boy persevered.

"I have had some experience with automobile engines and particularly this type. I wish I could help you. I've broke, and if I fix it, you might be willing to give me a ride to the next town."

The car owner straightened up, looked quizzically at him, and said:

"Well, you are persistent enough. Go ahead. See what you can do."

It took but a short time to find the broken connection to the distributor. The break was inside the insulation and the older man had not discovered it.

They gathered up the tools and soon started away. No word was spoken for several moments. Then the driver, with a whole hearted grin, said, "Well, you know your stuff, all right, and I'm very grateful because I was depending on this early start to help me cover a lot of ground between now and nightfall." He paused. "By George! It just occurs to me, I haven't had my breakfast. Have you had yours? No? Well, there's a town about six miles ahead of us and I'm sure they can fix us up with something to eat."

The sun seemed to shine a little brighter, and by the time they had put away a sizeable breakfast, the boy felt his spirits rise. As they left the restaurant, his host inquired his destination. The boy answered that he had no particular place to go. He was looking for work anywhere. His companion seemed to be pleased and suggested that they ride on together to the large city several hours distant. It would keep him from being lonesome and he might be able to put in a good word somewhere along the line, as he had many friends.

The task of driving was now absorbing attention, and the boy, gazing across the billowing grain fields which lay on either side of

the road, felt no lack of conversation. The world was a good place. A little song sprang from his lips and the simple tune seemed alive with heartfelt spirit and joy. As he sang, he felt the other's eyes upon him, and with a half apologetic smile abruptly ceased.

"Where did you learn to sing?" The boy answered that he had sung in the boy choirs in his early boyhood, and that later he had been able to have a few private lessons. Now, with no job in sight, he'd have to postpone any more study.

The question seemed to loosen the floodgates of his heart and before he realized it, he was pouring forth the whole story of his thwarted hopes, ambitions and the repressions of his life at home.

There was a short silence. Then the older man said:

"I think I can help you, not only get a job, but to find a way to provide for music lessons. The owner of the Radio broadcasting company which puts on a program once each week for my firm, is a friend of mine, and I think, with a little persuasion, he can find something for you to do at the studio. They have their headquarters in the city which is just ahead of us, and we will go directly to see him."

The events of the next few hours proved that his friend had not been over optimistic. The boy now had a job as assistant announcer and would have his initiation into the mysteries of radio that very evening. A new advertiser was presenting a "News Reporter" service and this was to be his special province if he pleased the advertiser and the fans.

Several nights later, the News Reporter was drawing his period to a close:

"And that, ladies and gentlemen, concludes our program for — just a moment please — here's a 'last minute' item that someone has just pushed under the door — Here it is: "The sheriff of Reed county announces an important capture. Four men were taken into custody immediately following an explosion in the bank at Lamont. According to a confession, the charge placed in the safe door was timed to explode at the moment a long, fast freight train was passing through the town. The noise of the train was to have drowned out the sound of the blast. From the wreckage which followed, it is evident that too heavy a charge was used, inasmuch as the front windows and part of the front wall of the building, along with parts of the safe door, were blown into the street. In addition the robbers were stunned, and the posse of citizens which quickly formed had no difficulty in capturing them. The bank lost nothing and the damage is covered by insurance." Well — that is mighty lucky for someone. Nobody cares to lose the things he has struggled to save. And now, friends, the News Reporter bids you all Good-night."

MY FIRST BALL, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

ADA LOUISE ROOT

I floated in on a pink cloud and the arm of my first love to my first ball! He was the all-beautiful, the all-powerful, my shrine, my idol and my god. No one had ever been in love before — no one ever would be again, as I was then. It was the night of nights.

By great favor, we had received an invitation to the annual Royal Ball, honoring the Queen of the Rose Festival in the City of Roses. All the tedious waiting for the gala evening to arrive was over, and the dream was a reality. The stars in a June sky, the ball-room green with potted palms, the brilliant crowd surging from the cloak-rooms, our brand-new high school graduation finery, mine, a white organdy frock and his, light flannel trousers — all seemed to lend glamour to the great occasion.

All about us were sleek and sophisticated sirs and madames, quite perfect as to manner and apparel. Their gowns were Paris; their studs were diamond; their nails were manicured; their hair was coiffured. They stood and chatted at ease and walked with grace. One or two couples threw condescending glances in the direction of the eager-faced young pair in ruffled organdy and white flannels.

Of a sudden, our brave and once beautiful graduation apparel drooped and shrivelled under the accusing looks bent upon it. White organdy, indeed! I, alone of all my sex in the room, was ruffled and unbedjeweled; and white flannels! — with every other escort, to a man, fitted out in full dress. That accounted for the condescension in the glances sent us. Heaven, send a cyclone — a disaster — anything, but don't make us live through this!

But we had come to dance and dance we must, though the heavens fell as we waltzed. On to the crowded floor we moved in a bliss of first love, if not of ease. One turn around the room we took, and past the Royal Court, seated in a bower of flowers upon the platform, smiling benignly and beautifully. I coolly and privately hated each one for being in silk and the company of a fully-dressed escort. In a doorway we paused to adjust our pseudo-composure. Glancing down I beheld the unmistakable imprint of my beloved's sturdy oxford upon my chaste white slipper. The finish! The last straw!

As we moved off the floor with the others, the sight of the potted palms lining the ballroom brought a hope of deliverance to our unhappy minds. Stepping nonchalantly back of the nearest, we found ourselves in an Arcadian retreat where, flannels unnoticed and organdy

unscorned, we could watch the dancers to the full of our desire, and hold hands in blissful secrecy.

At the intermission, there was a movement toward the doors, from which the lure of roses and a perfect June night and young love drew us to the balcony overlooking the flower show. It was as if we were King and Queen, peering haughtily down from our palace on the populace gathered below. We were alone, we and a giant flood-light, gazing at the bouquets and wreaths on display in the lighted park under our private paradise.

The night enticed us further — on and out into her splendor. What could we do but get our wraps and follow her lurking call, in a dilapidated Dodge touring car and the exuberance of extreme youth? They, dancing at the temple back there, might have their Paris gowns and cosmopolitan sophistication. Ours were recklessness and freedom from care and long, long dreams that would never come true.



TANTE SOPHIA

EDITH M. PETERSON

There is a woman in our town who, though her actual kinship extends to only a few families, is known to the whole town as Tante Sophia. Ever since I can remember her, Tante Sophia has seemed old, and yet, although I have grown older she seems to have remained the same sprightly, gray-haired lady who used to bribe me with cookies into saying my choicest kindergarten rhymes for her.

Tante Sophia has no home of her own. She "visits" in the homes of her nephews and nieces. She "visits" with the farmer nephew in the summer when the harvest helpers make extra help in the house a boon to the farmer's wife, and with a niece when sewing for the niece's twin daughters needs to be done. Before the holidays, Tante goes to stay with the relative who intends to hold the family reunion, and for weeks before Christmas Tante is busy making the holiday goodies that are her specialties — "Lebkuchen", "Keffee Brod", and rich fruit cake. Her accomplishments are many. Although the dresses she sews for herself are the high-necked, full-skirted styles of long ago, no one can surpass the artistry of the dainty, hand-smocked dresses she makes for niece Olga's twin daughters. Her reputation as a housekeeper she guards as carefully as an artisan does his craftsmanship. The kitchen is her special province, and orderly shelves, crisp white curtains, and a spotless floor mark her reign there. More than once a niece has looked at her kitchen with pride until Tante Sophia has come to visit and has quietly undertaken a campaign of energetic cleaning that has seemed quite surprising to a less particular housekeeper.

No one ever says much about Tante's own family. Sometimes an older person in the town will talk about her only son, who was killed in an accident, — "a regular bum," they will say, and sometimes add in an undertone, "and good riddance it was for Tante, if she only knew it when the train struck him". Tante herself is much too busy for reminiscences. She says so little of her past life that it almost seems she has always been this sturdy, hurrying old lady who is so busy sewing and cooking and working for some one else's family.

Except for Sunday afternoons, when respect for the Sabbath keeps her idle. Tante is always busy. As soon as all the odd jobs are finished in one household, Tante moves on to another. Yet to neither Tante nor her relatives does this seem at all a hard life for her. No one can doubt Tante's feeling of importance when family plans revolve around her coming and going — when niece Esther's spring cleaning siege is postponed until Tante has nursed nephew John's children through measles, or when another niece sends a hurry call for Tante to come and bake cookies for the Ladies Aid Meeting. It might seem that Tante Sophia is the perfect picture of a household drudge were it not for the fact that she is so obviously happy and content. She is so busy seeing to the material comforts of her families that she has no time for brooding on the drudgery she must endure. Or, perhaps she is living proof that the happiest life is the life of service for others.



JOE, A SYMPOSIUM YOU SHOULD HEAR ABOUT

NORMAN C. STINES

Joe is our gardener. However, that doesn't prevent him from being an authority on everything else. There isn't a single thing he hasn't done at one time or another. He was born in Switzerland; and it may as well be added right now that Switzerland is the finest country in the world. Joe's appearance is rather unique, to say the least. He has a noticeable stomach, one eye, a walrus mustache, and a cigar in his mouth. On Sunday, with his best suit on, he resembles a country gentleman. On other days, he is a gardener.

Possibly one of the fields in which Joe is most accomplished — although don't forget that there isn't anything he doesn't know something about — is that of music. He plays the harmonica himself, and when he was younger he used to manipulate a Swiss variety of the mandolin. I am not certain as to whether or not he yodels, but since he has passed his prime, his yodeling wouldn't be quite as good as it once

was. "That stuff," he will scornfully say of Beethoven's creations as they pour forth rather meekly from a radio, "ain't no good. People don't like it. They like music." I ain't never heard — pardon me — I mean I haven't ever heard the actual extent of Joe's repertoire, but perhaps it is just as well.

Politics finds him equally interested. I am not sure as to how he predicted the outcome of the election, but if he prophesied the victory of President-elect Roosevelt, it was only one of his minor achievements. He also foresees the return of beer before long. "People want their drinks. These prohibition ladies don't know what they is talking about. Ya can't stop people from drinking." It is just such a peculiar sense of insight into the mob mind that distinguishes Joe from most other gardeners and makes one admire him for his wise statesmanship and vision.

Motor cars? Oh yes, he knows all about them. He likes the Buick (pronounced as if the B were P), and he especially prefers a Packard. However, the Ford is his favorite automobile, but, as he so nobly says, "Them gas buggies are an awful waste of money. You might just as well walk." Nevertheless, it is one of his more charming inconsistencies that he always welcomes the opportunity to ride to his destination in an automobile.

His greatest rival in Science is Professor Einstein. Joe reads the Hearst Sunday Magazines in the newspaper with great care, particularly noticing the profound technical articles therein. It has always been a wonder to me how he ever remembers what they contain, but he does; in fact, he will repeat and explain practically every detail. True, I have never heard him delve into the matter of what a cosmic ray is, but I think that he considers it something extremely elementary.

It is useless to attempt to mention all the subjects that Joe can talk fluently about, or do himself. He is a superb mechanic, knowing how to fix doorknobs. Of course, he don't always work very well, but one shouldn't be too critical. He has built roads, and, like all other subjects within his knowledge, he has lots to say about it. In addition, he is a devout movie fan. His favorites include Charlie Chaplin, Tom Mix, and Greta Garbo. He likes Miss Garbo, because she has, as he says, "such a purty neck." And what he doesn't know about art—well, what he doesn't know about art.

I could go on with this indefinitely, but I won't. I don't believe it is necessary. Already I can see that I have convinced the reader of the notable fact that we have a remarkable gardener. However if you still harbor shameful doubts, ask Joe about it. He'll tell you all you want to know, and more — just try to stop him from talking.

"POKEY PETE"

MARGARET G. NIES

A quarter of a mile south of Red Bluff, there is a sharp turn under a railroad track and then up on the level again. On the top of this little hill, the first thing one sees is a shack — or a group of shacks would be better to say. They are built of logs, planks, tins, cardboard, brick, mud, straw, rock, and anything else which would serve as building material. In the largest of the shanties lives Pokey Pete. It is propped up with poles and braced to the telephone pole with wire and rope. The one door hangs askew and usually part way open. The lone window is one that used to have several panes in it, but now it possesses only one dirty, cracked glass pane. The others are made of cloth, tin, and paper. A weather beaten poster, "La Follette for President," is tacked on the rear of the house. A forsaken chimney of tin adorns the top of the hut, and on cold days one may see a thin spiral of smoke coil out of it. The other buildings, are not so sturdy as the house. If a strong wind blows, Pokey Pete has to rebuild his scrap buildings. In one of the crude contraptions, Pete has a dozen ancient chickens. The only other inhabitant to keep Pokey Pete company is a trustworthy old dog, his boon companion.

Pokey Pete is beyond the stage when one remembers age. He has always lived in this one place, and never has mingled with other people except to peddle a book of poems which he says he has written. He usually brings a few eggs to town to trade for food. Every morning at ten o'clock, one sees this old fellow plodding down the highway with a sack over his shoulder and a bucket in his hand. He wears an ancient stiff straw hat in both summer and winter over a white mop of hair, which hangs to his shoulders. His beard, yellow and filthy, reaches his waist. His clothes are always dirty, sloppy, and torn. The trousers once gray, are dingy and frayed. He makes his own shoes, the tops being from old leather, and the soles being carved from wood. In these he shuffles on his way.

As the children on the school bus pass him, he sets the bucket down, doffs his hat and salutes them as long as he can see the bus. He is a gallant old figure and a land-mark as he stands there, bare-headed, with twinkling blue eyes set in a leathery old face which is fairly cracking in his broad smile.

There are many stories about Pokey Pete. Some say he is an old miser, and that twice a year he dresses up and goes to the city to take care of his wealth. They say he is a socialist leader, a disappointed politician, a run away from law, and a fugitive from society. Everyone says that he is crazy. Nevertheless, no one ridicules Pokey Pete, nor does one question him. He is never molested, and probably does not realize what a mystery he is. One does not pity him; one just wonders.

GENERAL RICARTE: A MONUMENT TO A LOST CAUSE



LEO V. GILDO

During our brief stay at Yokohama, I gathered first hand information about a man of whom until then I had only read in history. All that is generally known about this man is that he was among those who organized the first unit of the Filipino defensive force during the war with Spain; that he was banished; and that he refused — and still refuses — to return, because he felt that he could not conscientiously take the oath of allegiance to the United States. Few know more than this; and fewer know that he is happier to have spent more than thirty years of his life as a patriot and exile rather than as a subject of a foreign nation in his own country.

Who is this man who is so proud and self-determined that he does not admit defeat?

Artemio Ricarte was in his early twenties when the Philippine revolution broke out. He gave up his college work in Manila to help organize an army. After a short time, he was promoted to the rank of Commandant General, and a little later, he was commissioned to organize a force in a nearby province. As a general, his brilliant campaigns are worthy of record in the pages of history. After winning over the Spaniards, his men turned to the invading Americans, who finally overpowered them. Ricarte fled before he was forced to surrender, and today he is the only Filipino military leader who has not surrendered to the United States — a very singular distinction.

At the ripe age of sixty, the General doesn't look very different from his photograph taken when he was at the height of his career. He has not forgotten his military gait, and when he talks, his chest swells like that of a captain giving orders. Behind his wide glasses are fiery eyes, shrewd and determined, yet strong enough to see without aid. He grows a mustache that makes him look like a Japanese official. His grey eyebrows that curl upwards, nearly meet above his flat nose. Although his face is now wrinkled, and his hair has turned grey, he is not only healthy and strong, but also full of fight. His face ought to frighten little children, but it doesn't. In fact his Japanese neighbors send their children to his house at night to study Spanish.

Living in a country where people look upon every yen* that they earn as bigger than a national war debt, Ricarte's outstanding

*Japanese Dollar

principle is economy. He lives with his wife and two children in a two-story building adjacent to a barber shop on one side and a florist on the other. For a living, while his wife runs a cafe, Ricarte teaches in a Japanese school a few minutes ride by street car, and although not really very far, he takes his lunch with him and doesn't go home at noon (as the other teachers do), thereby saving carfare.

Among other things, he likes to write about the war with Spain, and to date, he has translated his book, which was originally written in Spanish, into several Philippine dialects. While he speaks Spanish and nearly all the Philippine dialects, he also speaks English and Japanese.

Although Ricarte was once considered a great man, at present he has not only been forgotten by most of his countrymen but he is a target of criticism by those who claim that he has done nothing for his people after the war. Whatever has been said about him, however, his unique distinction still remains, and when the American flag comes down in the Philippine Islands, Ricarte will be allowed once more to live under that flag for which he valiantly fought, and his return will bring back memories of his splendid career.



A SCARLET FLOWER

JANET OSTROM

Yesterday afternoon I walked to the foot of the Yosemite Falls. It was one of those glorious early July days in the valley, and the roar of the waterfalls filled the air with their rich music. I stopped when I came to an open space where I could look up and see the water hurl itself over the perpendicular side of the mountain of rock, come cascading along over rills and knolls of stone, disappear for a moment, and then reappear to make its final plunge to the very floor of the valley below; and I thought of you, my dear, and how you would love just such a sight.

Birds and tiny animals could be heard chattering and playing among the trees, but as I progressed on up the needle carpeted path the noise of the water began to push them into the background. Soon I could feel the spray in my face, and this increased in intensity as I came in view of the pool that caught and halted the sparkling water as it came tumbling on its impetuous way.

I seated myself upon a rock to lose myself in the beauty of the place around me. The spray was so thick that it was as if a light fog

lay over everything, and the roar of the falling water was so deafening that I could not hear people a few feet away from me speaking.

"So much beauty," I thought chokingly, "It can't be possible to have it all in this one place", and again I wished that you might see. You would have been fascinated, as I was, by the seething, boiling pool as it twisted and writhed and then straightened itself to go frolicking along under the giant trees. Before long the hot summer sun would dry this same stream, and this water, now so terrifying in its strength would be nothing but a stagnant pool.

A faint shout caused me to look up at the wall of rock down which the torrent was falling, and there half way up, seemingly clinging to nothing but the bare rock, was a young boy. Slowly he was trying to work his way down the almost perpendicular wall, now clinging to some dried up shrub, now following a ledge of the rock wall, he was trying to accomplish what looked to us like an impossible feat.

The people around me had been watching him for some time, and in answer to my question they told me that he and another boy had been hiking along the ridge above when one had wagered the other that he could go straight down the wall more quickly than by returning along the regular trail. He could not be dissuaded, and, as a consequence, here he was clinging to the side of nowhere while the other boy waited anxiously but safely below for him.

For half an hour or more we watched; a maddening half hour during which we all held our breath at each step, and the other boy went for a ranger in the hope that he could help. Beauty, wonder, all was pushed to the background as we forgot everything but that boy up there, who because of a childish whim was now courting death on a bare mountain side.

He finally succeeded in reaching a ledge directly below the one on which I had first seen him. There was no tree or shrub which he could hold on to here, but the ranger could be seen approaching down the trail and surely he could do something. The boy, looking around to see what his next step would be, spied a beautiful red wild flower growing in a crevice near by. Cautiously he reached out and picked it and then with a smile he turned as if to toss it down into the water below. Without a sound the ledge on which he was standing gave way, and only the clattering of the boulders as they leaped down their rocky pathway could be heard above the roaring of the falls.

I had been watching the wild flower when the accident came, and I saw his fingers close convulsively around it as if it were his only hope. Then my horrified eyes followed that flash of scarlet as it went from jagged rock to jagged rock down that mountain side until it was lost to view at last behind the merciless shrubbery at the bottom.

Suddenly the spray seemed to be closing in on me — choking me, the roar of the water terrified me, and I turned and ran down the path — my one idea being to get away — get away. I sped past the ranger carrying a coil of rope — I had to get out of these woods, away from these sounds. The spicy odor of the woods nauseated me, and the carpet of needles on the path hindered me, and always before me was a flash of brilliant red and a hand clutching — clutching.

I reached camp too exhausted and tired to think. Tonight I have made up my mind that I can not possibly stay here for two more weeks. I'm leaving for home as quickly as I can pack. Perhaps you think me silly, but you just don't understand. Some day, my dear, you will come here and sit as I did and marvel at the beauty and wonder of it all, and you will go away taking as much of it with you as you can. Again you will laugh at me and say I was silly, but then you have not seen a boy clutching a scarlet flower — a flower that failed him.



TRADITION OF THE MILITARY SALUTE

ALBERT VIEHWEGER

When a gentleman raises his hat to a lady he is but continuing a custom that had its beginning in the days of knighthood, when every knight wore his helmet as a protection against foes. When among friends, especially ladies, the knight removed his helmet as a mark of confidence and trust. In those days failure to remove the helmet in the presence of ladies signified distrust and want of confidence — today it signifies impoliteness and a want of good manners. Tipping one's hat to a lady is a salute.

The military salute is one of the things about military life little understood by a great many civilians. Due to some thorough misconception of its spirit and usage, some even regard it as an undemocratic practice. This is far from the fact. To the uninitiated two points or questions arise: what is its derivation and whence its need? When these two questions are satisfied, when the true significance and origin of the salute are understood, it becomes easily plain that it is a mutual token of honor and dignity, as well as a necessary custom.

An army is merely a human machine, for whose smooth functioning uniformity in all things is essential. Military uniformity is as old as military organization. So, the method of expressing recognition between military persons must be uniform. Verbal salutations are so many and diverse, and all lend themselves too easily to personal expres-

sion, such as favor or dislike, that some uniform impersonal sign for that purpose has always been necessary.

In all armies the sign consists of raising the right hand to the cap vizor or hat brim in some form or manner. That the right hand is always brought to the head dress indicates a common origin. This is indeed the case, for according to tradition the hand salute relates to the days of chivalry. This is the case with many military customs.

All military knights wore armor. The head piece, or helmet, had attached a grill or slotted face plate, working on hinges so that it might be drawn down over the face or pushed up above the eyes. This was called a visor, a term still applied to the leather piece attached to the modern service cap as an eye shade. When a knight rode afield he almost invariably wore the visor of his helmet down, so as to be protected in case of a sudden encounter with an enemy. All knights had painted on their shields or worked on the shirts worn over their mail the insignia of their 'house', called the 'coat of arms' and generally referred to as 'armorial bearings'. This served the same purpose as the metal ornaments worn on the collar and the shoulder loops of the modern soldier's coat, which are the military identifications of the wearer...

When a knight met another whose coat-of-arms marked him as belonging to his own forces, he raised the visor of his helmet to expose his face and so to show that he was in fact a friend, and not traveling under false colors, also to be better able to speak with him. The right hand was naturally used for this, because the reins of the charger were gathered in the left. Since this exposure incurred some risk in case the other knight might be using false insignia, the obligation fell first to the one whose rank was junior. The act of exposing the face in this manner was therefore the natural means to a greeting between two friendly knights, and in later years, when armor ceased to be worn, the motion continued to be a hailing sign of military comradeship.

The military salute in our army, or for that matter, in all armies, is attributed to that custom in its origin. When a soldier's hand is raised to his cap vizor on meeting an officer, it should be considered as simulating the last motion of the knight's hand in raising the visor of his helmet, by which act he signifies his recognition and confidence. When a soldier salutes before speaking to an officer, or an officer before addressing a superior, it is as if he raised his helmet visor 'to be better able to speak with him'. It is therefore no servile token, but a knightly act which calls for the same token of dignity and honor in return.

Because of the mass association of soldiers and the irksomeness that would ensue if every military man had to salute every other, in most armies, as in ours, it is limited to an exchange between enlisted

man and officers only, but in a few it is rendered between the men of the ranks and the sergeants and officers. The officer, however, has no relief from any irksomeness, for if he should pass individually every soldier of his company or command, each soldier would salute but once — the officer would render as many salutes as there were soldiers.

Hence there is nothing undemocratic about the salute between military persons. In essence, it is merely a mark of recognition and respect; a mutual act whose rendition demands an equal return. The duty to give it entails an absolute right to receive it, and so becomes the privilege of the military man. An officer is not obliged to give a salute to a civilian who for any reason chooses to give him one; in fact, it would not be proper for him to do so, but he is compelled to return one given by a soldier. Since the junior is required to salute first, a soldier who fails to salute an officer prevents the officer from satisfying his own obligation, and thus he commits a double fault.

The military person who neglects to salute, or who does so sheepishly or indifferently, may be taken either to lack proper self-respect or to misunderstand its true spirit and meaning. The one who brings his head erect and hand up smartly, looking squarely in the eyes of the person whom he is saluting as if to say, "Here is mine, dish up pop", indicates that he esteems his privilege to this ancient usage and seeks the respect that is his due.



THE DEPRESSION STRIKES HOME

ANONYMOUS

At first I was furious! They had no right! How could they!—After all, what could I do, at eighteen, with no economic training, in a world crashing about my head? Everything had been all right; then suddenly everything was not. Something was wrong—with Dad, or the big financiers, or the national government, or something. And because of their error, I was being hurt!

But time and a little thought calmed me. After all, who was I, to say who was wrong or who was not? The whole horrible calamity had been unforeseen. No one was more to blame than anyone else. Dad had depended on a bank of excellent repute and on the possibilities of the building trade. But the bank had failed, and building trade was sliding, like an avalanche, downhill. The financial geniuses, too, had banked on something that could not lose, and had lost. And as for the national government, it had, at least, died with its boots on

and gone down fighting, with derision and a blasted reputation to show for it.

Came January 1933 and a new deal for Mr. Citizen. Came a New Year for me—and a dream—and a plan.

I took an inventory and listed my assets. I had twenty dollars in a bank that had not failed. I had enough clothes to last for four years. I had a good mind in a sound body. But best of all, I had three years' dream of a room full of kindergartners, and of myself in charge. So because my assets exceeded my liabilities, I decided it was a good gamble.

I drew out my twenty dollars and used fifteen of it to buy a bus ticket to San Jose. I packed my clothes, destined to last for four years, made the usual teary farewells to my near and dear, and was off. From then on, and for the first time in my life, I WORKED. Because I could not give money for my room and board, I gave service. I know now how to take orders and carry them out. I'm learning by trial and error.

For awhile I was a waitress behind a counter. Now I'm looking for room and board again. I'm finding out how to live in the world. I've discovered one has to bear with people, whether one approves of them or not. I have found a way to check an indignant answer and put a polite reply in its place. I know that some day I shall be a better employer, for having been an employee—and that, if knowledge is power, money runs a very close second. In short, I'm finding out what the books meant by Life, written with a capital letter.

Among my friends are such as I never had before—a Greek restaurant proprietor, a cateress, a resort waitress. They are every bit as interesting as the sorority presidents and star athletes I used to know. To my surprise and delight, I find that there are countless types of people — an endless and fascinating study. If I can ever climb to the upper five percent of mankind who are leaders, I shall do so without forgetting the viewpoint I learned in the servant class.

Therefore, from a purely selfish point of view, I am grateful for this economic situation. Through it, I have settled upon a vocation, learned, if only a little, the value of a dollar, and widened my social outlook.

If only I can keep my head up through the struggle, I shall emerge a greater person than I could ever have been, had my father sent me through college, protected and secure.

AN IMPRESSION



RICHARD HIATT

The opera house is crowded to capacity and beyond, for the audience overflows the stage. A mass of faces, thousands of eyes, all focused on the piano; a strange babble of many tongues; then the gradual dimming of lights, and the subtle diminuendo of voices, until what was clamor is now little more than a murmur.

He walks on the stage, tall, gaunt, unsmiling, moving carefully, slowly — Rachmaninoff. Applause splashes out of the audience and beats on him. He bows perfunctorily, but no change of expression modifies the savage gloom of his face. In that sea of flesh he knows there is a soul; he could not play as he does if he did not know that; but sometimes he is weary, and all he sees is the flesh with its impertinences. Tonight the effort seems scarcely worth while.

Still moving slowly, with almost painful precision, he sits down at the piano, turns the screws that elevate or depress the stool a fraction of an inch, remembers his coat-tails flips them out behind him, rubs his hands a little, allows them to dangle limply at his sides, and looks at the audience. The people wonder why he does not begin. They think they are quiet. But they do not know the meaning of quietude, as the artist understands it. He alters the height of the stool again, stretches his hands once more, and looks again at the audience. Then he strikes a few chords, demanding silence. This time he achieves it, a silence so breathless, so complete, so foreign to the atmosphere of turmoil in which these people pass their rattling lives, that even to have tasted it thus briefly is worth the price of a concert ticket to them. At last, after the suspense has been prolonged to the finest possible tension, he crashes down into the piano and plays.

This music is not sweet and beautiful. It does not appeal. He has chosen to open his program with one of the harsh, contemptuous moderns. The people out in front will applaud, he knows. He is practically daring them not to applaud, though this music is torture to some and weariness to others. He sits there, his long back humped over the instrument, staring straight into the keyboard, losing himself within austere, unapproachable walls, and hurling a bombardment of hard, brittle music into the crowd. His hands crawl through a maze of chords with a strangeness of motion that is somehow frightening;

they seem like large intelligent spiders that have been trained to do remarkable things.

On and on the man plays. Number after number is completed in the same savagely aloof manner. And then he begins the Liszt Bb Minor Sonata. He is just entering his element. Barbaric sounds belch from the quivering piano. The wild mass of tone sweeps out over the people and submerges them. There is something relentless in this music. It gathers and swells in intensity, as though performer and audience were competing in some grotesque endurance test. When it crashes to a finish there is certainly an element of relief in the wild applause.

Encore! He draws himself up to his weary height and makes the requisite bows. The clapping of hands continues. He gives up, and throws the C-sharp Minor Prelude as he might throw a bone to a pertinaciously yapping dog.

"My dear, you didn't hear Rachmaninoff! You missed it! He was just too sweet!"



THE GARDENIA WARRIOR

BELDEN K. SMITH

Through the murk of a San Francisco fog, cars crept slowly along like shadowy prehistoric animals, glaring near-sightedly before them, and dodging past each other on the slippery pavement. Blurred halos dimming the lights and illuminated signs, gave an unfamiliar and mysterious glamour to upper Mission street. Pretentious store fronts, their flashiness softened and toned down, gleamed cozily, and even the black faced and stodgy apartment houses and "flats" that line up along the pavement, gazed in a mellow and humid glow from their pale windows. Traffic had noticeably thinned here. Shops had closed for the day; the theatres would not be open for an hour yet; and the respectable people who lived in this part of the city, had settled down to their respectable dinner tables.

Turning the corner at Nineteenth Street, a yellow cab swung cautiously onto Guerrero and proceeded still further out of town. The driver huddled in an old army overcoat. Within the car sat a man and a ten year old boy, in conversation. At least, the man was deep in a story of some sort. The boy meanwhile sat cautiously on the edge of his seat, listening with simulated attention, while from the tail of his eye he took note of the clicking meter and his fog dim-

med surroundings and filed the information away against possible future need.

Sensing the divided interest of his companion, the older man spurred himself to further efforts at explanation.

"You see, Ed, as soon as I saw you I knew I could count on you as a pal."

A skeptical smile flicked the boy's features for a fleet second.

"And I thought to myself, 'There's a young man who could be a good friend to a fellow in a pinch' — for a consideration of course."

The boy gave the speaker a cool glance, and then fell to his earlier preoccupation with street and number.

"Of course, for a consideration," floundered the man, "I shouldn't expect you to come in on my scheme unless you were going to get something out of it. For, after all, you don't know me from Adam, any more than I know you; and you're certainly under no obligation to a perfect stranger like myself."

The meter clicked on — (past Thirtieth now.) "—but I need you, and I'll pay well for your help, just as I told you I would. We're almost there now, and I want to know that I can count on you; that you won't fail me. If you have a yellow streak in you, I'm going to give you a last chance to get out of this." His face was scarlet, and he mopped his brow, in spite of the cold. "Do you want to back down? Now's your last chance!"

The boy turned a suspicious and accusing glance on him for a half minute.

"D'ye know, Mr. Jones," he said dryly, "you haven't told me yet what you're up to, or what I'm in for. All I know is that I'm to go with you to call on a lady who's going to the theatre with us. What then? What's my cue?"

"Well, the only thing you're to do is to stand by. Don't be scared, no matter what happens. The young lady has a terrible temper, and there's apt to be a ruckus. Just stand your ground. Don't run off and leave me in the lurch. That's all I'm asking you to do."

"Then you mean to tell me that you're payin' me for the pleasure of my company while you're taking your girl to the show?"

"Precisely!"

The boy's eyes said, "Oh, yeah!" but he merely added, "Nothin' else?"

"Not another thing. Except to be as stupid as possible. Do you think you can fill the bill?"

"Sure thing."

Here the cab drew up at the curb, and in some confusion, Mr. Jones jerked at his tie, wiped his forehead again, put on his hat at a

defiant angle, picked up a spray of gardenias carefully, and alighted.

He was a well set-up young man of about thirty, with an innocent blue eye and a smooth bland expression which belied his agitation of five minutes earlier.

"You're sure you know what you're to do?"

The boy nodded.

Then to the driver, "We'll be out in a few minutes."

"O. K."

The house which was their destination lay enveloped in fog. It was an old fashioned wooden structure, three stories in height, with a long external staircase which led to the front entrance. The illumination of the porch and its adjoining bay window lit up the dismal gray street like a beacon of welcome. With his young charge in tow Mr. Jones mounted the steps and proceeded to brandish the bronze knocker with Napoleonic valor.

A young lady responded. Swathed in a maze of white chiffon, she was a vision of loveliness. Turquoise eyes set under level brows, black hair, classic profile, and a clear complexion enhanced by the strategic use of cosmetics, — the attacking general was almost paralyzed by this formidable battery of the defending force. Nevertheless he gallantly proceeded.

"Hello, Natalie. Get your things on and come along. The taxi's waiting."

At first sight of her suitor, the young lady's eyes had melted, her lips curved in a welcoming smile. But on perceiving that he was accompanied by an unidentifiable youngster her mouth sagged for a bewildered moment and her eyes flashed blue fire.

Jones, realizing that in a surprise attack speed is the determining factor, brought his somewhat demoralized reinforcements forward hastily.

"This is Ed," he announced in a matter of fact tone. "He's going along with us." And he proffered the spray of waxy flowers cavalierly.

Disdaining a word, and with a gesture worthy of a pacifist at a disarmament conference, the vision slammed the door to.

His young accomplice counseled immediate withdrawal, but Jones seemed unruffled as he rescued the rather dilapidated bouquet. Convinced that his success, like prosperity, was just around the corner, he persevered in his assault. The vigor of his next knock nearly shattered the door.

This time the young lady's mother answered, and ignorant of the state of war, invited the shock troops to enter. Now, at the solicitation of Jones, she agreed to act as mediator between the two forces.

The state of affairs was this. For the past month or two, on

those evenings when Jones had called, Natalie, with what had at first seemed a charming generosity, but with what had of late seemed more like a diabolical habit, had insisted on being chaperoned by her six year old niece. As a chaperone the child was a howling success—she always went promptly to sleep. But Jones was led to protest against his position as nurse maid and official totter of the sleeping Betty. It was all right once. It was all right twice. But it was not all right seven times. Patient and fond of children though he was, he had finally flared into revolt and declared a moratorium on such unwarranted indignities. Now he demanded parity. If Natalie persisted in being accompanied by her diminutive charge, he should certainly be privileged to take a young friend of his along as a counter weight.

Natalie's face depicted a vortex of seething emotions. Indignation struggled with love, and it was some moments before she could control the workings of her face. Her mouth flapped hopelessly, but no sound came forth. It was a touching spectacle—Jones, gazing blandly but implacably at the outraged Natalie, whose make-up was beginning to crack and smear under the strain of her excitement, and the stricken mother standing tearfully and dejectedly between them.

The mother was the first to see that Jones had won the day. With the diplomacy born of three decades of matrimony, she swiftly extracted two crisp bills from somewhere; closed the ready hand of the young mercenary over them; slipped off upstairs to tuck the young niece in her bed.

The two lovers glared fixedly at each other. Gradually their eyes softened, their features relaxed into a normal state of vacancy, and with one impulse they rushed into each others arms.

The trophy gardenias were stuck in a vase, where they recovered some of their pristine freshness.



A CITY GONE MAD

R. ALFORD

"Paper? New York Herald!"

"Here! How much?"

"One dollar."

"Right!"

One dollar is a great deal of money to pay for a newspaper at least two months old, but men of San Francisco paid just that price during the gold rush, when fifteen hundred copies sold like hotcakes

the moment they reached the beach. Accepted price standards meant nothing in San Francisco of '49, when every man firmly believed that gold was to be picked up casually in the beds of streams in the Sierra country. Fortunes far greater than those made in the gold fields could easily have been acquired by persons who were willing to stay sane and go into the business of producing the necessities and luxuries of life for the cosmopolitan Bedlam that was the metropolis of California.

But San Francisco was hog-wild. Few could think of anything but gold in this city of maniacs. Ships were deserted by their crews in San Francisco Bay, and miners on the banks of the Sacramento daily witnessed boats, with the names of their mother-craft carefully smudged out, being rowed lustily up stream by "French leave" sailors who sought to pick up fortunes from the surface of the ground in the foothills of the Sierra-Nevada. Cooks, bell-hops, and water-front laborers could seldom be retained in the city by the Golden Gate, despite the ten dollars and up per day that was paid for wages. The call to the "diggins" and wealth beyond measure was too strong to resist.

And yet, business flourished in San Francisco. Although houses were either shaky board structures or tents, and streets were veritable swamps where men were actually drowned occasionally when, from excess of refreshment, they fell from what passed for sidewalks, the city did an enormous business. It was estimated that rents for the city for one year came very close to equaling those for New York. The laws of supply and demand, aided by the gold-fever, which was more a potent intoxicant than the whiskey served over the bar at the Parker House or the El Dorado, had contrived to run prices up to ridiculous figures. Prices often doubled and redoubled within the day. No one could prophesy what would be the price of ham and eggs on the following day — frequently an order sold for upwards of two dollars and a half.

Real estate speculation was rife. Lots sold at \$1,500 in the spring would be priced at \$15,000 in the fall — and sold. Rents were in proportion; in fact, the value of land was based entirely on the rents it would bring. Gamblers, able to pay enormous sums, established the rates, which not infrequently reached \$1,800 a month. Lumber was known to sell at \$300 a thousand board feet, and houses brought from \$1,500 up — this in spite of the fact that they were sheds. As the frequent fires made insurance impossible, the owners of buildings suffered recurring losses, but San Francisco always picked itself up from its own ashes and started anew. It was indeed a city of optimism.

Six dollars a dozen, taking big and little prices together, was the standard price for even bad laundry work. It was often cheaper to buy new apparel than to have the old washed. Bayard Taylor gives the price of laundry as eight dollars a dozen, and says further that, in

consequence, large quantities of soiled linen were shipped to the Antipodes to be cleaned. A vessel arriving from Canton brought two hundred and fifty pieces which had been sent out a few months earlier. The Hawaiian Islands also received some of this trade.

Streets in the vicinity of Jewish clothing shops were often strewn with old clothing. An observer writes.

"Always tons of cast-off garments were kicking about the streets — — — The majority of the population carried their wardrobe on their backs, and when they bought a new article of dress, the old one which it replaced was pitched into the street."

Such was San Francisco in the "days of gold". A city composed of men from all walks of life and from all parts of the earth, it was continually turning and tossing in a high fever. Life moved rapidly.

When one considers the strenuousness of the life, the element of chance in it all, and the hodge-podge of humanity that formed the great camp — for town it could not with truth be called —, one comes to understand why the place grew into such a fascinating city. No wonder San Francisco acquired such a colorful personality! No wonder that it has been called the "biggest city of its size in the world"!



I DON'T LIKE ANTIQUES

M. WARREN FOWLER

Perhaps it is I, myself, who am to blame. I have looked over my past life, and I have found nothing in it that would account for my deep aversion for old things. I do not intend this statement to cover too much territory. To be specific, it is old-fashioned knickknacks that arouse my dislike. To go into an old-fashioned house filled with what-nots, horse hair furniture, Chippendale chairs, and other articles of a bygone era, depresses me to the point of acute melancholia. I cannot account for this strange reaction, so I take it for granted and live in the present as much as possible.

It has always been a puzzle to me as well as a source of extreme annoyance, that professors of English literature in high schools and colleges place so much emphasis upon the very beginnings of Eng-

lish literature. Especially I mean Chaucer and Shakespeare.

I will grant that Shakespeare is unique, and that perhaps no other English poet or playwright can compare with him. Also, I grant that his subjects are as various as human emotions, and that he turned out manuscripts wholesale. But why hold him up as a divine being beyond our comprehension? Why should savants pick his plays to pieces and exclaim over the excellences of the various bits? It seems to me the very height of foolishness for learned men to cover reams of paper, discussing whether Hamlet was actually insane or only pretending. What if Shakespeare was a genius in his line? How does he affect the plays of our period? Surely a playwright of our time could not model his plays on those of Shakespeare and expect to sell them for a thin dime.

At one time it was a mark of culture and education to read Shakespeare with pseudo-appreciation, and to discuss him learnedly. That time is happily passing; and I hope to see the time when college professors will take their courage in both hands, and admit that there are other geniuses. He has earned his place in the "Hall of Immortals". Why not let his bust accumulate the dust of ages while we carve a new place for a deserving contemporary?

Where I can see some excuse for Shakespeare, I find only the faintest bit for Chaucer. I have read the "Canterbury Tales" and was never so bored in my life. His plan of the stories is one that calls for the least amount of intellectual exercise. They are written in such old English, that this fact alone makes him difficult of examination. To be sure his verse is light and full of melody, but so was that of Shelly, Keats, and the Elizabethans. These, to my mind, are much more important and worthy of consideration than Chaucer. To dig into Chaucer, like exploring an Egyptian tomb, may be a task suitable for a research worker, but hardly for one who wants an appreciation of English literature.

Perhaps I have passed over these two men too hastily; but the point to my whole dissertation is that there are writers of our own time to be discovered, or at least, some not as ancient as Chaucer and Shakespeare, that warrant more emphasis than is usually given them. I suppose I have committed heresy by aiming my blows at these two ancients; but if such is the case, make the most of it. Why spend weeks and weeks on these two, when there is a whole wealth of contemporary literature to be revealed to the inquiring mind?

A SUGGESTION



PHILIP CHRISTENSEN

For the more than casual student, for the one who is preparing for a life's work, there is, perhaps, no better way of throwing the various phases of his field of special study into proper proportion and perspective than by the historic approval. It is too often the case that this highly attractive method of introduction to a study is neglected by the two ambitious student; usually he passes it by entirely, or else ignores such a method as being inconsequential. At first blush, admittedly, the benefits of the practice may seem few enough indeed for, truly, the student's gain is not of the essentially practical sort; yet I hold that the class of information thus derivable is very essential to an ultimate, complete understanding of any particular subject. Not only will it constitute an extremely valuable supplement to the student's elementary learning, but it should also provide a welcome contrast to the more abstract nature of his initial studies.

To demonstrate the full value of such an historical view, I must develop this discussion in some detail. In the first place, undoubtedly the student's interest will be quickened by the added color and animation which these readings will bring to his subject. Those things which were purely impersonal will take on new life and reality and will become more attractive objects of study. The story of the old monk who first tried to measure the speed of electricity is not found in text books, but it is well worth the knowing. This old fellow called all the members of his monastery together and had them join hands in a long line. His plan was to impart a shock to the man at one end and to determine how fast the effect of the charge would travel along the chain. Needless, to say, he was completely baffled upon observing that all jumped at once! And then, in the realm of mathematics, would not the student be interested to know that Enler, one of the founders of modern analysis, once concentrated so hard on a problem that he contracted a fever and lost the sight of one eye? Balzai, founder of one of the modern, non-Euclidian geometries, was noted as a duelist and violinist as well as a mathematician. He once accepted the challenge of thirteen officers upon the condition that he be allowed to play his violin between engagements — and he defeated them all! Pancelet, another famous geometer, like Bunyan, wrote his greatest words in a prison. And so it goes; not only mathematics, but all fields are replete with

equally striking instances, all full of lively human interest and appeal.

Then too, if a study contains elements which are difficult to grasp, points which are involved or confusing, I count it a great help to approach these problems from an historical standpoint. The student's difficulties, whatever they may be, must closely parallel those of some bygone pioneer. The mental barriers which first arose to obstruct the original investigator probably still exist as stumbling blocks to the present-day novice. If he is able to discover how these problems were first solved; what methods were used; and what explicit difficulties had to be overcome in the solution; then his confusion will vanish and he will have found guidance to direct him past his obstacle.

A further practical value of knowing of the genesis and development of any part of a field will be a truer comprehension and orientation of that part in its relation to the rest of the study; for it is evident that a retrospective view is quite apt to show the connection between otherwise apparently detached parts of a field, and to lend order and unity to the whole. Unfortunately, the student usually receives his subject in its immediately applicable form, and the story of its growth is lost by this detachment from its original setting. But it should be remembered that little has ever been attempted without purpose; few noteworthy digressions from the beaten paths of thought have ever been ventured except as efforts to explain some existing discrepancies of theory or some newly discovered phenomena. Then, too, the trend, the philosophies and the conditions current in the past, always have been powerful factors in the directing or restricting of mental processes. It follows, consequently, that to know of these influences, these prime moving elements through which have evolved our present-day studies, is the key to the fullest apprehension of their several features.

And finally, how often have our great intellectual advances been made against the opposition of the whole world! Ignorance, superstition and intolerant restrictions have ever stood in the way of the mental pioneer; thus many times it has required courage of the highest sort, and doggedness as well as zeal to bring truth to the fore. Should not the inspiration, the romance of these struggles, lend zest and stimulus to the student's efforts? Would he not, then apply himself to his work in a more properly appreciative spirit if he were cognizant of the trials of his predecessors? Certainly, against a background of such worthy tradition a respectful attitude becomes the beginner well, and this respect would be conducive to an intensifying of his interest and application in his study.

ONE HOUR



ADAM MAE RHOADS

A clock had just struck eight.—

All his life Henry Andrews had wanted a few minutes he could call his own. Ever since he had married Carrie, that poor soul. As he thought of her now in this his last hour on earth, he felt a queer pity creep over him. She had been a good wife in the only way she knew how, looking out for his balanced diets, mending his socks and all those commonplace things. But life with her had been anything but peaceful, and what he needed was peace of mind.

The late October evening was most tranquil, with signs of rain in the air outside. The atmosphere within his small, cramped room was stifling. This room in which everything seemed too crowded. The bed on which he lay filled the room like some great monster. Yet his daughter thought she had done her duty—given her father a room of his own.

His daughter Margaret had taken after Carrie in such things. She made a good home for her husband Horace and their four children. But looking back on his life under their roof, the father was filled with regret — his life from the very beginning had been nothing but humdrum. Fate had intervened every time he was near freedom, peace of mind and body.

As he lay there now, on that huge bed which filled the room, he tried to think of the happy days of his life, but nothing except trouble and sorrow entered his mind. Death was pleasant to think of now. If he should die, and the doctors had said he had only a few more hours—would he go to the place where Carrie was, if there were such a place? If he lived, would fate change the unbearable life he had been living? These questions he asked himself. No answer came to his tortured mind. He began to welcome death, he wanted to die—it would mean the end, he thought, of all caring. Even to go to Carrie now seemed a way out.

Lying there, thus, with all his thoughts set out in cruel reality—the door opened slowly. Charles, the eldest son of Margaret, and his nephew entered.

"Hello, grandfather", said the eldest son. "How are you feeling now?"

"Not very well, my boy", replied the old gentleman of the

huge bed. "But come and talk to me—what have you been doing all day? I haven't seen any of the others, where are they and what are they doing?"

"Oh, ma's having guests in for bridge". Charles did not realize what these words might mean to the old man.

At any other time Henry would have felt bitter resentment toward the whole family, but now with death and its possibilities of freedom within his reach there was little that he could say. And did he want to? No, hadn't he tried all these years to tell them what he had thought? He had not lacked courage—what was it then? Try as he would he always concluded it was of no use—they would not understand. A family living for themselves, was this Madison tribe.

Horace, his son-in-law, worthless fellow that he was, was always in debt and had just about taken Henry's last cent.

"Strange", thought Henry, "that all my resentment has passed?"

It was not strange, however, because as he thought of all his life spent under their roof he had been strong and they all had been weak, caring nothing about others and selfishly grabbing everything for themselves. People like that were to be pitied weren't they? This Henry asked himself.

Suddenly he remembered Charles had come in. What had happened to him.—

"Charles", he called with a feeble voice.

"Yes, grandfather I'm here", came from one of the small corners.

"Say, do you want this old watch any longer?"

"Oh", "Let the poor child have it," cried Henry half aloud.

"To die, oh", he gasped, "what a relief".

"There it had come again, that terrible pain near his heart, like a serpent coiling tighter and tighter——"

His time had come—ah!

Suddenly the cramped room took on the appearance of an immense cathedral with a very high ceiling. Space—vast space all around—and in the distant corridor, heavenly music from an organ of infinite beauty came drifting by — quietness everywhere — peace entered his tired body—his mind, up to this time a mass of confused thoughts, was at rest—every nerve had relaxed and all was calm—

Softly a door opened and closed—alone at last—peace freedom.

Down the corridor to the very end he drifted—to the altar where but one candle burned. There he knelt and prayed for the

first time in sixty years, thanking the Lord for the peace he had been given.

The one candle flickered and in its light he saw the image of Carrie, his long dead wife, beckoning to him.

"Ah—Carrie, my love, I have waited so long for you", he said.

"Come", she said, "We must go".

And the two walked quietly away together. The candle sputtered and slowly went out as if with a peaceful sigh.

A clock struck the hour of nine.

The old man of the huge bed had gone—all was quiet in the small cramped room.



A RODEO

GRACE WHITE

This was "Rodeo Time" in Gilroy, an old 'cow town'. Banners were strung across Main Street. These banners of yellow and red whipping in the wind and scaring half to death any horse that had good 'horse sense', told those that were interested that Gilroy was having a Gymkhana. It was going to be the biggest rodeo in the west, for a town of its size. The windows of the "city's" largest stores were crowded with posters of brave cowboys riding steers and horses.

The streets were filled to overflowing with people; towns people in their gaudy shirts, 'kerchiefs, and big hats, cowboys with clanking spurs and wide white hats, girls who giggled and whispered loudly that they thought cowboys were just grand, and children dressed in overalls and gingham dresses.

The rodeo grounds were located just inside the north city limits. The grounds consisted of an arena in which the dust lay a foot deep; a grandstand able to hold several hundred people; and a booth at which could be bought tickets for the show, candy, popcorn, peanuts, and soda pop. This booth was presided over by a red-faced man in a checkered suit, a derby, and a red tie with a diamond horseshoe pin.

One event of the day which was of interest to all, was the parade on the street. It was scheduled to take place at twelve noon sharp,

but the cornucopias, hot dogs, and hamburgers had all been consumed and forgotten before the strains of a lively march filled the stifling air of the June afternoon. Down the street came cowboys, cowgirls, floats with children, and floats with wild animals, the city officials on horse back, a prairie schooner, with the young hopeful bravely riding the family cow. Even the depression was not forgotten for this single day. An old white horse, who had shed only about half of his winter coat, was drawing a cart with two of the town belles dressed in their very worst clothes riding in it.

Followed by the crowd the parade wended its way to the grounds, where the horsemen and horsewomen passed the grandstand in single file. First was a man with a very red face, who no doubt was president, manager, and chairman of the show; then came a quite attractive cowgirl, with several attendants, carrying a banner with the word "Queen" across it; then came several hundred cowboys. They were all dressed somewhat alike with their big hats, bright shirts, high-heeled boots and chaps. Their steeds, though, varied somewhat, some being very spirited, although others were just able to carry their riders.

At two o'clock the rodeo began. The huge man with the very red face rode into the arena and said, through a rolled piece of tin, that the rodeo would start. The loud report of a gun shot was heard and the show was on! From the chutes on either side of the arena there bounded bucking horses and bucking bulls on which some of the riders were able to stay only a second. The more fortunate were able to stick on until the whistle blew, which meant they would probably come in for some of the prize money.

There followed numerous special events, horse racing, hurdle jumping, a polo game and the very funny antics of a clown and his trained mule, which kept the crowd amused in minutes when the show lagged.

The "city band" consisting of twenty players in blue uniforms with gold braid, played "Stars and Stripes Forever" until everyone, and the horses too, was automatically humming it.

It was twilight before the last event was over. Tired, happy, and hungry, the jostling crowd left the arena to seek the pleasure of the cowboy dance which would end the excitement until the next year.

LOPEZ STREET



JANE KESSLER

After having put off our visit to the street every time we happened to be in Los Angeles, for one reason or another, we finally found time to tour it. And then, as is usually the case, we wondered why we could have been so inanely foolish as not to have gone there, before.

It was a truly charming place—a bit of old Mexico in the heart of Los Angeles. It conspired to transport one to another land, the moment one's foot touched its pavement, even while the other one was still on the noisy street of the city.

At the entrance stood a cross on a mound of dirt, with various inscriptions, the nature of which has now slipped my mind. However, the whole thing was in accord with the religion of this little colony — a symbol of their Catholic faith as they have kept it. A remnant, it was, perhaps, of the beliefs of their original country.

The bricks of the pavement were rough and old. Each had become a part of the next one, now, and no individuality was apparent in their mellow and dull-red appearance. Down the middle of the street were small, unattached booths, open on all sides to display their wares. Bordering the entire length were other booths, larger, but more snug and compact. Odd little oil-pots, on the ground, burned for illumination, throwing up strange, waving flames into the cool night air. They were not too bright, but produced sufficient illumination. Aside from these and various cooking-fires, there was no other lighting arrangement in the place.

People were plentiful — tourists, sightseers, and the Mexicans, themselves contributing color and atmosphere. From their little stalls with their wares, they nodded and smiled to us as we strolled past, cajoling us to buy their food or trinkets.

There were old women, fat and lame, sitting solidly by their fires, with black shawls around their shoulders and over their heads (we wondered why Mexican women always wear these shawls, and why they inevitably become fat!); old men whose dark, wrinkled faces and white hair seemed characteristic of all the old men of Mexico we had seen elsewhere; young girls with sparkling eyes and red lips, who listened to the music swarthy young men played upon their native instruments; and, of course, the children, who were practically the only

ones outside of the booths. They played and ran and shouted, quite like any other youngsters — and why not? Occasionally, a shy child leaned against his mother, hiding his face in the folds of her skirt, and giggling when we spoke to him; or else, he stood with his head hanging, large, black eyes raised to us, and a thrust-out lower lip, looking for all the world as if he had lost his last little brown-skinned friend.

Everybody seemed to be happy and healthy — and not too dirty in appearance! They kept to their own stalls where they cooked a variety of unique dishes over little fires burning in foreign-looking stoves. We were offered food; but we passed it up in favor of an interesting basement cafe; but not until we had examined their stock of wares. On display were all sorts of pottery, baskets, vases, dishes, cigarette trays, dolls, animals and other figures of colorful and minute craftsmanship, candy, jewelry, cactus and other native plants, leather souvenirs, and the not to be forgotten Mexican Jumping Bean! A bright, cheap conglomeration, this, repeated over and over in each shop.

Entering the cafe, I was entranced with the collection of bottles before us. The room was long and low, and around the walls ran a narrow shelf, supporting a great accumulation of gin, whiskey, wine, and champagne bottles. They were empty, of course, used purely for decoration. They were of all shapes, sizes, and colors, still with their alien labels and stickers attached to them. A different note, I thought, in this bit of old Mexico.

We seated ourselves at a gingham-covered table, and were served by an American girl in a Mexican costume. This jarred! Why couldn't the waitresses have been Mexican, too? It would have been in the spirit of the thing to much better advantage!

The food, which was tasty, but very hot, was served on interesting pieces of crockery of different colors and designs. Ice-water was contained in tall, narrow-necked whiskey bottles, which gave to the dinner quite a daring air, we thought!

While we ate, we were entertained in real, native cafe style. A young man played the violin, accompanied by a girl at the piano, while another girl sang lively Mexican folk-songs. The dancer was a young man with a nimble pair of feet, as every good dancer is claimed to have. He clicked his castanets and executed an assortment of steps, all the while tossing his head and rolling his dark eyes! He was utterly soft and effeminate, and, though a good dancer, was so self-conscious and conceited that he became unbearable. While my insipid young man capered, the others laughed and talked, shouting, occasionally, above the music. It was all very informal and pleasant.

The girls were pretty and plump, with beautiful dark, wavy hair and snapping black eyes. The entire group was attractively dressed in black and bright colors.

Having done justice to the meal, we left, passing a group of people, mostly children, at the entrance, staring solemnly down into the warm, fragrant interior at the entertainers. They do love music, and I imagine that they gather there every time they hear it.

We next inspected a modern building in which were expensive shops and a puppet theatre, all very grand and artistic, but out of keeping with the rest of the surroundings. Leaving this, we went on up the street, back to the entrance, still looking into the curious and numerous booths. The last thing we did was to give an old, blind, Mexican fiddler some money. This sent us out laughing, because the way in which he immediately played more energetically and with renewed vim was so marked and evident as to be most amusing to us.



THE VALLEY OF DEATH

RICHARD SILVA

The stifling rays of the mid-day sun beat on the bodies of friend and foe impartially. Jack Mulroy lay with his face to the ground. At his side was his rifle with his right arm thrown over it as though to shield it from the heat of the day and the dust of the sun-baked earth. An occasional bullet whizzed past him. To the left he could see his corporal some thirty feet away. To his right, an equal distance off, was another member of his squad.

The sun shoved west and blazed as it moved. The ground rose and fell in a series of heat-created waves. The hilltops seemed to be afire. To his burning eyes the very grass seemed to wilt and shrivel. His thoughts flamed and rioted through the torrid inferno that was his brain. Why was he in the army? Why did he have to obey orders? Who gave the order that sent him up here to face the death that the grey-clad man of the northern steppes had brought

with them? Why were they fighting him? Question after question hurtled its rocket-like course through his mind and, to him, seemed to burst with a shower of fiery sparks in his brain.

The capitalists are the cause. This weary refrain beat in his mind in time with the undulations of the heat devils rising off the torrid hills. The capitalists are the cause. Why not leave his rifle and run? Could anyone stop him? Would his own comrades shoot him down? He doubted it. What were their thoughts? Why not all throw down their arms? If he could only talk to them! What right had the moneyed men to send him out here to meet his death? None! None! None! But they are the cause. Damn them!

Heat! Fierce and unrelenting heat! Merciless heat! The brazen sun had finished half its journey from the meridian to its bed behind the dancing hills. Jack Mulroy turned on his side in defiance of the whistling bullets to look at his corporal. How the grim, set face and form of his squad leader contrasted with his own! He could not see his own face but knew what it looked like. He was sweat besmeared, but so was the corporal. His eyes were shot with blood, but so were the corporal's. His clothes were a muddy mass of dust and sweat; the corporal's were the same. Yet a difference was there. The veteran was purposeful and steady. Jack Mulroy was neither of these. He rolled over again with a groan. How long would his torment keep up?

He was again watching his leader as a good soldier would have been doing all the while. He saw the corporal's arm rise, poise for an instant, then shoot forward. What did that mean?

Forward of course! Forward! Gone was heat! Gone rebellion! He leaped to his feet and an instant later was pressing forward in the mad exultation of the charge.



